

The Effect of Confucian Values on Support for Democracy and Human Rights in Taiwan

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Abstract

Recent years have seen a great deal of interest in the extent to which “Asian values,” or Confucian ideology, inhibit a country’s acceptance of liberal-democratic values. Much of that research, however, focused on the experience of nondemocratic states, concentrated on theory rather than empirical analysis, was written before the complete democratization of Taiwan, and/or created a pan-Confucian-values index instead of estimating the effects of the main components of Confucianism (family loyalty, social hierarchies, and social harmony) individually. In this article, we review theoretical arguments for why Confucian values would decrease public support for democratization, women’s rights, and freedom of speech. We then use OLS and Logit to estimate models of data from the Taiwan subsamples of the 1995 World Values Study and the 2001 East Asia Barometer. Our results indicate that adherence to Confucian values did not consistently undermine public support for liberal democracy in 1995 and even increased support for some liberal-democratic values in 2001. Our findings thus disconfirm previous empirical research on this question. The article concludes by discussing how Confucian and liberal-democratic values might reinforce rather than undermine each other.

The traditional culture of China has conferred upon the Chinese a wide range of unseemly characteristics....The political and social system engendered by Chinese-style feudalism was so contrary to every notion of human rights, that one could say that there was no such thing as human rights in China.

Bo Yang, *The Ugly Chinaman and the Crisis of Chinese Culture*

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There is thus no basis for asserting any inherent incompatibility between Confucianism and the human rights to which nations subscribe.

Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Asian Values and Human Rights*

The relationship among Confucianism, political development, and some form of democracy has generated a great deal of controversy in recent decades. Claiming that Confucianism inhibited political progress and economic expansion and that it was hostile to Communism, Mao Zedong, or at least some leaders of the Cultural Revolution, tried to eradicate this system of thought.¹ More recently, Lee Kuan Yew² has extolled “Asian values”—a proxy for a particular form of Confucianism—for promoting economic development and political stability, but also for limiting the kind of “excessive” personal liberties exercised in the West. President Kim Dae Jung of Korea and President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan countered that Lee Kuan Yew had misappropriated the Confucian tradition for his own self-interested purposes.³ It would be easy to claim that this argument said more about the contested nature of politics than it did about any inherent interpretive issues within Confucianism, except that a similar theoretical debate about the compatibility of Confucianism and democracy also divides social scientists.⁴ Scholars such as Robert Weatherly⁵ and Peter Moody⁶ highlight how the traditional Confucian stress on hierarchy, social order, and an individual’s duty toward others, and an absence of any particular notion of individual rights might inhibit efforts to promote liberal democracy. Samuel Huntington speaks of the “rejection of individualism and the prevalence of a soft form of authoritarianism or limited forms of

¹ A. James Gregor and Maria Hsia Chang, “Anti-Confucianism: Mao’s Last Campaign,” *Asian Survey* 19, no. 11 (1979): 1073-1092, and Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Chinese Civilization* (Stamford, CT: Thomson Learning, 1991): 368.

² Fareed Zakaria, “A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew,” *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 2 (1994): 109-126. See also Lee Kuan Yew, *From Third World to First, the Singapore Story: 1965-2000* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000).

³ Kim Dae Jung, “Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia’s Anti-Democratic Values,” *Foreign Affairs* 73 (November-December 1994): 189-194, and Lee Teng-hui, “Chinese Culture and Political Renewal,” *Journal of Democracy* 6 (October 1995): 3-8.

⁴ Michael D. Barr, “Lee Kuan Yew and the ‘Asian Values’ Debate,” *Asian Studies Review* 24, no. 3 (2000): 309-334; Michael Jacobsen and Ole Bruun, eds., *Human Rights and Asian Values: Contesting National Identities and Cultural Representations in Asia* (Richmond, England: Curzon Press, 2000); Young-Bae Song, “Crisis of Cultural Identity in East Asia: On the Meaning of Confucian Ethics in an Age of Globalization,” *Asia Philosophy* 12, no. 2 (2002): 109-125; Tan Yuanping, *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiang: Rujia yu minzhuhua* [Chinese political thought: Confucianism and democratization] (Taipei: Yangzhi wenhuashiyue gufen youxian gongsi, 2004); and Xu Fuguan and Xiao Xinyi, *Rujia zhengzhi sixiang yu minzhu ziyou renquan* [Confucian political thought and democratic freedom and human rights] (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1988).

⁵ Robert Weatherly, *The Discourse of Human Rights in China* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999).

⁶ Peter R. Moody, “Asian Values,” *Journal of International Affairs* 50, no. 1 (1996): 166-192.

democracy”⁷ in East Asian societies that are imbued with Confucian values. Joseph Chan,⁸ Michael Freeman,⁹ and Wm. Theodore de Bary,¹⁰ on the other hand, counter that the Confucian tradition is flexible, that it allows for more than one interpretation, and that it can be used as a basis for democracy and human rights.

While political leaders and theorists extensively debate the question of Confucianism and democracy, far fewer empirical studies have measured the relationship between these variables. We know of only three relevant quantitative investigations in East Asia. Chang, Chu, and Tsai conclude that “Confucian values have a negative influence on democratic values.” They believe that the democratic future in East Asia is bright, but only because modernization will undermine support for Confucian values.¹¹ Andrew Nathan and Tse-hsin Chen similarly find that “people with traditional values in all three societies (Taiwan, China, Hong Kong) were highly unlikely to hold democratic values.”¹² Finally, Chong-Min Park and Doh Chull Shin are more equivocal in their study of Asian values in South Korea, finding that certain Confucian values undermine democratic values, others support it, and still others have no effect.¹³ Clearly, much more empirical work remains to be done on this important dispute.

In this article, we propose to test the effect of Confucian values on mass public attitudes toward democracy, women’s rights, and freedom of speech in Taiwan. We selected these values because they have been articulated as fundamental human rights through international declarations, treaties, and conventions. The first and most important of these statements, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, affirms in article 19 that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold

⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 108.

⁸ Joseph Chan, “A Confucian Perspective on Human Rights,” in *The East Asian Challenge for Human Rights*, ed. Joanne R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 212-237.

⁹ Michael Freeman, “Human Rights: Asia and the West,” *Human Rights and International Relations in the Asia-Pacific Region*, ed. James T.H. Tang (London: Pinter, 1995), 13-24.

¹⁰ Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Asian Values and Human Rights: A Confucian Communitarian Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

¹¹ Yu-Tzung Chang, Yun-han Chu, and Frank Tsai, “Confucianism and Democratic Values in Three Chinese Societies,” *Issues & Studies* 41, no. 4 (December 2005): 1-33.

¹² Andrew Nathan and Tse-hsin Chen, “Traditional Social Values, Democratic Values, and Political Participation,” Asian Barometer Working Paper No. 23, 2004, p.4, <http://asianbarometer.org/newenglish/publications/workingpapers/no.23.pdf> (accessed August 16, 2006).

¹³ Chong-Min Park and Doh Chull Shin, “Do Asian Values Deter Popular Support for Democracy? The Case of South Korea,” Asian Barometer Working Paper No. 26, 2004, <http://asianbarometer.org/newenglish/publications/workingpapers/no.1.pdf> (accessed August 16, 2006). See also Doh Chul Shin, Myung Chey, and Kwang-Woong Kim, “Cultural Origins of Public Support for Democracy in Korea: An Empirical Test of the Douglas-Wildavsky Theory of Culture,” *Comparative Political Studies* 22, no. 2 (July 1989): 217-238.

opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” Article 21 of the same treaty states that “everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives” and that “the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.”¹⁴ In a similar way, the United Nation Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women recognizes the “dignity and worth of the human person and... the equal rights of men and women.”¹⁵ Although these norms are not without controversy and interpretive debate, they have become the basis by which the international community defines individual, gender, and political rights. As such, it is important to discover if Confucianism, as an ideological tradition, is consonant with those values.

We chose Taiwan for several reasons. First, the society is infused with Confucian values.¹⁶ Unlike China, it never experienced the anti-Confucian campaign of the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, Chiang Kai-shek encouraged the inculcation of Confucianism, paying for the building of numerous Confucian temples and mandating the teaching of his version of the tradition in the public schools.¹⁷ Second, Taiwan has evolved into a vibrant, multiparty democracy¹⁸ and as such can serve as a model for other Confucian-oriented societies in the region that have not yet fully democratized. As the first culturally Chinese democracy, Taiwan is thus a counter example to the argument that a Confucian society can never produce a liberal democracy.¹⁹ Finally, Taiwan is an open research environment, where respondents to public opinion surveys are free to express their honest views without fear of governmental retribution.

Our article differs from the three existing empirical studies in several respects. Nathan and Chen²⁰ specifically address the question of Confucianism

¹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: United Nations, 1948).

¹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women* (New York: United Nations, 1979).

¹⁶ Gary Marvin Davison and Barbara E. Reed, *Culture and Customs of Taiwan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 34-37.

¹⁷ Christian Jochim, “Carrying Confucianism into the Modern World,” in *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society*, ed. Philip Clart and Charles B. Jones (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 48-83.

¹⁸ John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?* 4th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), 241-243.

¹⁹ Linda Chao and Ramon H. Myers, *The First Chinese Democracy: Political Life in the Republic of China on Taiwan* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

²⁰ Nathan and Chen, “Traditional Social Values, Democratic Values, and Political Participation.”

and democracy, but they base their findings on data only from 1993, before it was completely apparent that Taiwan would fully democratize. It was not until 1996, after all, that Taiwan held its first direct presidential election.²¹ Our study compares data from 1995, in the midst of Taiwan's democratization, with those from 2001, after Taiwan had fully democratized and the Democratic Progressive Party had gained control of the presidency.²² The two data sets allow us to evaluate whether Confucianism has different effects in an emerging as opposed to a more mature democracy.

Chang, Chu, and Tsai do look at the more recent 2001 data, but we see potential problems with the way in which they operationalize Confucianism. In particular, they conflate all "traditional Confucian ethics" into a single composite index. The six component indicators, however, seem to overemphasize the particular Confucian value that Park and Shin²³ call "Group Primacy" (questions Q064, Q065, and CN74E) but underemphasize the Confucian value of Social Harmony (only question Q066). Although their resulting index seems to hold together well, their use of a composite index could obscure the extent to which different components of Confucianism may have divergent effects on support for liberal democracy. This suspicion is at least partly confirmed by Park and Shin, who break Confucianism into its chief component values instead of creating a single composite index. Using Korean data, these authors find that the individual Confucian values, which they labeled Social Hierarchy, Social Harmony, Group Primacy, and Anti-Pluralism, all had statistically significant effects on opposition to authoritarianism, but those effects were signed in different directions. Such results suggest that using a composite Confucianism index or a related technique (e.g., factor analysis treating Confucianism as a single dimension) is not theoretically justifiable. Since Park and Shin look only at Korean data, it seemed useful to conduct a parallel analysis of Taiwan.

Data and Models

In order to test these hypotheses, we analyzed two Taiwanese public opinion surveys. The first is the 1995 Taiwanese subset of the World Values Survey.²⁴ Obtaining a sample size of 780, the Survey Research Center of Academia Sinica in Taipei fielded the poll in July 1995, using face-to-face personal interviews

²¹ Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 195-202.

²² *Ibid.*, 227-240.

²³ Park and Shin, "Do Asian Values Deter Popular Support for Democracy? The Case of South Korea."

²⁴ Ronald Inglehart et al., "European and World Values Survey Integrated Data File, 1999-2002, Release I," University of Michigan, second ICPSR version #3975, January 2005. Neither the producers nor the distributors of these data are responsible for our analysis or interpretations.

in Mandarin, Taiwanese, and Hakka. The second survey is the Taiwanese subsample of the 2001 Asian Barometer Survey.²⁵ Again using face-to-face interviews, Academia Sinica sampled 1,416 Taiwanese voting-eligible citizens older than nineteen, using the Probability Proportional to Size method during June-July 2001.

Confucianism is a rich and complex tradition that does not easily lend itself to simple definitions. What we seek to measure is a least-common-denominator Confucianism that is true to the tradition but does not predetermine our empirical results by veering either in a legalist, antidemocratic direction²⁶ or by taking on a Mencius-based, prodemocratic slant.²⁷ Our definition of Confucianism generally follows that of Park and Shin, except that we do not include antipluralism. The questions these scholars used to measure antipluralism (e.g., “If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic”) seem to presuppose the result of our model of freedom of speech. If from the outset we define Confucianism as opposed to any challenge to the dominant social group, the findings of our later regression analysis would be pre-ordained. Our definition also differs from that of Park and Shin by replacing their “group primacy” with our “family loyalty.” Although we agree that Confucianism emphasizes the group over the individual, we believe this ideology preferences loyalty to the family over ties to any other group. Three of the “five constant relationships” involve family relations, for example, and Confucius described “filial piety and fraternal submission” as “the root of all benevolent actions [仁之本].”²⁸

Therefore, we will define Confucianism as an ethical system that places primary emphasis on family loyalty, social hierarchies, and social harmony.²⁹ We were able to identify usable questions from each of the surveys to measure these three aspects of Confucianism. Out of the universe of all questions in the 1995 and 2001 surveys, we chose one indicator for each of the three Confucian values. For the 1995 survey, our indicator of family loyalty was whether a main goal of the respondent’s life has been “to make my parents proud.” Our

²⁵ Data analyzed in this article were collected by the East Asia Barometer Project (2000-2004), which was co-directed by Professors Fu Hu and Yun-han Chu and received major funding support from Taiwan’s Ministry of Education, Academia Sinica, and National Taiwan University. The Asian Barometer Project Office (www.asianbarometer.org) is responsible only for data distribution. The authors are grateful to the above directors and institutes for these data; neither the producers nor distributors are responsible for our analysis or interpretations.

²⁶ Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Chinese Civilization*, 37, 47-49, and Han Fei Zi, *Han Fei Tzu—Basic Writings*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

²⁷ Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Chinese Civilization*, 42, and Mencius, *Mencius*, trans. D.C. Lau (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1970).

²⁸ Confucius, *Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean*, trans. James Legge (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), 139.

²⁹ Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, *Understanding Confucianism* (London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2003).

measure of support for social hierarchies was if the respondent agreed that people in Taiwan should have “greater respect for authority.” Finally, the item for social harmony was whether interviewees believed that an employee should “follow one’s superior’s instructions at work even when one does not fully agree with them.” In the 2001 survey, the indicator for family loyalty was whether “for the sake of the family, the individual should put his or her personal interests second.” The measure for social hierarchies was whether, when there is a quarrel, “we should ask an elder to resolve the dispute.” The question for social harmony was whether the best way to resolve conflict with a neighbor was to “accommodate the other person.” We acknowledge that our operationalization of Confucianism is not perfect, but we believe it is the best possible using secondary analysis of these two pre-existing data sets.

Our first dependent variable was support for democracy. In 1995, the four indicators we used to create a democracy index were: whether interviewees supported “having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections” and “having a democratic political system,” and whether they agreed with the statements, “democracies are not good at maintaining order” and “democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government.” The 2001 indicators were: a one-to-ten scale measuring “to what extent would you want our country to be democratic now?”; whether “democracy is better than any other kind of government”; and whether “we should get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide things.” Freedom of speech was our second dependent variable. The one indicator for the 1995 survey was whether one of the country’s chief aims should be “protecting freedom of speech.” In 2001, the two freedom of speech questions were whether the government should “decide if certain ideas should be allowed to be discussed in society,” and whether “a political leader should tolerate the views of those who challenge his political ideals.” Finally, to determine support for women’s rights, we used the following three indicators from the 1995 survey: “when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women”; “on the whole men make better political leaders than women do”; and “a university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.” The one women’s rights indicator for the 2001 survey was “a man will lose face if he works under a female supervisor.”

The first issue we explored was the extent to which Taiwan is a Confucian society. Table 1 indicates the percentage of our respondents who agreed with each of the indicators of the three different Confucian values in the two surveys. These results demonstrate that, in both 1995 and 2001, respondents gave overwhelming support to at least one indicator of a Confucian value and majority or near-majority support to a second, but lower acquiescence to a third. In 1995, for example, nearly two-thirds of interviewees agreed that one of the major life goals was to “make their parents proud,” while in 2001 a slightly larger percentage affirmed that a person should put his or her interests “second” for the sake of the family. Partly because the 1995 and 2001 surveys

Table 1. Levels of Support for Confucian Values, 1995 and 2001

1995 World Values Survey	
Question	Percent Agree
Make Parents Proud (family loyalty)	63.4
Greater Respect for Authority (social hierarchies)	44.8
Follow Superior's Instructions at Work (social harmony)	15.4
2001 Asian Barometer	
Put Family First (family loyalty)	86.2
Elders Should Resolve Disputes (social hierarchies)	68.9
Give in to Avoid Conflict (social harmony)	46.1

did not ask identical questions measuring the particular Confucian values we are studying, we are not convinced that support for all three Confucian values increased from 1995 to 2001. On the indicator for social harmony, for example, superficial analysis of table 1 might suggest that 30 percent more respondents supported this fundamental Confucian virtue. Yet, the very different wording of questions from the two surveys likely explains this apparent revival of Taiwanese Confucianism over the six years. The two items on social harmony may be providing substantially different results because the 1995 indicator could be measuring interviewees' willingness to disobey an unjust order as well as their preference for social harmony. Ideally, we would have liked to have used identical questions, but we were instead limited by the items actually asked in the two surveys.

In order to test the net effect of Confucianism on liberal democracy, we used ordinary least-squares or Logit regression to estimate the effect of each of the three Confucian values on the various dependent variables for both the 1995 and 2001 surveys. Although we focused mainly on the effect of the three Confucian values, we also controlled for such demographic variables as education, income, religious identification, gender, age, ethnicity, and urbanicity.

Findings

Tables 2 and 3 present the results of our regression analysis. In 1995, no Confucian value had any statistically significant effect on either democratization or freedom of speech. Family loyalty and social harmony, however, did undermine support for women's rights ($b = -.246, p < .05$; $b = -.193, p < .05$; respectively). In 2001, the effect of two Confucian values remained unchanged. Social hierarchies still failed to achieve statistical significance in any of the three equations, while social harmony continued to undermine women's rights only. The Confucian value of family loyalty, on the other hand, seemed to have been dramatically transformed by democratization. Adherence to this

Table 2. Regression Models of Three Confucian Values and Support for Liberal Democracy in 1995

	Democratization	Freedom of Speech	Women's Rights
Family Loyalty	.060	-.079	-.246*
Social Hierarchies	-.165	-.128	-.063
Social Harmony	-.044	-.247	-.193*
Income	-.009	-.008	-.001
Education	.076*	-.033	.041
Female	-.359*	-.462*	.078
Age	.006	.003	.001
Mainlander	.214	-.020	.528*
Yuanzhumin	.046	.170	-.463*
Other Ethnicity	-.385	.372	.188
Urbanicity	.177*	-.010	-.132*
Christian	.835*	.219	-.340
Not Religious	.167	.312	.296*
Single	.309	.370	.488*
R ² /Nagelkerke R ²	.079	.044	.134
χ^2		18.731	
Degrees of Freedom		14	
N	609	660	647

Source: Data from Taiwan subset of 1995 World Values Study.

Note: Equations for Democratization and Women's Rights estimated using ordinary least-squares regression, while equation for Freedom of Speech estimated with dichotomous Logit. All regressors are dummy variables except for Democratization (range = 6 to 16), Women's Rights (3 to 11), Family Loyalty (1 to 4), Social Hierarchies (1 to 3), Social Harmony (1 to 3), Income (1 to 10), Education (1 to 8), Age (20 to 75), and Urbanicity (4 to 8). *p < .05.

value now increased support for both democratization and women's rights (b = .277, p < .05; b = .361; p < .05, respectively), but it appears to have reduced sympathy for freedom of speech (b = -.085, p < .05).

Some of our control variables produced a few unanticipated results. Despite the widespread assumption that Taiwan is a society riven by ethnic strife, our three indicators of ethnicity (i.e., Mainlander, Yuanzhuren, and Other Ethnicity [largely Hakka]) produced almost nothing that reached statistical significance. In 2001, no ethnicity variable had any effect. In 1995, ethnicity mattered only for support for woman's rights. Not surprisingly, however, higher education led to increased support for democratization in both years. Also intriguing is the effect of being a woman. In 1995, women were, everything else being

Table 3. Regression Models of Three Confucian Values and Support for Liberal Democracy in 2001

	Democratization	Freedom of Speech	Women's Rights
Family Loyalty	.277*	-.085*	.361*
Social Hierarchies	-.206	-.046	-.081
Social Harmony	-.157	.026	-.452*
Income	.115	.045*	-.061
Education	.102*	-.007	.172*
Female	-.087	.047	.434*
Age	.013	-.007*	-.004
Mainlander	-.207	-.039	-.003
Yuanzhumin	.392	-.177	-.608
Other Ethnicity	-.080	-.127	.360
Urbanicity	-.001	.022	.037
Christian	.030	-.016	.540*
Not Religious	-.119	.102	.017
Single	.228	-.004	.019
R2/Nagelkerke R2	.084	.043	.103
χ^2			100.484*
Degrees of Freedom			14
N	995	1037	1169

Source: Data from Taiwan subset of 2001 Asian Barometer.

Note: Equations for Democratization and Freedom of Speech estimated using ordinary least-squares regression, while equation for Women's Rights estimated with ordered Logit. All regressors are dummy variables except for Democratization (range = 5 to 17), Freedom of Speech (2 to 8), Women's Rights (1 to 4), Family Loyalty (1 to 4), Social Hierarchies (1 to 4), Social Harmony (1 to 4), Income (1 to 5), Education (1 to 10), Age (21 to 89) and Urbanicity (1 to 8). * $p < .05$.

equal, *less likely* to support democratization ($b = -.359$, $p < .05$) and freedom of speech ($b = -.462$, $p < .05$). By 2001, however, being female had no effect on democratization and freedom of speech, but did increase support for women's rights ($b = .434$, $p < .05$). In 1995, being a Christian seems to have increased support for democratization ($b = .835$, $p < .05$). Perhaps because many leaders or supporters of the democracy movement were Christian clergy,³⁰ Christian

³⁰ Shih Ming-teh, "Taiwan," in *To be Free: Stories from Asia's Struggle against Oppression*, ed. Chee Soon Juan (Clayton, Australia: Monash Asia Institute, 1998), 6-51; Shelley Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 117-118; and Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, 169.

laity undoubtedly received prodemocracy cues from the pulpit or their co-religionists. Once democracy had become an established fact in 2001, however, the Christian variable no longer achieved statistical significance.

Conclusion

One important finding from our analysis is that Confucian values do not consistently undermine liberal democracy. None of the three Confucian values (i.e., family loyalty, social hierarchies, social harmony) reduces support for democratization. Only on women's rights do we find any possible pattern of conflict between human rights and Confucian values. Social harmony, in particular, seems always to decrease adherence to the rights of women. Family loyalty, on the other hand, showed a similar pattern in 1995, but by 2001 was *boosting* support for women's rights.

A second key result is that our empirical outcome appears to have bolstered our case for considering each Confucian value separately *à la* Park and Shin, instead of conflating the various components of Confucianism into a single index. In 2001, for example, the effect of social harmony on women's rights was statistically significant and negative, the influence of family loyalty was statistically significant but positive, and the impact of social hierarchies did not achieve statistical significance. Had we combined these three elements into a single scale, we would have missed the real variations among their effects.

Our data indicate that Confucian values remain strong in Taiwanese society, and we have no reason to believe that these values are likely to disappear anytime soon. Instead of vanishing from the world as many social scientists predicted, religion and related ideologies, in fact, have become more significant in social and political life in the twenty-first century. Further, we hope that liberal democracy will remain the political norm in Taiwan and spread to other parts of East Asia. The question, then, is whether or how democracy and the several Confucian values can reinforce each other. For our part, we believe that such an accommodation is both feasible and desirable.³¹

The history of Christianity in the West illustrates how a deeply rooted religious tradition is malleable over time. At different times, both Protestant and Catholic churches opposed political and economic liberalism.³² The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, took several centuries to make its peace with such ideas as majoritarian rule and civil liberties. However, the churches

³¹ For a similar view, see Joseph B. Tamney and Linda Hsueh-Ling Chiang, *Modernization, Globalization, and Confucianism in Chinese Societies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002).

³² Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), and Andrew C. Gould, *Origins of Liberal Dominance: State, Church, & Party in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1999).

eventually redirected their focus to those parts of the Christian tradition that supported these fundamental principles. While a few Christians today chafe at political majoritarianism, the vast majority of churches now embrace liberal democracy. We believe that Confucianism also contains many intellectual resources that would allow this ideology to be reconfigured in a democratic direction.

A number of Confucian values could be used to temper the excesses of Western-style democracy and individualism. Confucianism's communal ethos recognizes the most salient intermediary institution, the extended family, which binds human beings together into a meaningful community. Likewise, the stress on social harmony can serve as a valuable check on the tendency in some forms of political liberalism toward the prioritization of individual rights with no thought to the social and cultural context through which those rights can be expressed. Finally, filial piety might help individuals see beyond their narrow self-interest to embrace obligations they have to previous generations.

On the other hand, some formulations of particular Confucian values certainly can reduce respect for women. In particular, traditional Confucianism's emphasis on social harmony seems to be hindering the efforts of individual Taiwanese women to advance gender equality. One can certainly also understand how traditional Confucianism's inordinate deference to authority would run counter to the liberal principle that each human being has the right to equal political influence and is equally capable of political rationality. Assuming that only scholars or men may rule similarly violates this central democratic tenet. Equally problematic is the presumption that only the politically powerful may articulate the meaning of Confucianism. Our data suggest, however, that, with the exception of women's rights, the mass public in Taiwan is unlikely to hold these traditionalist views of what Confucianism means.

Democracy and Confucian values are not incompatible, in short, but neither is a marrying of these perspectives inevitable. If history is any judge, political leaders will manipulate Confucian values for the leaders' self-interested purposes; we can only hope that citizens will offer counter interpretations that highlight the more democratically inclined features of the tradition.