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## **DEVELOPMENT OF UTOPIAN THOUGHT IN ANCIENT CHINA (EASTERN ZHOU ERA): HISTORICAL AND TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

The article is devoted to the formation of utopian thought in the history of ancient China. The chronological framework of the topic covers the period of the Eastern Zhou era (770 - 256 BC). The historical preconditions for the emergence of utopia and its features are revealed. Emphasis is placed on the affinity of utopian thought of the region with the ethical and philosophical currents of the time, the peculiarities of worldview. The author draws attention to the relevance of this topic, which is explained by the existing debate in modern humanities about the existence of utopia and utopianism in ancient China. The idea of the presence of certain elements of utopian thought, starting with Confucius and Mo-Tzu, whose works later became the basis for the development of utopia in the future. The methodological basis of the work revealed the main roots of the utopian ideal, to substantiate the characteristics of utopia in line with socio-political thought China. Generic signs of utopia were revealed. It is shown that these features are the product of a socio-political crisis (the fragmentation of the state into warring kingdoms, social contradictions of property and legal nature between social strata). Hence the idea of the "golden age" as an idealized past, the opposite of the real (modern) rolling situation. Weak political power causes the emergence in utopia of the image of a strong wise (and perfectly wise) ruler, who is helped to rule by wise and pious people. In support of this, the article quotes Mo-Tzu, who assesses reality with a degree of pessimism and, putting forward an altruistic idea of universal love, does not believe in its realization. As a result, among the typological features of utopian thought in ancient China are criticism, idealization of the "ideal" past, compensatory (utopia inspires hope) and timeless (ukhronia).

**Key word:** "golden age"; Confucius; Mo-tzu; utopia; utopian ideal; utopianism; uchronia.

### **Introduction**

The history of utopian thought is an important component of the genesis of social and political ideas. Of particular interest is the fact that it is the utopian ideal that expresses that layer of social dreams about a better future, the desire to construct the existing way of life in society, pointing out the existing social contradictions. It is this feature of utopia that has been manifested since the ancient world, although it acquires a generally accepted meaning in the epoch of modern times (starting with "Utopia" by Thomas More) - "whose place does not exist". It is interesting that it is among the states of the ancient world that the idea of a "golden age" (as a utopian image left in the past) arises, which for many centuries (in the Middle Ages and in modern times) will become a model for the image of an ideal social structure. In this sense, the utopian thought of Ancient China represents a special period of its formation and development, in which its generic characteristics and specific features inherent in this particular culture are gradually formed.

The problem noted above is still very urgent. This is largely due to the fact that ancient Chinese utopia had a strong emphasis on ethical and philosophical thought, which led to discussions between scholars about the existence of a utopia in ancient China. For example, A.S. Martynov points out that some ancient Chinese thinkers (Men-Tzu (389-272 BC) and Den Mu (1247-

1306) are worthy of being on a par with T. Mor and T. Campanella (*Martynov A. S., 1987*). Another scientist, D. E. Martynov, on the contrary, puts forward the idea that the ancient Chinese social ideal is not a utopian ideal, utopianism in China appeared at the end of the 19th century, in connection with the acquaintance with Western philosophy and the picture of linear historical time. The scientist draws attention to the fact that the basis of the problem is rooted in the absence of a generally accepted definition of the concept of "utopia". «If by "utopia" we understand any ideal of a bright future, - D.E.Martynov, - then practically any text describing certain ideological movements, not to mention religious writings, will have to be recognized as utopian» (*Martynov D. E., 2011*). In our opinion, in this case it is necessary to take into account the difference between utopia and utopianism. The second phenomenon, as the highest stage in the expression of utopia, is usually spoken of in times of strong socio-economic and political upheavals, a time when utopia reaches the level of a reform project.

Thus, given the relevance of this topic, the controversial emphasis in the historiography of the issue, the purpose of this article is to study the foundations of the emergence of utopian thought in ancient China, to determine its features.

Research objectives:

1) to reveal the historical background of the birth of utopian thought in ancient China;

2) to identify its main features, which are specific to ancient Chinese society.

Chronological framework - Ancient China of the era of Eastern Zhou (770 - 256 BC).

### Research methods

In the process of studying utopian thought in the history of Ancient China, the following methods were used: the system method (utopia is considered as a phenomenon of human social life (system), expressing cause-and-effect relationships), methods of analysis and synthesis (aimed at identifying the specific features of the utopia of a given region), as well as the principle of historicism (made it possible to identify the roots of the formation of social utopia in ancient China).

### Results and Discussion

Historically inherent in society as a product of human consciousness, the result of cognition of the surrounding world, its perception of the world, utopia carries information about the development of culture as a whole. Since the basis of any utopia is the ideal (in this case, the social ideal), then naturally criticism as the main function of utopia reveals the reasons for its formation, the nature of the image of the ideal social and political structure, and the place of man in it.

As E. L. Chertkova notes, it is the orientation towards the ideal, and not just striving for the future, that is the hallmark of utopia (*Chertkova, 1993: 72*). Striving towards the future, although it is often present in utopian writings, is still not the main, but a derivative characteristic of utopian consciousness. Indeed, an example of a perfect society can be sought both in the distant past (the legend of the "Golden Age"), and in a distant space (a distant or fictitious geographical point, another planet, etc.). It is important that he is not in the time and place where the creator of utopia and those to whom he addresses his project are.

Hence, the historical definition of utopia becomes clear as an image of an ideal society that is an alternative to the existing one. The principles and norms of human life, the organization of work and leisure, the socio-political structure, etc. - all this in utopia is better, more harmonious, more attractive than in the society in which its author lives. A utopian society is free from want and injustice, violence and war, lies and deceit. These features do not have regional or national differences in utopias, be it the West or the East, the essence of utopia as a social phenomenon remains. Therefore, the study of utopia is impossible without analyzing the prerequisites for its formation in a particular historical environment. In our case, we are talking about the ancient Chinese society of the era of the Eastern Zhou, a time when utopia received a significant impetus for its expression.

It is known that the era of the Eastern Zhou is divided into two periods: the period of spring and autumn (Chunqiu, 722 - 481 BC), corresponding to the chronicle of the kingdom of Lu, which, according to legend, was edited by Confucius and the period of the Warring States (Zhanguo, 403 - 249 BC) B.C.), the kingdom of Zhou had already been destroyed, and other kingdoms determined policy in China.

The socio-political reality of China fragmented and absorbed by internecine strife during the Chunqiu period is characterized by the presence of aristocratic kinship

and powerful omnipotent noble clans based on large hereditary land holdings, as well as the associated internecine struggle and localism of the titled nobility. All these important features were characteristic of Chou China of the Chunqiu period, especially in the 7th-6th centuries. BC. Wan had no real power outside his domain, but he retained a sacralized charisma, was considered the son of Heaven and was entitled to a number of important privileges, mainly of a ritual and ceremonial nature. Only he had the unconditional right to the title "van" and was the unconditional lord, suzerain for all his vassals, including powerful hegemonies. And if some of the potential vassals, such as the rulers of Chu, arbitrarily began to call themselves Wangs, this was not recognized in the center, in Zhongguo, where the impostor was still called by his old title.

For example, the ancient Chinese thinker Mo-tzu, who was one of the first in the history of Chinese social thought, came up with utopian ideas, studying the situation of the warring kingdoms, wrote that "big states attack small, big families overpower small, strong oppress the weak .... Did they come from love for people and from the desire to benefit them? Of course not. Of course, they came from hatred of people and the desire to harm them. ... Therefore, isolation must be destroyed ... It must be replaced by universality. " The philosopher put forward the idea of universal love based on altruism, which can save humanity from misfortune and social oppression. "If a son filled with love for his parents thinks about their welfare," says Mo-tzu, "does he want people to love his parents and do what is good for them, or does he want people to hate them and bring them harm? ... If we all act as loving sons, wouldn't it be best to first love other people's parents and do what is good for them? "

However, at the same time, the idea of Mo-Tzu is saturated with pessimism. In addition to criticizing the existing order, the philosopher expresses thoughts about the impossibility of people of all social strata to comprehend and build social relations on universal love. Mo-Tzu demands maximum altruism from people, while realizing that it can be achieved with this approach only by influencing a person from the outside with punishments and rewards. The system of these punishments and rewards comes from the state, and thus it is the state organization that becomes the main problem for Mo-Tzu (*Rykov, 2013*).

Continuing the study of our question, we come to the social stratification of ancient Chinese society, where two main social groups stand out: on the one hand, these were the ruling feudal leaders with soldiers, merchants and artisans who served them (i.e., specialists in supplying the nobility and warriors with everything necessary), as well as servants and slaves of various categories, who satisfied all the growing needs of both the aristocracy and the administrative apparatus in the states (they were all townspeople); with another - peasants, residents of village communities. The stratum of farmers took a place immediately after the ruling elite and was considered socially higher than everyone else (service personnel, starting with artisans and merchants). Actually, it was the people, the very simple people, producing and providing the basic vital needs of the state, in whose name and for whose good - as it began to assert itself even before the time of Confucius and turned into a normative formula after the formulation of its doctrine and the transformation of Confucianism

into an official state ideology - only there are states and their governing apparatus headed by rulers.

This stratum represented a real force with its own interests. All of them, in one way or another, served the ruling elite and depended on them, for all city dwellers - artisans, merchants, servants were directly connected with the service of the nobility, worked according to its laws and fed on the power exercised by it as an apparatus. In an atmosphere of constant civil strife, wars and conspiracies, coups, intrigues and political instability in general, much could depend on this mass, on its support or disagreement.

Such a gap between these social strata was largely due to the fact that the class of officials was separated from the common people by an insurmountable barrier - the "wall of hieroglyphs", that is, literacy, which determined the social status and property qualification of a person throughout the history of China. Already in Liji it was specially stipulated that whether (that is, ceremonies, rituals) are not related to the common people and that gross corporal punishment is not applied to literacy. True, successful people from the bottom, having mastered literacy, could make a career and be at the top. But in principle, this did not change anything: having received an education and a Confucian upbringing, anyone became the support of the order that the teaching itself called for immutability (Miroshnikov, Masaev, 2018).

These features of the social situation, it becomes clear why the final and supreme goal of governing Confucius and Mencius proclaimed the interests of the people. Mencius taught that of the three most important elements of the state, the people are in the first place, the deities are in the second, and only the sovereign is in the third. At the same time, the aforementioned thinkers were deeply convinced that the people themselves were incomprehensible and inaccessible to the people and that they could not do without the constant paternal care of educated Confucian rulers.

It is impossible not to pay attention to the fact that in the folk songs of this time the usual life motives and themes prevail: love, mourn, sorrow. People complain about separation from a loved one or an alliance with an unloved one, complain about life's difficulties and hardships, worry about those who have gone to war, grieve about the death of loved ones, etc. In the songs, everyday motives are not uncommon: the desire to sew a favorite dress, the willingness to work for the good of loved ones, especially elderly parents and small children. There are complaints of backbreaking work, reproaches against those who do not work themselves, but eat a lot and live happily ever after (clear hints of social inequality), and threats to leave their homes and go far, where it will be easier to live.

This led to the fact that subsequently the idea, very clearly formulated by Confucius, that the state is a big family dominated. What was meant was the fact that, within the framework of any socio-political formation, the elite assumed the function of a father not only on the scale of their clan (where no one else thought otherwise), but also of the state as a whole within the framework of any socio-political formation. The lower classes, on the other hand, performed the function of numerous household members of a large family, in which everyone has their own business and their own duties, but where, at the same time, everyone is aware of themselves as members of a large collective, united by common interests, headed by all the recognized head, the father-patriarch.

The idea fixed in the canons of Confucianism that the Celestial Empire is for everyone, and the ideas of the second great Confucian of antiquity Mencius that the people are the most important thing, and everything else exists in the name of their good, that a ruler who does not understand this is not a ruler and deserves to be overthrown, ultimately go back precisely to the idea of the inseparability of the top and bottom. Both the ruling upper classes and the producing or serving lower classes are parts of a single socially-clan body, a single living organism (Vasilyev, 1993). Of course, the head of this organism has one function, the rest of the body and especially its working parts, especially the arms and legs, others. But everything is interdependent, it is still necessary for the normal functioning of the body as a whole.

A highly moral ruler, designed by the philosopher as a role model, had to possess two major virtues: humanity and a sense of duty. The concept of humanity (zhen') was interpreted by Confucius in an unusually broad way and included many qualities: modesty, justice, restraint, dignity, selflessness, love for people, etc. Zhen' is a high, almost unattainable ideal, a set of perfections that only the ancients possessed; Among Confucius' contemporaries, including himself, he considered humane only his beloved disciple Yan Hui, who died early. However, for a real chun-tzu, humanity alone was not enough. He had to have another important quality - a sense of duty (s), dictated by the inner conviction that one should do this and not otherwise. Duty is a moral obligation that a humane person, by virtue of his virtues, imposes on himself. A sense of duty is usually driven by knowledge and higher principles, not calculation. Confucius developed a number of other concepts, including loyalty and sincerity (zheng), decency and observance of ceremonies and rituals (li).

Adherence to all these principles was the duty of the noble chun-tzu, who in the collection of sayings of Confucius Lunyu is defined as a person honest and sincere, straightforward and fearless, all-seeing and understanding, attentive in speeches, careful in business. In doubt, he must restrain himself, in anger - ponder actions, in a profitable enterprise - take care of honesty; in his youth he should avoid lust, in maturity - quarrels, in old age - cursing. He devotes himself entirely to serving lofty ideals, serving people and searching for truth.

The point is that Confucius's "noble man" is a speculative social ideal, an edifying complex of virtues. However, over time and in connection with the growth of the authority of Confucius and his teachings, this abstract-utopian ideal became more and more an obligatory standard for imitation, to approach which was a matter of honor and social prestige for everyone, and especially for those representatives of the upper class of academic officials. professional bureaucratic administrators who, from the Han era (III century - III century BC), began to rule the Chinese Confucian empire. By this time, much in the ideal created by Confucius had changed.

The above-mentioned realities of social and political life are very clearly reflected in the book "Shu-Czin". The second part of this book, which was written during the years of political decentralization and feudal civil strife during the Chun'cyu period, is a clear contrast to the wretched reality of conspiracies, intrigues, coups, and far from virtue norms of behavior of the ruling elites of Zhou China. As L. S. Vasilyev notes in this case, the subtext of these skillfully designed chapters that had their impact primarily on the same tops of the chapters is obvious: here it is, the true standard of virtue and harmony, this is

what one should strive for, this is what it was and should be become the Celestial Empire! The exalted, artificially raised on an unattainable pedestal, the Highest Harmony and Wise Order not only relied on the respected idea of a heavenly mandate, which was not questioned by anyone, but also, starting from this idea, re-formed the largely lost mentality of the subjects of the ruler of the Celestial Empire. This mentality was revived by the ideals of the golden age in their visual and concrete form. Thus, a powerful socio-psychological charge was formed, directed against decentralization with its fragmentation and strife, self-interest and immorality of ambitious people striving for power. The historiographers who created the ideal of the golden age were not so much the Wang officials who fulfilled his social order, but the ideologists of a strong state, without which there is no political stability, disorder and disharmony in relations between people reign (Vasilyev, 1993).

Attention should be paid to the fact that in the kingdoms of the Chun'cyu period, the ideal of harmony and order was considered and evaluated in different ways. Two models were formed, differing in goals and means of achieving the desired ideal. The first of them could be called the Zhou-Lu model, the second - Ci-Czin'.

The Zhou-lu model of ideals boiled down to a careful respect for the traditions of antiquity, praising the wisdom of the ancients, emphasizing Zhou's legitimacy, respecting the hereditary aristocracy with its clans and ethical principles, praising the paternalistic formula of statehood, evolution towards harmony on an ethical basis, the cult of antiquity, respect for the commandments of antiquity. It was a kind of proto-Confucian model of the organization of society and the state, a model with some obvious elements of a socio-political utopia, especially if we bear in mind the unsightly political reality in the Wang's house, and even more so in the principality of Lu, which was torn apart by all-powerful dignitaries.

The second model, Ci-Czin', was in many ways the opposite of the first. It was an orientation toward realities, toward the power of force, in particular hegemon-ba, an orientation toward reforms, including very radical ones, breaking with traditions. The difference between the first and second models is obvious, but in some ways they were also similar: both advocated the order and strength of the centralized state, for which it was necessary to weaken both the (first) all-powerful sovereign nobility and (later) the wealthy private owner; both proceeded from the fact that the people are the basis of the state, and the authorities care about the welfare of the people; both were no strangers to reforms, as well as traditions.

It is interesting that D. E. Martynov refers all the philosophical schools of this time to the idea of a "golden age", correlating it with different periods of Chinese history (Martynov D. E., 2011). As for the Confucian school, the countdown of Chinese history dates back to the reign of Emperor Yao, and it is with him that it relates its "golden age". The scientist notes that ideal conditions were created for the development of Confucian utopianism in the era of antiquity, which were expressed in the presence of feudal fragmentation and the unity of culture. Confucians developed the problem of the best examples of social behavior and methods of government for the prosperity of the latter, as it was under the great perfect wisdom of Yao. An obligatory figure guaranteeing the well-being of the state and society, its prosperity was the figure of the sage, who was the core of the Confucian utopia. Thus, the presence of a sage in the state made it possible to

reconstruct the model Yao state. And the presence of the prototype of the sage in the philosophical Confucian tradition refers us to the very beginning of Chinese social history, allows us to draw a parallel between the Confucian utopian models and the mythical "It time", which are the starting point of further social history of the Celestial Empire.

Also, among the features of the Chinese utopia of this time, it is necessary to highlight the timeless nature, or rather uchrony. In fact, if we remember that utopia is translated as "a place that does not exist," then the marked feature is its generic feature. In this case, V.E. Cukanova argues that the peculiarity of the Confucian uchrony is the presence of a certain veil of the cosmic scale of transformations (Cukanova, 2016). Thus, the external politicization and pragmatism of utopia has not only a social, but also a second level, and represents an attempt to go beyond the socio-political issues to the ontological and cosmic level.

### Conclusions

Thus, we saw that the history of the socio-political and economic life of ancient China during the Chunqiu period allows us to identify the main elements of the emergence of utopian thought. Polycentrism, political struggle for power, fragmentation, the priority of the ruling elite, the remoteness of the top of society from the bottom in social terms, etc. - all this only created the basis for the formation of the ideal of social relations (utopian ideal), which would reflect the hopes and dreams of the lower strata of the population. In fact, this explains the fact that the thinkers of this time sought to create the ideal of a knight of virtue, who fought for high morality, against the injustice that reigned around. Among the main signs / features of the utopia of this time, the following can be distinguished: the formation of a utopian ideal (a perfectly wise ruler, who is helped by the wise and noble, the state is like a big family), idealization of the "ideal" past (the idea of a "golden age"), criticism, compensatory and timeless character.

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## РОЗВИТОК УТОПІЧНОЇ ДУМКИ В СТАРОДАВНЬОМУ КИТАЇ (ЕПОХА СХІДНОГО ЧЖОУ): ІСТОРИКО-ТИПОЛОГІЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

Стаття присвячена розгляду формування утопічної думки в історії Стародавнього Китаю. Хронологічні рамки теми охоплюють період епохи Східного Чжоу (770 р. до н. е. - 256 р. до н. е.). Розкрито історичні передумови виникнення утопії, її риси. Акцент ставиться на спорідненість утопічної думки даного регіону з етико-філософськими течіями того часу, особливостями світосприйняття. Автор звертає увагу на актуальність даної тематики, що пояснюється існуючою в сучасній гуманітарній науці дискусією з приводу існування в Стародавньому Китаї утопії і утопізму. Виражається ідея про наявність певних елементів утопічної думки, починаючи з Конфуція і Мо-Цзи, чиї твори стали згодом основою для розвитку утопії в подальший час. Методологічний базис роботи дозволив виявити основне коріння формування утопічного ідеалу, обґрунтувати характеристики утопії в руслі суспільно-політичної думки Стародавнього Китаю. Виявлено родові ознаки утопії. Показано, що ці ознаки є породженням соціально-політичної кризи (роздробленість держави на воюючі між собою царства, соціальні протиріччя майнового і правового характеру між соціальними прошарками). Саме звідси випливає ідея про «золотий вік» як ідеалізоване минуле, протилежне реальній (сучасній) політичній ситуації. Слабка політична влада зумовлює появу в утопії образу сильного мудрого (причому досконаломудрого) правителя, якому допомагають правити мудрі і благочестиві люди. На підтвердження цього в статті наводиться вислів Мо-Цзи, який з часткою песимізму оцінює дійсність і, висуваючи альтруїстичну ідею про всезагальну любов, не вірить в її реалізацію.

Як результат, серед типологічних рис утопічної думки в Стародавньому Китаї виділяються критичизм, ідеалізація «ідеального» минулого, компенсаторність (утопія вселяє надію) і позачасовий характер (ухронія).

*Ключові слова:* «золотий вік»; Конфуцій; Мо-цзи; утопія; утопічний ідеал; утопізм; ухронія.

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