

Student Name

Professor Name

Course

Date

### Conflict Management in Japanese Culture

A cultural compromise lies in the peaceful coexistence of deliberately preserved contradictions as complementary to each other within the whole society, which is recognized as the highest value. This applies to the relationship between the old and the new while people use the past experience as the foundation of the future's culture. However, most importantly, this concept applies to resolving social contradictions that naturally arise in society and the coexistence of group and individual interests.

Japan and its culture truly represent the cultural compromise that determines the development of the entire Japanese spiritual tradition. Conflict-free relationships and the orientation towards equal assimilation of the most diverse ideological concepts have become the hallmark of the culture of this country. First of all, one must understand the notion of non-individualism that is traditionally rooted in Japanese culture. The Japanese are practically dissolved, on the one hand, in nature – that is, in the whole universe with which every individual is in a close emotional bundle. On the other hand, each of them is also an inseparable part of a social group they identify themselves with, such as a family, an organization, or a school class. The Japanese oppose themselves neither to nature nor to society, unlike Western individuals who are always fighting for existence. A traditional Japanese is focused on a harmonious coexistence with everything in the surrounding world. Therefore, the culture of antagonism and conflicts spread in the West is quite alien to them.

For example, in Japan, turning to lawyers or courts to resolve conflict situations

occurs much less often than in other countries. It is rooted deeply in the tradition of the Japanese to resolve problems by non-legal methods. It is so because the Japanese legal system is based on the norms of Giri (義理), which is loosely understood as a set of ethical rules. When solving interpersonal conflicts, most Japanese people choose not to resort to legal acts because they are convinced that it is better to stay away from the law in general, especially in the provinces.

If in Japan a citizen suffers a loss through someone else's fault, they react to the situation in a completely different way from what Europeans might imagine. The Japanese consider going to court with a claim for damages as an extortion, so they try to refrain from such extreme, in their opinion, actions. In addition, the Japanese do not like to change the nature of the relationship they have developed with other people. The intervention of the court would not leave an opportunity to continue the relationship on the same means in the future. Yu states that "the Japanese have out-of-speculation relationships between self-construals and marital resolution strategies, such as obliging subjective self, probably due to the common careful use of the strategies for balanced concerns" (66). Moreover, in their eyes, litigation damages the prestige of both parties, which is why people usually try to resolve a conflict without it.

Ting-Toomey's "Face Theory" claims that all people have two sides to their personality. One side is known only to the person himself, and the other side is presented to society – it is what the rest define as one's 'face.' Following this logic, two types of people exist in the world – collectivists and individualists. The Japanese are the embodiment of the collectivist type – they put the welfare of their society and interpersonal relations above their own interests, thus preventing possible conflicts in the very beginning. They build relationships on the principle of responsible behavior when the person with the most power

carries the greatest burden of accountability for the people in their care, well-being, and overall moral atmosphere. Individuals who also have to behave respectfully are obliged to maintain the harmony of these relations in every possible way, without engaging in conflicts. This system of social relations and conflict resolution that the Japanese follow throughout their life is the most valuable thing in Japanese social arrangement.

Work Cited

Yu, Kyung-Ran. "Why Do We Resolve Marital Conflicts the Way We Do? Self-Construals, Marital Conflict Resolution Strategies, and Marital Satisfaction in Japan and South Korea." *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2020, pp. 59–68.

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