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Religious and Political Philosophy of the Social Education in Ancient China

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In this paper we attempt to make the value assessment of the ancient Chinese philosophy in the context of the concept of the faith ontology. The creeds of Taoism, Confucianism and the most influential philosophical concepts are analyzed. It is proved that transformation of values from the tradition to ideology determines the priorities of personal identity through the rationalization of human consciousness. The given article will be interesting not only for philosophers, but also for all people interested in current problems of human and society.

Keywords: faith ontology, ancient Chinese philosophy, continuity of values, rationality, ideology, creed.

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Character education in ancient China through the conscious influence on the human nature is one of the most important tasks of the Chinese classical philosophy. Despite the fact that these ideas were expressed by the teachers of all schools, the greatest impact was made by the ideas of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism that agree in the fact that knowledge is not immanent, but is comprehended in studying. In addition, the distinctive feature of philosophical pedagogy of ancient China is the prevalence of socio-centrist tendencies over personally-centrists ones.

In "Shi Ji" ("Historical Records") by Sima Qian (145/135 BC-90 BC) there is the first classification of the philosophical schools in

ancient China that after additions made by Liu Xin (46 BC – 23 AD) has gained the following form: 1) natural philosophical doctrine or school of Yin-Yang (Yin Yang Jia), 2) the teaching of Lao-Zi (Dao Jia), 3) the teaching of Kong-Zi, or a school of scholars (Ru Jia) 4) the teachings of Mo Zi, or a school of Mohism (Mo Jia), 5) the teaching of lawyers, or a school of Legalism (Fa Jia) 6) the teaching of nominalists, or a school of names (Ming Jia) and also the school of eclectics-lexicographers (Za Jia), the school of diplomacy (Zong Heng Jia), the school of agrarians (Nong Jia) and the school of narrators (Xiao Shuo Jia)¹. Already in the early period of philosophy development in ancient China, there were so many different directions that the very

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ancient Chinese spoke about the existence of “a hundred schools”.

Opinions about the education and training of representatives of different schools differed mainly in the understanding of what is their starting point. Thus, the Confucianist Meng Zi (372/389-289/305 BC) saw the task of education in the cultivation of the natural qualities, and Xun Zi who was close to the ideas of Mohism and Legalism (313/290-238/215 BC) thought about combining education with practical activities that promote the elimination of natural defects. It is clear that in this case the orientation of education and training was determined by the understanding of the human nature, his place in the world. N.E. Borevskaia notes that “to the beginning of the Zhou era (XI-III centuries BC) the concept of Heaven has been gradually separated from the idea of the Supreme emperor: in the early Taoist and Confucian monuments it is already impersonal and appears as the carrier of nature concept as the universe, the force that engages everything in the world in a legal way, but not purposefully”².

Natural (i.e., inherent) personal qualities *xing*, including vision, hearing, speech, appearance and thinking, are the basis by which humans exist between the Heaven and Earth. However, education presupposed the improvement of its nature (*xing*) that in fact was implemented through the development of value relations between the ruler and the ruled, between father and son, between husband and wife, between older and younger, between friends. Devotion to the emperor, filial piety and brotherly love were those qualities the development of which was the purpose of education in ancient China. Comprehension of the deep concepts such as philanthropy (*ren*), duty (*yi*), ritual (*li*), loyalty (*zhong*) has led to the finding of identity (*de*) that was embodied not only in the intellectual features of a person, but in her morality. One can only

imagine the qualities of the ancients admired by Confucius who said about it in his treatise “Lun Yu”: “In ancient times, people studied to become better than themselves: but now they study to become better than others”. The tendency to the value degradation even in the time of Confucius was so obvious that it was not possible to not notice it. However, such a tendency is also taking place today. Thus, the researcher of the early Confucianism A.S. Martynov points out: “They [Confucianists] believed that for this purpose [to create a society for people – author’s note] it is necessary to turn the cognitive social activities primarily into the “cognition of humans” (*zhi ren*) and cover the society with the self-perfection process (*xiu shen*). We are still at the lower stage of development than ancient Chinese society of the “axial age”, because we continue to believe without any grounds that solution of economic problems will automatically solve all other problems”³.

Generally these ideas can be expressed in a single thought of Confucius: “You should overcome yourself in order to return to *li*”. Such kind of overcoming is a complete rejection or transformation of selfish desires that prevent conscientious performance of duty that is so necessary for the maintenance of the social balance. Playing musical instruments, calligraphy, poetry, ceremonies in this case was the important pedagogical methods that could unnoticeably but deeply cultivate cultural values in humans. For Confucius and his followers the culture is acquired in the process of education through inclusion into the spiritual culture of their ancestors. Diametrically opposite position was belonged to Lao Zi and his followers, for whom training and education were the free realization of their nature and did not allow any form of compulsion.

It should be noted that for philosophical pedagogy of ancient China the most important

category is the category of Dao (from ancient Chinese – “way”). Marcel Granet (1884-1940) observed that “on the basis of any interpretation of Dao there is the concept of order, universality, accountability and efficiency”⁷⁴. In a sense, Dao serves as the ideal way of life, and therefore, despite the differences in the understanding of this category, all philosophers in ancient China used it for educational purposes. Individual realization of Dao was expressed in De.

Lao-Zi: to balance the opposites within yourself

Lao-Zi (about 604-517 BC) is considered as the author of the famous treatise “*Dao De Jing*”⁷⁵. His personality is both legendary and mythological that does not deny the reality of Lao-Zi existence in the past. Famous Russian Sinologist V.V. Maliavin noted that “there is no “doctrine of Lao-zi”: the book of the “dark” wise man expresses not a particular objective sense, but the pure life breakthrough, pulsation of the living body of life, accident, surpassing every rule”⁷⁶. Perhaps that is why Lao Zi so often turned to the concept of all-embracing emptiness, interpreted as the “mirror emptiness” that does not exist apart from reflects images, and is not reducible to them. There are no truths that should be known, but there is only the desire to implement the values of life.

“All philosophical schools in ancient China taught about the continuity of human and heavenly being, but Taoists with particular depth and consistency were developing the idea of not just relationships between humans and the universe, but of the internal continuity of the human heart, on the one hand, and the transcendent emptiness, from the other hand, the idea that eliminates the opposition between subject and object, and all the attendant difficulties and inconsistencies of speculative thought. In the human heart, as it was taught by Lao-Zi, there is the hidden inhuman,

truly heavenly glory, and it is something that is the promise of humanity”⁷⁷. We will try to reproduce the value content of religious and philosophical teachings of the ancient Chinese thinker using several theses.

For Lao Zi the world consists in the fact that opposites not only balance, but also complement each other, so a person’s position in the world is simultaneously the biggest challenge and the greatest gift. Ritual for Lao Zi is that the imperfect is brought as the sacrifice to the perfect, but the full does not require the complement. Omission for Lao Zi is that harmony does not need improvement or enhancement, so, on the one hand, inharmonious actions will only cause new problems, and, on the other hand, all actions must be harmonious. Emptiness for Lao Zi is the space for such activity that is fundamentally different from mercenary or forced one. Human for Lao Zi is the qualities that are implemented in a perfect way even in small things, and therefore are attractive for sophisticated and asylum people. Dao for Lao Zi is the way that should be chosen, but not the idea of the way, that is why the naturalness for him is greater than the ritual, the practice is above the theory, and the action is louder than words. Knowledge for Lao Zi is to know not only life but death, so the person who has known himself is eternal.

We will turn to the text of several chapters that can be very valuable for teachers:

“The person who knows others is smart. The person who knows himself is enlightened. The person who defeated others is strong. The person who has won himself is mighty. The person who knows what is the prosperity, is rich. The person who acts decisively, has the will. The person who does not lose what he has is everlasting And the person who does not die in the death, lives forever”⁷⁸.

“In ancient times, those who were able to incarnate the way, did not want to use it to educate

people, but used it to make simple-minded people. Because it is difficult to manage people due to their multiply knowledge. So the person who controls the realm with the knowledge, is a thief of the kingdom. And who controls the realm of ignorance, the benefactor of the kingdom. Who knows these two things, he is the sample for everybody. To always know this sample is called “the hidden perfection”⁹.

“To know, but to seem ignorant is the perfection. To not know, but to think that you know is a disease. Only someone who knows his disease cannot be sick. Wise people do not have the disease. He knows what is the disease and therefore he is not sick”¹⁰.

It should be noted that if the ontological orientation of philosophy is typical for Taoism, for Confucianism this is the ethical one. Even in this fact it is possible to see the fundamental difference that affect the continuity of values. In our opinion, legendary Lao Zi is one of those “ancient” people who experienced in an absolutely different way things that we understand as the being of humans. Today, it can only be imagined how and about there was communication with each other of such persons, about whom Lao Zi and Confucius spoke as about “ancient” people. In the scientific literature can be found mention of a meeting of Lao Tzu and Confucius. Words of Lao Zi addressed to Confucius were about the need to change oneself, but not about the proud and moralistic aspirations to change others through the teachings and instructions.

Kong-Zi: to be or to teach?

Kong-Zi (about 551-479 BC), known as Confucius, at the age of just over twenty years, became famous as the first professional educator in China. In his philosophy the true nobility arises only in the harmony of the naturalness (spontaneity) and culture, since the prevalence of the first over the second is rude, and the prevalence

of the second over the first is pedantry: “When under heaven there are the ways, be in sight, but there is no way – you have to hide. Be ashamed to be poor and humble, when there is a way in the country, be ashamed to be noble and rich, when there is no way”¹¹. It should be noted that if Dao for philosophers acted as the ubiquitous natural law of nature, Confucius used this concept as a set of ideas, principles, and methods by which he was going to send a man to the right way, manage him, influence on him¹². Dao, anyway, is not the truth, but is only a true way to it. We have to note that the views of Confucius and Lao-Zi on the relationships of heaven and Dao were different: if Lao Zi believed that the sky should follow Dao, and Dao naturally follows itself, so for Confucius Dao is based on the heaven.

Word for Confucius usually has the semantic core and features some notional direction. Researchers of the philosophical legacy of Confucius are studying traditions in understanding and translating into other languages of the main terms of his legacy, but despite of the scholar’s qualification, the accurate and specific meaning of the word is lost in translation to some extent¹³. For example, Ren is the most important category in the teachings of Confucius and it is translated in different ways, “the highest virtue”, “kindness”, “humanity”, “philanthropy”, “humanism”, “truly human origin”, “mercy,” etc. One thing is certain: ren primarily involves the value attitude of one person to another. In the treatise “Lun Yu” (“Conversations and judgments”) Confucius defines ren as a commandment: “Do not do to others what you do not wish for yourself”¹⁴.

The treatise “Lun Yu” was composed by Confucius’ students after his death. For drafting of the treatise that is the main book of Confucianism and has fixed statements, actions and dialogues of the teacher with his participation students have spent from 30 to 50 years. Curiously, the knowledge of the book by heart was the

compulsory requirement of classical Chinese education, although Confucius and his closest students believed that the educated person is not someone who knows a lot, but someone who acts in a right way.

The social philosophy of Confucius opposes *li* (ritual) as the basis of high moral qualities and *fa* (laws) as the basis of rigid obedience and strict regulation. The qualities of the ruler's individuality are exactly the only reason for successful management. The ideal of a noble man (*jun zi*) involves not only the origin, but the qualities (moral and cultural human image), so the achievement of such an ideal is becoming available for everybody, regardless of his origin. A noble person is a mentor of the ruler, but he should be an autonomous, moral, and original personality (for example, "the noble men in disagreement are in harmony, but the small people cannot have harmony even in agreement"¹⁵). However, according to the words of Confucius, the noble man is not a "tool", "instrument"¹⁶, the means of social control, but, on the contrary, he is its purpose. Antipode to the noble man is the "low man" (*xiao ren*) who is constantly concerned about the material prosperity, benefits and related conceit. "It's easy to serve, when the noble man rules, but it's uneasy to please him. He will not be pleased, if you will please, not following the path. When he manages people, it is based on everybody's talents. It's difficult to serve, when the little man rules, but it's easy to please him. He will be pleased, even if you will please, not following the path. When he manages people, he is extremely exacting to them"¹⁷. The person who is low by nature had an appropriate social status, so *xiao ren* is sometimes translated as the "little man".

The noble man always improves himself: such self-fulfillment is carried out through the service to own parents, the knowledge of people in the process of prescribed social relations and

ultimately boils down to understanding of the Sky. The motivation of self-improvement in ancient China is fundamentally different from that mood that has defined the worldview of the ancient Indians, aspiring not to social stability and harmony, but to release from material existence for the sake of eternal spiritual life. For example, it is clear, if we follow the logic of Confucius:

"When you study [something] with love, you will approach the knowledge, when carrying out [something], you show diligence, then you will approach the philanthropy, and when you have a sense of shame, then you will approach the force. [Those who] know it, also know how to improve oneself. [Those who] know how to improve oneself, know how to manage [other] people. [Those who] know how to manage [other] people know how to control the Middle Kingdom and the state"¹⁸. Other aspects of the philosophy of Confucius are disclosed in the process of reading of his treatise "Lun Yu". In general, in order to imagine the style of the treatise, we will cite the example of a few verses from the first chapter, entitled "Studying":

"The teacher said:

- Who looks into the aspirations of his father when he is alive and after his death – in the way he acted, and does not change his way for three years, such person can be called the one who honors parents ...

Teacher said:

- If a noble man during the meal does not think about the satisfying of his stomach, does not think about the comfort, living at home, shows quickness in the business, speaks carefully and corrects himself, drawing closer to those who have their own way, he can be called the one who loves to learn ...

Teacher said:

- Do not be sad that people do not know you, but be sad that you do not know the people"¹⁹.

For the noble man Dao is opening naturally, for others – only during the process of education. “Li Ji” (“Book of Requirements”) states: “The thing that is given to [human] by the Heaven is called his nature, [actions] corresponding to this nature are called the [right] way, ordering of [this] way is called education”²⁰. Confucian “Wu Jin” (“Pentateuch”) in I century BC became the basis of Chinese educational system. “When as a result of mental [effort] people acquire sincerity, it’s called education ... Only that person [who] has the greatest sincerity in China is able to fully develop his nature. [Those who] are able to fully develop their nature, are able to fully develop the nature of [all] people, are able to fully develop the nature of [all] things ... Sincerity is the thing [through which human] completes the creation of himself as a person”²¹.

Confucius highly assessed tradition as such, but it does not give the right to consider Confucianism as a conservative ideology. L.S. Perelomov notes that the principle he (“difference of opinion”) as a value criterion of nobility distinguishes the noble man from the small man, with characteristic principle tong: “Having become the bearer of the principle he, the “noble man” acquired the features that were not able to give him any ren, or wen: independent thinking, activity, ability to solve problems, based on the recognition of the right of opposing party to have its own opinion...”²². Tradition in his understanding is closely intertwined with the culture (wen) that cannot exist apart from its transfer and continuity. For Confucius tradition was embodied in the notion of li that is translated into European languages as “rites”, “ceremonies”, “etiquette”, “ritual”, “rules of decency”. “Compliance with le meant not only the fulfillment of certain rules, in the understanding of Confucius it also included the adoption of the values embodied in these rules”²³. For example, according to the thinker, the shame,

not punishment is the only valid method for people changing.

Xun Zi (about 313-238 BC) revised ethical and political teachings of Confucius, in accordance with the new trends of the Chinese society in the social, economic and political areas. The thinker came from the fact that humans by nature are evil and greedy, envious and lustful, “so it is necessary to influence humans through education and law: you have to make him abide the ritual norms and to do their duty, and only then the person will acquire compliance and will become the cultural one, that will to the order”²⁴. It should be noted that even after 350 years after the death of Confucius, his teachings acquired the status of a state ideology. The substantial transformation was undergone by the concept of noble person who has ceased to be a knight-errant of humanity, but was ready for a blind and unquestioning obedience to the instructions of his superiors²⁵.

Mo Zi: substitution of concepts for the sake of changes

Mo Zi (about 479/470-391/381 BC) is the founder of the philosophical doctrine called the school of Mohism. In the IV-III centuries BC the teachings of Mo Zi²⁶ had popularity in China, as it followed the line of renewal of ideas and was focused on social changes. Mo Zi, like Confucius, believed that the ideology is essential, but his position was not that ideology should be aimed at the improvement of the lives of citizens, but that the satisfaction of the needs of the maximum number of people is possible while improving the mechanisms of the state machine.

The teaching of Mo-Zi was largely directed against such reactionary aspects of Confucianism, as the hierarchical rituality, blind worship of the old days, the justification privileges of the dominant aristocracy. The declared idea of

universal love (*jian ai*), proposed by Mo Zi, often took the form of denial of the family that was the serious threat of conformism and civility cultured by Confucius. “Universal love” was opposed to “biased love” (*be ai*) to one’s inner circle: if the first one supposed impartiality in the distribution of the benefits and blessings of this world, the second one supposed a passion to keep all the benefits for themselves and their neighbors. We will also note that biased love is used by Mo Zi as a synonym for clannishness, nepotism, domesticity. “Disregard for the feelings of a real person,” that has been noted by V.A. Rubin²⁷, here takes on an entirely different reading: ancient Chinese thinker criticized individualism manifested in clannishness.

In an effort to overcome isolation and individualism, Mo Zi offered to convince all people of the benefits of altruism and the rulers of the benefits of universal love. Obviously, the sense of commitment that was so criticized by Confucius is the only method for Mo Zi to overcome disunity that was presented not only in the political fragmentation, but also in the interpersonal fragmentation based on selfishness.

The image of the ideal unified state described by Mo Zi is the first Chinese utopia of universal conformity. Identity and uniformity of the citizens, the priority of the public to personal, blind obedience to the will of the ruler – these are the main differences between the views of Mo Zi and the views of Confucius regarded the state as an organism banded by the kindred feelings of one family. Establishment of the system of penalties based on intimidation, and the best conditions for the material and moral incentives, based on the benefits – this is the approach to the management proposed by Mo Zi. The main motive of the noble man for him is material interest, encouraging the faithful implementation of the routine work. However, in the end, Mo Zi tried to protect the

interests of the state and its representatives, but not the people.

The fact that the thinker inherent provident ationality, can be understood from the following description of Marcel Granet, “the fear that people will lack the means of subsistence, rules the mind of Mo Zi... he condemns hoarding and even more luxury, the development of tax, increase of the military power ... he strongly argues that the war is the robbery that offers no real benefits, it prevents both warring parties to produce useful things ... the general rule should be the hardworking moderation”²⁸.

Mo Zi believed that people have the same abilities that are, however, developed in different people in different ways. Fanatical strictness of Mohism implied the possibility of formation of any person through education and ideology.

The fourth chapter of the Mo Zi’s treatise “Soran” (“Imitation of sample” or “Effect of example”) set forth the thinker’s idea of the importance of the example and its influence on people: “While carrying out the businesses in China it was not possible to work without the imitation of the model. Without imitating the model no case has been completed. Even the wisest servicemen being generals or advisers of the ruler – they follow a certain method. The most skillful master of all crafts also has a method ... Currently the greatest people managing the Middle Kingdom, as well as those who run the separate kingdoms, if they do not have a method to measure [their cases], they can not even be compared with the masters of hundred crafts...”²⁹ In the answer to the question “what can be taken as a model for management?” the philosopher emphasizes that neither father nor mother, nor a teacher, nor a ruler can be an example, if they do not have humanity *ren*. The decline of culture is manifested in the fact that the role models are inhuman, because the mother and father, the teacher and the ruler are philanthropic really rare. However, the Sky

is always an exemplary model, so “preparing for action, it is necessary to compare own behavior with the [desires] of the Sky”, consisting in the fact that “people mutually love each other and bring each other good”³⁰. The Sky is impartial to the “servants of Heaven” because it feeds everybody, without distinguishing big and small, rich and poor, noble and ignoble. An example as the condition of continuity was so important for the teachings of Mo Zi, that he was ready to show universal love by himself in order to draw the rulers to this idea by his own example. On the one hand, his method may seem traditional and idealistic (in antiquity the authority has always been God or his representative), on the other hand – innovative and rationalist (as we know, the European Enlightened also tried to follow something just to attract the others to it).

Mo Zi’s views on the process of learning differ greatly from the teachings of Confucius about the innate knowledge (sheng zhi). The analysis of the position of Mo-Zi makes it possible to say that his view on the object of knowledge in a sense can be considered as scientific: the experience of past generations (history), human relations (sociology), the principles of governance (policy), impressions and observations of his contemporaries (psychology), logical reasoning (philosophy). The philosopher believed that on the basis of the past we can know the future, and on the basis of the evident – the hidden. Moreover, he denied fate and believed in the transformative human power. If Confucius wanted to see the world through the eyes of authoritative books of antiquity, so Mo Zi attached great importance to the opinion of people, based on trust in feelings: “The rule of the knowledge check about whether there is something in China or not, is certainly consists in the situation when you take facts as the sample that have been seen or heard by huge mass of people. If people really have seen something or heard something, [it] should be regarded as

actually existing. The things that no one has ever seen or heard, should be considered as really non-existent”³¹. Perhaps, in such a position of the thinker we can see both the desire to adapt the ancient truth to the modern conditions and scientific approach to the analysis of human and the world on the basis of specific concepts.

Shang Yang:

the law as a method of control

Shang Yang (about 390-338 BC) is the founder of the school of legalism (“legalists”), known not only as a thinker, but also as a statesman, reformer. At that time, in China there was not any opportunity for existence of equal and independent states, as each ruler chose between domination and subordination. According to the opinion of V.A. Rubin, “the specifics of the theory of Shang Yang is in the fact that, rejecting the idea of serving the people of the state machine as the ridiculous naivete, he openly states that the state is needed not for the people, but for the ruler, and he needs it primarily for submission of the people, and then for usage in order to gain hegemony in the available world – in the Middle Kingdom”³².

Legalism doctrine set forth in the book “Shang-jun-shu”³³ (“Book of the ruler of the Shang district”), fully overcomes the personality, regarding it only as the means. Even the ruler is considered not as having personal qualities, but as occupying the position and having the will to power over the impersonal mass.

The law as Shang Yang argued it, is the essential means of management and achievement of absolute power by the ruler, but this law is not restricted by morality or religion. In the understanding of ancient Indian, antique, Christian and Muslim cultures the law has the divine origin, but in China, no law has ever been described that way. This law did not only rewarded for denunciations, but punished for

non-information. If the traditional understanding brings the law and the high level of education of citizens together, so Shang Yang saw the law as the means to control the uneducated people.

Shang Yang paid great attention to the so-called “unification of people” (“concentration people’s desires on the one”): specialization of citizens on agriculture and war takes the total character. Aiming at the development of vacant lands (“new ground breaking”), the used measures such as the ban on trade and travel, because in the first case, the peasants will not be tempted by the beautiful clothing and will be occupied only by work, and in the second case, they will not know about how things are going on in other parts of the country. This policy, although it stimulated the achievement of the ruler’s purposes, was incompatible with education and could only lead to the degradation of values. Shang Yang argued that ignorant people, who are able to work are the great force, and therefore education only distracts people from their work.

Shang Yang relied on the following understanding of the history: “In ancient times people loved their families and honored greed, in the Middle Ages people honored the wise and enjoyed philanthropy, and in the later centuries people began to appreciate those who are on high positions, and honour these positions”³⁴. However, the understanding of the tendency of values degradation encouraged him to the very extremist methods of control: “If manage people by punishment, they become fearful, do not dare to do evil deeds, and when people do not do evil deeds, they will be happy with what they love. If we teach people with justice, it spoils them, and when people are spoiled, the order is collapsing, and where there is no order, people are suffering from what they hate. That’s what I call punishment, it is the basis of justice, it is so-called justice in our century – it is the path to violence. Indeed, one who tries to correct people

using what they hate, will definitely achieve what they love, but one who tries to correct people using what they love, will definitely stir to life what they hate”³⁵.

The attitude of legists to education, taking the form of an open struggle, is clear from the following lines of “Shang-jun-shi”: “When education becomes a habit, people give up agriculture and start talking, using pompous words and false arguments ... So people are moving away from the ruler and forming the mass of unruly subjects. Education, therefore, leads to the fact that the country is impoverished and the army is weakened... The eloquence and wit are the rebellion assistants, rules of decency and music are the evidence of debauchery and idleness; kindness and humanity are the supporters of violations, the appointment and promotion of virtuous people are the loophole for theft and embezzlement ... Under the unification of education, I mean that admirers of vast learning, debates, intelligence, honesty, unselfishness, rules of decency, music and moral behavior, regardless of whether they are clean or dirty, should not be rewarded with wealth and the ranks of nobility, they should not criticize punishment, develop their own private views and on the basis of them give advices to the higher people”³⁶. “Unification” of education, expressed in its pursuit and destruction was caused by the fact that it promotes independence in thought and criticism of the state’s politics, so Shang Yang advised to force scientists to use farming.

Shang Yang summarized the ancient poetry, history, etiquette, music and also the humanity, kindness, education, faith, eloquence and wit in the concept of “lice” (“parasites”), antagonistically perceiving the culture (wen) as a whole. So, the music that could contribute to the unity of related groups, was also banned, and the outbreak of wars and steeped in them were promoted as the only method of destruction of culture and education.

But this system of punishment and awards proposed by the thinker is called “education”, the effectiveness of which is determined by the ability to use the features and imperfections of the human psyche. Thus, given the attitude of his contemporaries to the funeral ceremony, Shang Yang developed the special conditions (participation in the war, giving of the surplus grain to the state, denunciations, etc.), the fulfillment of which allows its conduction. Despite the utopian ideas of the ancient Chinese philosopher, his teaching was applied by the rulers of China in practice.

Conclusion

In contrast to the religious orientation of the philosophy of ancient India that considers human life through the prism of the suffering of the soul imprisoned in the body and directing it to the release from material bondage, the philosophy of ancient China is focused on education of the perfect human, or the ruler, the happiness of whom can be attained already in this life.

The ideas of ancient Chinese religious and philosophical thought can not be considered

as similar to the ancient Indian thought to the full extent. Orientalist E.A. Torchinov gave the example of the ancient Chinese model describing the historical process that he calls a linear regressive model: “The chapter “Li Yun” of Confucian canonical text “Records about Ritual” (“Li Ji”) describes the order of the degradation of humanity: from the era of the Great Unity (da tong) people have moved to the era of the Great Prosperity (tai kang), then – to the Small Prosperity (xiao kang), then it has been the time of revolt (Luan)”³⁷. From the example it is clear that the ancient Chinese considered the story in a regressive way, but for them it was linear. Compared to the Vedic approach this view, though it reflects a real tendency towards the degradation of values, is pessimistic. Only in the possibility to put the clock back you can find the roots of the deification of the oldest wise people known today. In the “Dao De Jing” by Lao Zi and “Lun Yu” by Confucius there are several references to the “ancient people”, on whom these legendary, mythical philosophers were focused.

¹ See Feng Yu-Lan (1998) Short History of Chinese Philosophy. Moscow, Eurasia, 1998. Pp.50-53.

² Borevskaia N.E., Toroptsev S.A. (2010). Chinese culture over time and space. 50 and 50 – the century in Sinology. Moscow, Publishing House Forum, 2010. Pp.46-47.

³ Martynov A.S. (2001) Confucianism. Lun Yu. Saint-Petersburg, Petersburg Oriental Studies, 2001. Vol. 2. P.163.

⁴ Granet M. Chinese thought, translated from French by V.B. Iordanskiy; general editor I.I. Semenenko. Moscow, Republic, 2004. P.209.

⁵ See Lao Zi. Dao De Jing. Translated and commented by V.V. Maliavin. Moscow, Feoria, 2010. 704 p.

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Религиозная и политическая философия социального воспитания в Древнем Китае

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В статье предпринята попытка ценностного переосмысления древнекитайской философии в контексте концепции онтологии веры. Рассмотрены символы веры даосизма, конфуцианства и некоторых наиболее влиятельных философских концепций. Обосновано, что трансформация ценностей от традиции к идеологии определяет приоритеты личностной самоидентификации посредством рационализации человеческого сознания. Данная статья будет интересна не только философам, но и всем интересующимся актуальными проблемами человека и общества.

Ключевые слова: онтология веры, древнекитайская философия, преемственность ценностей, рациональность, идеология, символ веры.

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