

The Revival of Confucianism and the Rule of Law in China:

A Complex Interplay in the Narrative of 'Chinese Dream'

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The relations between Chinese Confucianism and Western-exported concept 'Rule of Law' seems a quite interesting and under-discussed topic in China and abroad. Since Xi's administration and propaganda for 'Chinese Dream' starting from 2012, there have been more and more signs showing that the Confucianism has been reinterpreted and revitalised by the CCP to rule China. The new national ideology emphasised the nationalism, Chinese characteristics, the central leadership and rule of virtue, etc. In the meanwhile, the Rule of Law, as a reaffirmed statecraft, is increasingly playing a significant role in governing China. As such, both Confucianism and the Rule of Law has been coordinated by the Chinese authority to exercise more effective social control.

There is abundant literature on the CCP Confucianism and the Rule of Law in China respectively. The interdisciplinary study on the links between these two, however, has yet to come. In practice, several observers expressed their doubts on the issue. They believe that the revitalisation of Confucianism symbolises the marginalisation of laws. Others hold counterviews and give positive comments to the integration of CCP Confucianism and the Rule of Law in China.

To discuss their concerns, this paper will analyse how the CCP Confucianism interrelates the Rule of Law in China while unfolding complex interplay between them in the narrative of 'Chinese Dream'. With comparative case studies, the paper may reveal several distinctive features of the issue and hopefully contribute to relevant research on the Chinese Rule of Law theory. Overall, a conclusion that the CCP Confucianism and the Rule of Law in China may co-exist under specific circumstances could be drawn. The findings may provide implications for promoting the Rule of Law in the narrative of 'Chinese Dream', whilst suggesting the possible directions for the interplay between Confucianism and the Rule of Law in China.