

Tian Jing*Graduate Student of the Department of Philosophy and Methodology of Science
of Belarusian State University***Тянь Цзин***соискатель каф. философии и методологии науки
Белорусского государственного университета
e-mail: jingt7575@gmail.com*

PHILOSOPHICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MODERN CHINA

The educational system of modern China is considered. The main content of the philosophical and ideological foundations of the Chinese education system in the historical perspective of its formation is revealed. It is noted that the philosophy of education in China, which emerged at the beginning of the 20th century, was shaped by Western ideas, but at the same time retained a strong connection with national philosophical traditions and millennia-old cultural customs. It is shown that the modern Chinese education system is the result of a synthesis of traditional values and Western concepts, which ensures its uniqueness and high adaptability in the context of global transformations.

Key words: China, education philosophy, confucianism, marxism, education.

Философские и идеологические основания системы образования в современном Китае

Рассматривается система образования современного Китая. Раскрывается основное содержание философско-идеологических оснований китайской системы образования в исторической перспективе ее становления. Отмечается, что философия образования в Китае, возникшая в начале XX в., сформировалась под влиянием западных идей, но при этом сохранила прочную связь с национальными философскими традициями и тысячелетними культурными обычаями. Показано, что современная китайская система образования является результатом синтеза традиционных ценностей и западных концепций, что обеспечивает ее уникальность и высокую адаптивность в условиях глобальных трансформаций.

Ключевые слова: Китай, философия образования, конфуцианство, марксизм, образование.

Introduction

Education in the modern Chinese state occupies a strategically important place. Acting as a marker of historical greatness, China's education system demonstrates a high potential for adaptation and embeddability into the modern globalizing world, being an effective tool for constructing a new kind of social reality. Deep connection with philosophical ideas pre-determines the identity and originality of the modern educational system, making it a source of development and prosperity of the nation.

The aim of this article is to identify the specifics of the Chinese education system, substantiate its philosophical, ideological foundations and methodological development priorities, which determine the rapid pace of

formation of high competitiveness. Accordingly, the author of the article in the process of realizing the goal solves a number of problems: briefly analyzes the historical basis of the Chinese education system, substantiates the philosophical and ideological foundations of the Chinese education system, exploits the specifics of the philosophy of education in China.

Main part

Education philosophy is a branch of philosophical knowledge that studies the goals, value orientations, methods, and ideals of education viewed as social practice. This area of philosophy covers the ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects of education. The peculiarity of the Chinese philosophy of education lies in the unique combination of Confucian traditions with Marxist ideology, rethought under socialist modernization and the idea of a «harmonious socialist society». This combination highlights a collectivist and state orientation: education becomes a means of national

Научный руководитель – Анастасия Сергеевна Комаровская, кандидат философских наук, доцент, доцент кафедры социально-гуманитарных и историко-правовых дисциплин Академии управления при Президенте Республики Беларусь

revival, in which personal development is subordinated to public interests and the tasks of innovative growth. In this regard, a strategy of interdisciplinarity is used in the development of the philosophy of education in China, which combines theoretical research of philosophy with specific pedagogical practices.

Through traditional Chinese philosophy, adapted to the ideology of the modern Chinese state, this allows to directly influence the practice of disseminating the values of the state in the educational process at all levels of education.

The philosophy of education arose in China at the beginning of the 20th century. The disciplinary formulation of the philosophy of education was associated with the influence of Western philosophical ideas, which influenced the intensity and focus of the modernization of Chinese education. At the same time, one should not lose sight of the fact that the philosophy of education in China is based on the rich heritage of national philosophical traditions and millennial practices.

From a historical point of view, the Chinese philosophy of education developed from a Confucian orientation, where the emphasis was on the education of virtue, harmony and respect for the teacher, to the Taoist understanding of the natural development of the personality and the Buddhist emphasis on spiritual self-improvement. These traditions laid the foundation for the perception of education as a process of formation not only of knowledge, but also of a moral nature. For example, Confucianism had the most profound effect on the educational system of modern China. The central categories of «ren» (humanity), «li» (ritual, order) and respect for the teacher determined the structure of teaching and upbringing. It was Confucianism that formed the system of state exams, where knowledge of classical texts became a criterion for the selection of officials and one of the main indicators of the effectiveness of education. The teacher was considered not only as a bearer of knowledge, but also as a moral mentor, and education was understood as a means of forming a harmonious society and strengthening state power. «The Confucian tradition, condemning the tendency to gain money and material gain to the detriment of high morality and duty, at the same time skillfully directed the social activity of the individual into the prestigious channel of reproduction of Confucian principles of life, the

successful mastery of which guaranteed authority, power and prosperity» [1].

In turn Taoism introduced the value of individuality and natural development into the philosophy of education. The Taoist principle of «wu-wei» (non-action) emphasized the need to abandon excessive pressure and strict discipline, and training was supposed to help a person find a balance with nature and himself. Taoist practices, such as meditation, contemplation, have become an integral part of education, forming internal freedom and the ability to self-know.

Buddhism expanded the educational system by adding a spiritual dimension. Monastic schools, where instruction was combined with religious practice, shaped the values of compassion, tolerance, and discipline. Buddhist educational philosophy focused on internal self-improvement, abandoning material attachments and finding a path to enlightenment.

Thus, Chinese educational philosophy has a powerful historical framework, which is a synthesis of three traditions: Confucianism, which forms the priority of social harmony and moral education; Taoism, emphasizing the importance of natural development and harmony with nature; and Buddhism, which sees the purpose of education in spiritual self-improvement.

It was the interaction of these traditions that created a unique educational model, where learning is considered not only as the transfer of knowledge, but also as the formation of personality, values and spiritual culture.

In the XIX–XX centuries Chinese education philosophy entered into an active dialogue with Western concepts. This process was primarily caused by the crisis of the traditional Confucian model based on the examination system (keju), which ceased to meet the requirements of modernization and social development. The pressure of the Western powers showed the need for reform, and Chinese thinkers began to look for new guidelines in Western philosophy and pedagogy. Western philosophical and pedagogical works were translated into Chinese and actively studied. Influenced by the ideas of J.-J. Russo and I. Kant's emphasis shifted to rational and natural education, where personality was seen as an autonomous subject. J.-J. Rousseau inspired Chinese educators to rethink the role of nature and education, and Kant's ideas predetermined the inclusion of categories of freedom and responsibility in the educational discussions of Chinese thinkers.

The mechanism of influence of Western ideas on Chinese education philosophy launched educational reforms, which resulted in the abolition of the examination system in 1905 and the creation of a new type of school. Chinese students increasingly began to go to study in Europe and the United States, bringing new ideas and adapting them to the national tradition. Universities and pedagogical institutes appeared in China, where Western concepts were integrated into the curriculum.

A particularly strong influence on China's education system was the pragmatism of John Dewey. In the period 1919–1921 Dewey visited China and gave over 200 lectures, which were later translated by Hu Shi. The audience at the lectures reached thousands of listeners, which made his ideas massive. The ideas of J. Dewey had a radical impact on the transformation of the education system in China. The 1922 reform introduced project learning and a program of individualization of learning based on J. Dewey's ideas, adapted by his students Hu Shi and Tao Xingzhi, ideas that made a real change in the foundation of the education system, shifting the focus from the idea of «education is life» to «life is education».

J. Dewey's idea that «education is life, not preparation for life» contributed to a smooth transition from the Confucian tradition to pragmatic general education, stimulating practice-oriented schools, critical thinking and social adaptation during the Republican China period. J. Dewey emphasized that learning should be based on the child's real experience through activity, project method and solving practical problems, and not on passive assimilation of knowledge. «Dewey's own distinctly American philosophy, pragmatism, is often described as a call for action and progress, whereby humans manipulate nature in ways instrumental to the achievement of flexibly determined ends» [2]. Chinese educators embraced J. Dewey's emphasis on the student's experience and activity, which was an important step in the transition from book memorization to practical teaching methods.

In the 1920s and 1930s, China attempted to introduce an American-style education system, the result of which was an understanding of the unacceptability of foreign educational models by Chinese society in its purest form. At the same time, selective assimilation of individual components is a very successful solution

that can not only change, but update the outdated elements of the Chinese education system, making it more mobile.

After the institutional consolidation of Marxism in 1921, a radical restructuring of all spheres of society began in Chinese society, including the education system. «After the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, especially during the 1980s, under the guidance of Marxism, the discipline of educational philosophy has been maturing» [3, p. 13]. The new ideal of the educational standard was the Soviet education system, focused on social justice and collectivism. She strengthened the idea of the comprehensive development of the individual and emphasized the social function of education as a tool for the formation of civic responsibility and collective identity. Combined with critical pedagogy focused on identifying power structures and inequality, the Chinese Communist Party was given an effective tool to analyze social problems and develop social reforms. During this period, the traditional foundations of the education system were completely leveled, as well as pragmatic orientations, the historical foundation was criticized in order to belittle the significance.

Later, after the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, in the 1980s, the «open door» policy created the conditions for the revival of the philosophy of education in China, building Western and Soviet theories around the traditional Confucian core.

As a result, Western and Soviet ideas did not replace Confucianism, did not form the basis for creating a new educational model, but were adapted, built into the classical education system. Thus, the emphasis on moral education remained, but it was supplemented by a pragmatic approach and scientific systematicity.

Thus, the philosophy of education in China has gone from Confucian morality and the examination system to a multi-paradigm model where national values and Western concepts are combined. This process was not simple copying, but purposeful adaptation and integration, which made it possible to create a unique educational system that meets the challenges of modernization and globalization. Today, one of the main tasks of the Chinese government is «reinforcing a High-Quality Education System. The 14th Five-Year Plan and Vision 2035 was endorsed by the 13th National People's Congress in 2021 (National People's

Congress, 2021). It sets China's development goals from 2021 to 2025 and puts forward China's long-term development plan towards 2035. In education sector, it proposes to reinforce a high-quality education system» [4, p. 3].

From a methodological point of view, the modern Chinese philosophy of education, combining traditional approaches with Western innovations, demonstrates its advantages through multifunctionality and high efficiency in the perspective of the challenges of our time. The speculative-deductive method, inherited from the Confucian tradition, provides a basis for thinking about the essence of education and its moral goals. The empirical-positivist method, borrowed from Western science, contributes to the transformation of pedagogy into an independent field of research. The interpretation-hermeneutic approach is used to comprehend the cultural and symbolic aspects of education, and the method of critical emancipation, which came from Western philosophy, reveals social contradictions and inequalities in the educational system.

The theoretical basis of the philosophy of education in China is developing according to the «tradition – borrowing – integration» scheme, demonstrating the pattern of transition from a single Confucian paradigm to a multi-paradigm system, where national values are combined with Western philosophical and scientific approaches. This synthesis allows Chinese educational philosophy to serve as a guide for building a modern educational paradigm and practical reform that meets the challenges of globalization and the preservation of cultural identity.

So, the modern paradigm of education philosophy in China is multi-paradigm integration:

- 1) traditional Confucian values;
- 2) Western scientific and pragmatic approaches;
- 3) of Marxist and critical theories;
- 4) constructivist ideas of cognitive and sociocultural development.

This integration allows Chinese educational philosophy to simultaneously maintain cultural identity and respond to the challenges of the modern world, forming an educational system that combines humanistic values, scientific rigor, and social responsibility.

Modern challenges, such as digitalization, globalization, environmental crisis and social inequality, require education philosophy to find new conceptual solutions to train specialists who can effectively solve them. In the context of the rapid development of technology and artificial intelligence, educational philosophy must not only adapt to new forms of learning, but also maintain a humanistic orientation, ensuring a balance between technical skills and the formation of value guidelines.

In the 21st century, intercultural dialogue is of particular importance. Eastern traditions in education, for example, the Confucian idea of education of virtue and harmony, and Western approaches, such as pragmatism, critical pedagogy, constructivism, can be integrated into a single system capable of responding to current challenges. This integration allows for educational models that are both culturally identity-aware and open to innovation.

For legal and social institutions, the philosophy of education plays the role of a conceptual foundation. Legal practice focused on the protection of human rights, justice and equality is directly related to philosophical ideas about freedom, dignity and responsibility of the individual.

Therefore, the development of educational philosophy has not only academic, but also applied significance through direct influence on the formation of a legal culture, civil society and sustainable democratic institutions.

Conclusion

«Looking back at history and looking forward to the future, we could understand education modernization in China in the face of 2035 by exploring the modernization of educational ideas, education systems, talent training modes, educational governance systems and governance abilities» [5, p. 3]. Modern Chinese philosophy of education is formed under the conditions of historically determined symbiosis of traditional values and Western theories. Confucian ideas continue to play a role in moral education, but at the same time pragmatic and constructivist approaches are actively used. Western concepts have influenced the modern Chinese philosophy of education, where today the emphasis is on interaction, teamwork and personality development in society.

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