

**THE PROBLEMS OF INTERRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL PROGRESS AND  
COMMUNICATION IN THE CHINESE AND UKRAINIAN PHILOSOPHY**

**АНОТАЦІЯ**

Наведено підходи до дослідження актуальних проблем соціального прогресу в роботах китайських та українських філософів. Показано взаємозв'язок соціального прогресу і характеру міжособистісного спілкування. Розглянуті цілі транзитивності в Україні в світлі китайського досвіду.

**Ключові слова:** соціальний прогрес, китайська філософія, українська філософія.

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Приведены подходы к исследованию актуальных проблем социального прогресса в работах китайских и украинских философов. Показана взаимосвязь социального прогресса и характера межличностного общения. Рассмотрены цели транзитивности в Украине в свете китайского опыта.

**Ключевые слова:** социальный прогресс, китайская философия, украинская философия.

**SUMMARY**

Approaches to the study of actual problems of social progress in the works of Ukrainian and Chinese philosophers are analyzed. The interrelation of social progress and the nature of interpersonal communication is demonstrated. The aims of transitivity in Ukraine in the light of China's experience are considered.

**Keywords:** social progress, Chinese philosophy, Ukrainian philosophy.

One of the main manifestations of a human's social nature consists in the fact that involvement with other people in material and spiritual activities stands is necessary for his (her) normal existence and development. Its organization and implementation require such cooperation between the actors involved, which would give a real opportunity to achieve its aims. Interpersonal communication becomes basic mechanism of this interaction. It provides the ability to achieve mutual understanding between people and fruitful cooperation between them to achieve common goals. It is our deep conviction that established within particular society nature and norms of communication largely determine its social progress.

However, organization process of such interaction needs to overcome a number of serious obstacles. One of them is connected with contradictions that spawn the tripartite man's nature as not only social but also biological and thinking creature. Contradictions between biological and social human's nature consist of the fact that the person considers as priorities personal interests and goals, but not public. The people often tend to lower their labor, effort and energy intended to the social needs and to get more goods that have been accumulated in the consumption funds and resulted from joint activities of the society.

Contradictions between biological nature of human beings and their thinking status provide understanding that it is necessary to harmonize their actions and behavior with rules, regulations and customs adopted in the society. Only by this coordination normal functioning and development of society and the individual in society is possible. This necessity has been recognized since early stages of human civilization and it was framed by ancient philosophers in a systematic manner. Among them, it is reasonable to mention the great philosopher Confucius, the founder of the ethical-political doctrine that put desire for moral self-identity and strict adherence to the rules of etiquette in the basis for rational organization of society.

Teacher rightly affirmed that in their natural inclinations people are close to each other and in their habits are far from each other. He also taught that to conquer himself and return to the

proper is true humanity. It depends only on us to be human or not to be. The great philosopher's thoughts reveal his enduring wisdom and actuality for today: "a perfect balance between native substance and cultural refinement is the ideal state, although if one is to err it should be on the side of substance" [Confucius. *Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* / Confucius; translated by Edward Slingerland. – Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2003. –xxix, 279 p. – p. 59].

These deep thoughts of Confucius correlate with statements of the prominent Ukrainian philosopher Gregory Skovoroda very much. He was sure that the self-treatment, the revealing of own spiritual essence is not easy; it could not be known directly and immediately. Philosopher considered interpersonal communication as especially important thing. According to him, "there is nothing better for me than to talk to friend". He repeatedly stressed the value of communication and friendship in human life, based on the spiritual kinship. He wrote that "no one rejoices friendship more than me: it is my only consolation and my wealth".

As wandering philosopher, Skovoroda used every opportunity for deep communication between people based on spirituality and morality. At the same time, he wrote that sometimes he had stayed with someone whose vices he did not love "but only in order little by little through talks to them and arguing to attract them to the self-knowledge, to love for the truth, to the disgust of evil and to make love virtue by sample of life".

Confucius also paid great attention to the problems of communicating with other people. His statement is well known, encouraging: "when you go abroad, to behave to every one as if you were receiving a great guest; to employ the people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself; to have no murmuring against you in the country, and none in the family" [The Confucian Analects, the Great Learning & the Doctrine of the Mean. – New York: Cosimo Inc., 2009. – 518 p. – p. 251]. Unfortunately, even now many people do not observed these rules, which gives rise to complicated problems and conflicts situations.

Today, there is common understanding of the increasing role of the personal factor in the socio-economic development of the human civilization. The very development must be considered in its integral unity and a clear progressive trend. At that, the socio-economic progress should be understood as not just the growth of economic performances of a particular state and the entire world, sophistication of the applied technologies and increase in their efficiency, but improving the welfare of various strata of the society and their life quality. This refers to significant improvement in the environment, the level of education, healthcare, social and psychological well-being of people.

In modern conditions of the impressive socio-economic development of China and significant raise in authority and political weight of the country, definition of its place and traditions within the world culture has become one of the major problems of Chinese philosophy. Young Chinese researcher Xu Tsyuanyao defended his thesis dedicated to social progress in the context of Chinese philosophy in Ukraine. He convincingly showed that the constant analysis, search for new and effective ways of the social progress became an obvious prerequisite for translational motion, overcoming difficulties, prosperity, saving the Earth's resources, avoiding deadly conflicts, and survival on the planet. In this situation, the best minds of the humankind are still worried about the problem of the social progress.

It is extremely important to return from time to time to the philosophical heritage these thinkers left us. Today the Chinese model of the social progress evokes more and more interest, which objectively determined the need to investigate it, because at the late 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>th</sup> century it was China that had demonstrated the efficient model of the society's modernization, the successful integration into the world economic life, which provided for the steady growth of Chinese people's standards of the life. Simultaneously, the people's spiritual life becomes richer, and the quality of education improves. All this requires philosophical analysis and synthesis.

At the same time, a theoretically interesting and practically need for investigation and philosophical understanding of the distinctive features of the modern society's transformation in China and Ukraine. The initial positions of our countries can be considered similar to a great

degree. Therefore, the experience of the socio-economic, political, spiritual and cultural transformations in China can be very useful for Ukraine. Indeed, the valuable experience of China should be taken into account in the development and implementation of the reform strategy aimed at the country's harmonious integration into the global economic system and effective social and political reforms at the national and regional levels.

The problems of the social progress are closely related to scientific and technical progress, to profound transformations in the spiritual and cultural sphere. The fact is that it exercises a significant influence on the system of the values of life and the nature of relationships between people in general, including the nature of interpersonal communication. This influence is not always positive. Thus, the development of market relations significantly distorts the human communication, makes it more and more pragmatic, and turns into a simple exchange of information. Communication gradually loses humanity and emotionality. Development of telecommunication technologies enhances these trends.

Due to these circumstances, the problem of the studies related to the complex and contradictory phenomenon of the social progress remains urgent and attracts attention of the leading scientists in the field of social philosophy. Their research results enable provision of the wide public with knowledge and understanding of the nature and prospects of the innovative development of the human civilization in the fundamentally new post-industrial phase of its history, the informative nature of the modern society.

However, it is extremely important at that to save the values, moral ideals and warmth of interpersonal relations, without which a person becomes seriously impoverished, losing a whole range of the factors that form the spiritual component of his being. It is no mere chance that his ideals of morality and beauty are traced back to Chinese philosophy classicists. In particular, one has to agree to Lao Tzu's thought that the one who overcomes others is strong but the one who overcomes himself is mighty. Even today, the ability to control oneself, one's own emotions and behavior is considered to be one of the most important virtues of a person.

The thought of another ancient Chinese philosopher Xun Zi, Confucius' follower, sounds quite deductive to our contemporaries. According to him, when the perfect man has great knowledge and daily checks himself and analyses his behavior, then he is wise and makes no mistakes. Certainly, anyone can make mistakes, but, following the philosopher's advice, we can minimize them and achieve a great success in life, and have a rich spiritual world.

We are convinced that the activation of the study of complex problems, in the first place the serious challenges and threats, generated by the contemporary civilization and complicated, extremely contradictory nature of the social development, demands for their deep philosophical apprehension, analysis, and finding ways and means to effectively counteract dangerous trends. This is essential for successful overcoming of the deep crisis in Ukraine that became systematic, and for the country's taking the main path of sustainable social development. In choosing an effective strategy for this development, the experience of the People's Republic of China seems very valuable for our country.

It should be noted that the problems of social progress in the context of the Chinese philosophical tradition and contemporary socio-economic and philosophical thought attracts close attention of both Chinese and foreign scholars, namely philosophers, sociologists, economists, political scientists, psychologists, specialists in the theory and practice of the modern management. In addition to those mentioned above, such classicists of the Chinese philosophical thought, as Mo Zi, Meng Zi, Han Fei, Wang Chong, Fan Zhen, Han Yu and others can be named. They actually laid the methodological foundations of the study of problems of the society as a whole and the social progress in particular.

All of us have been impressed by the works of the leading Chinese theorists and practitioners devoted to the strategy of social modernization played a crucial role in provision of the up-to-date nature of the sustainable and rampant development of China, impressing our contemporaries. Among them the brightest is the figure of one of the most prominent thinkers of the

twentieth century, Dan Xiaoping. The ideas constituting his theoretical heritage and practice have been actively and closely studied worldwide.

Today China is confidently ranked number two in the world in economic development. The country successfully implements the space program and exercises scientific research and technological developments in the most promising fields of knowledge. That is why the philosophical understanding of this experience has become an important activity of many Ukrainian and foreign scholars. Of special interest is the fact that the Chinese model of social development is based on the organic combination of the market economy and free enterprise, on the one hand, and the socialist political system with the state planning and regulation, which is implemented through a system of benefits and public contracts, on the other hand. For Ukraine, it is important that the successful implementation of this model resulted in high competitiveness of the national economy.

The works of such foreign researchers as D. Barach, A.D. Barnett, Z. Belousov, T. Bernstein, Z. Brzezinski, L. Vasilyeva, M. Vilburg, V. Gelbras, A. Danilov, A. Jordan, J. Kornai et al. reflect considerable interest in the peculiarities of the socio-economic development of China.

Unfortunately, the Ukrainian economic policy in the context of China's experience does not give us reasons for optimism. According to the famous Ukrainian economist I. Kukuruza, the economic reforms in our countries, turned out to be diametrically opposed. Research made by V.M. Heyets, A. Galchinsky, M.I. Dolishnya, G.V. Zadorozhnyj, S.V. Mochernyj and other Ukrainian economists did not attract adequate attention of neither government representatives, nor businessmen. At the same time, in our opinion, in Ukraine the study of the philosophical aspects of such interesting phenomenon, as the rapid socio-economic rise of China surely is not sufficient.

However, we are convinced that the profound theoretical analysis of the socio-philosophical paradigms of the social progress in China could act as a kind of a catalyst for preparation of a new generation of the Ukrainian national elite – politicians and economists, capable of forming and effectively implementing the strategies of the country's innovative development. They must not only be prepared to choose reliable ways, methods and means to modernize the country and society, but also to take into account both positive and negative experiences of the countries – the world's leaders in the innovative development.

In this respect, the choice of the Ukrainian model of social development should be systematic and provide for simultaneous implementation of a number of reforms. These reforms in their integral unity, complicated and contradictory interaction should enable realizing the goals and strategic objectives of the transitivity, taking into account the cultural and historical traditions and peculiarities of the Ukrainian mentality.

In the socio-political sphere, these goals consist in democratization of all spheres of public life, clear separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, providing the real rule of law and building a civil society based on democratic principles. At that, protection of the human rights and freedoms and determined overcoming of corruption, free, fair and transparent elections and effective functioning of the public authorities and local governments have to be guaranteed. It requires everyone's civic engagement, a prerequisite for implementation of the constitutional provision that the people are the only power holder in the country.

In the socio-economic sphere, the transformation goals consist in transition to the socially oriented market economy, ensuring its competitiveness due to a significant increase in knowledge-intensity, the general innovation orientation and restructuring. First of all, it is necessary to update the material and technical base and reduce a considerable lagging behind the leading industrialized countries in the world, the effective integration of Ukraine into the world economic system and the rational use of the advantages of the international division of labor in the national interests. On this basis, the living standards and welfare of the wide sections of population should be significantly raised.

In the spiritual and cultural sphere, the transformational strategy should provide for overcoming double moral standards, creating opportunities for full satisfaction of the spiritual needs of people on the basis of universal values, harmonization of the interaction and interpersonal relations, formation of a new social consciousness, revival of the national cultural and historical

traditions, enriching them with the best achievements of the world culture. Achieving these goals requires a comprehensive government support for development of education and science, encouraging innovation and active implementation of its results into production. This should be the basis not only of socio-economic development of the country, but also of the fullest realization of every person's creative potential.

In the social and psychological sphere, most important task of the transformation strategy should be to overcome the civil passivity of people and the psychology of paternalism when people expect that everything necessary for life and work almost automatically is provided by the state. Now the well-being of everyone and his family completely depends on the person, his work and enterprise. Therefore, the formation of a person's self-confidence, the confidence in his/her own opportunities and abilities became another important task of transitivity in the socio-psychological sphere. Moreover, in conditions of the socio-economic progress, a person should defend his/her honor and dignity, and respect the honor and dignity of others. Civic engagement, trust in government, a sense of personal responsibility for the situation in the country and society, for the successful development should be inherent in a person.

Referring again to the analysis of the Chinese model of development, the new environmental paradigm of social progress must be to emphasize, based on the Chinese philosophical tradition of full harmony between the human society and nature. The real social progress in its humanistic understanding can be realized only in such harmonious union, in its deep understanding by a human being as an integral part of nature. It should be emphasized that the Western philosophy of the social progress, influenced by China's success, is also moving away from a purely technocratic context to more humanistic content.

Estimating significant accomplishments of researchers of the present problems of the social progress from Ukraine, China and other countries, one should mention a definite shortage of the systematic analysis of its features related to globalization and building of the post-industrial information society. At the same time, an extremely dynamic nature of the of the social processes development in the world, their close relationship and interdependence greatly complicate the philosophical understanding of the main trends of the general civilizational development.

It is also characteristic that the development of the scientifically grounded strategies of the effective social development should more and more consider the global experience, especially the experience of the countries like the People's Republic of China, which worked the way that took centuries in other countries during a short historical period. However, not only technical and technological achievements of China are interesting for Ukraine, but also a deep philosophical understanding and justification of the ways and means that supported these achievements.

Ukraine, which overcame the Chernobyl disaster - the most severe in the history of humankind, is particularly sensitive to different kinds of threats and challenges that globalization creates. First of all, we are talking about the real dangers of the global ecological catastrophe, the problems associated with an adverse and irreversible nature of the climatic change. Therefore, the philosophical and methodological principles of the social progress study start playing an important role. In this respect, not only Ukrainian, but also Chinese philosophers should be mentioned. Van Loughlin, Lee Chzhanfu, Shenlyan Lu, Pei Chzhanhun, Tsyia Tsinzin, Yu Wujin, and others are among them. Unfortunately, the works by many of them are not yet available to Ukrainian researchers.

At the same time, we should keep in mind certain cultural, historical and mental differences between our nations, the differences in traditional systems of thought, attitudes, approaches to the analysis of complex problems, differences in the perception and understanding, finally, in psychology, behavior and character of the interpersonal communication. All these factors may well influence the perception and rethinking of Chinese experience by the new generation of Ukrainian politicians, on their understanding of the essence of the social progress and its interpretation in Chinese philosophy. However, it remains undoubted that the experience itself and its interpretation represent a considerable value to all states seeking to progress and implementing the necessary

transformation of their political, socio-economic, spiritual and cultural systems in accordance with the requirements of the time.

To be able to use this experience successfully, the problem of the forces driving the social progress needs deep investigation, as well as its forms and ways of implementation, methods and nature of the actions of the social system, within which transformational processes are purposefully implemented. The progress becomes possible as result of the system integrity and interaction, and the study of reactions from various social actors is also noteworthy.

In this regard, the pragmatism that characterizes Chinese philosophical thought, philosophical ideas and concrete recommendations seem extremely useful for Ukrainian philosophers, politicians and practitioners. We are deeply convinced that practicality of theoretical constructs and associative thinking together with a distinct emphasis on the socio-ethical obligations of an individual provide for effectiveness of these ideas and recommendations.

The ecological paradigm is especially appealing for us, based on value attitude of Chinese philosophers to the nature and, generally, the Chinese people's tradition to identify themselves with nature. Therefore, their thoughts and behavior are based on the idea of the human natural involvement in the ecosystem of the planet and extremely careful attitude to its resources. This attitude is one of the aspects that Ukrainian citizens should unconditionally adopt and make a defining determinant of their activities and behavior. When developing and implementing strategies for social progress in our country, natural processes and regularities should be considered, and the relevant restrictions on the economic activity should be provided, that would prevent breaking the ecological balance, and which would maintain harmony of the system "a man – society – nature – techno sphere".

These provisions should be included in the system of educational objectives so that pupils and students in the process of the interpersonal communication with teachers, would not just assimilate them, but also transform into vital values, principles and believes. They should be guided by these principles in relation to nature, their behavior and future professional activities.

We are convinced that the centuries-old cultural and historical traditions of the Ukrainian people, its powerful intellectual potential and favorable soil and climatic conditions in conjunction with the Chinese experience will contribute to the successful promotion of the Ukrainian social progress.

*Translated by Alexander Golozubov*