儒學資本主義與俄羅斯 Confucian Capitalism and Russia

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- 赴國外出差或研習心得報告一份
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- 國際合作研究計畫國外研究報告書一份

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This project is a research in comparative political studies of the concept of Confucian Capitalism and Russian political concepts of the 19th and 20th centuries. The objective of the research is to see into their similarities and difference, provide initial assessment of the Confucian political thought possible application for Russia’s current needs.

The author gives critical evaluation of the concept of Confucian Capitalism, stresses its connection with modernization concept, illustrates its positive and negative sides with assessments of Japanese modernization, substantiate Modern Confucianism as a study topic within this concept. The basis for comparison between Modern Confucianism and Russian political thought is found in classification of European liberalism in broad sense. Both Russian non-Communist philosophy of the 19th century and Modern Confucianism are seen as a result of a “have-not
liberalism" split into moderate and radical liberalism.

Russian Slavophilism, State School, Vehi, Eurasianism and Modern Confucianism political philosophy ideas are discussed and compared. Similarities are found in emphasis on national culture originality, cultural monism, and importance of ethics and esthetics, life philosophy, positive attitude to collectivism. Difference is seen in attitude to rationality, modern science, and liberal tradition. Possible areas for philosophical dialog identified. Problem of state is emphasized as the most prominent for this dialog, current Eurasianism is specified as the most suitable channel for borrowings from Modern Confucianism.

Analysis of the 1999 Duma elections campaign political rhetoric in Russia provides with data regarding Russian political elite attitude to the Confucian capitalism idea in Russia. The objective need to replace the negative ‘Asiatic capitalism’ with positive Confucian or Eurasian capitalism notion is shown.

The overall conclusion evaluates the current moment as positive for East Asia and Russia intercultural dialog.

三、Reasons and objectives:

The political developments in Russia since 1998 have revealed disillusionment with the prospects of Western liberal political culture in the country. Even the representative figures of liberal political circles often spoke about “the unique way of Russia development”. Current Russian capitalism is often described as an “Asiatic capitalism”. On the other hand, the 1998 financial crisis is sometimes interpreted as showing signs of system proximity of East Asian and Russian economies. Russian media for a number of years already have been explaining the economic success of the East Asian countries as a result of “Confucian capitalism”. Economic stagnation and “ideology vacuum” are both considered failures of the Russian reforms.

The objective of the research is to see into similarities and difference in the modern Confucian political thought and the Russian non-Communist political concepts of the 19th and early 20th centuries, make initial assessment of the Confucian political thought possible application for Russia’s current needs. The three particular objectives were 1) the case study of the Japanese Confucian capitalism; 2) comparative studies of the attitudes toward modernization and liberal social values in Modern Confucianism and Russian Slavophilism, State School, Vehi, Eurasianism; 3) analysis of the place of East Asian Confucian capitalism model in the 1999 Duma (Russian Parliament) election rhetoric.

四、Results and discourse:

The first part of the research consists in critical evaluation of the Confucian Capitalism concept. The relation of this idea with modernization concept has been shown. Two points are
stressed: 1) the lack of the theoretical and practical scholastic integrity of the idea; 2) its positive role in development of sociological and political culture area studies for East Asia in the 1980s and 1990s. The possible political connection with interest in this concept is also mentioned. The author believes that the future development of the Confucian capitalism concept depends on the progress in Confucianism national or area traditions studies, popular Confucianism studies, Confucianism sociological and political culture studies.

To demonstrate the achievements and shortcomings of the Confucian capitalism concept the role of Confucianism in Japanese modernization has been analyzed. Originally the case study of Taiwan was supposed to be done. This part of the research plan had to be changed, because in 1998-2000 new books (Burov, Ostrovky, Borokh) on Taiwan economy, politics and modernization were published in Russia. On the other hand, the new edition of L. S. Perelomov’s book on Lun yu and Confucianism was also issued, and the polemics with his assessments of Japanese and Chinese Confucianism became scholastically pressing.

First of all, the author disagrees with Perelomov on the Japanese ‘ability’ and Chinese ‘disability’ to creatively apply Confucianism principles for modernization in the 19th century. The author emphasizes systematic character of Confucianism in China and its ‘simplified’ and particular role in the complex ideological system in Japan. Besides that, the author shows weakness of the Confucian capitalism concept to prove ‘Confucianism’ character of the Japanese modernization, does not stress but imply the common features (as capitalist late-comers) of the Japanese and Russian-Soviet modernization.

The research subject of the second part is prepared by the author’s Confucian capitalism concept criticism in the first part. In particular, it has been noted that the concept does not consider transformations in Confucianism itself during modernization. Modern Confucianism (Post-Confucianism, New Confucianism) should be seen at the same time as a driving force and as a result of modernization. Actually, it is the only subject in Confucian capitalism, which ties with both modernization, and Confucianism can not be denied.

The basis for comparison between Modern Confucianism and Russian political thought is found in classification of European liberalism (broad notion). Russian liberalism is considered a “have-not liberalism” (Fisher). We discuss only the moderate wing (cooperation with the existing political system rather than its overthrowing) of Russian liberalism: Slavophilism, State School, Vehi, Eurasianism. The split of Russian liberalism took place over the attitude to modernization (Walicki). Modern Confucianism (New Confucianism, Post-Confucianism) can also be seen as a result of the same type of Liberalism split in the Chinese thought (the radical wing is represented by the Chinese Communism, and historically it included other teachings).
Introduction of Confucianism ‘modernization potentiality’ is done according to (黃國光), topics for comparison and Modern Confucianism authors list were mostly prepared according to (何信全). Political philosophy of Modern Confucianism and Russian non-Communist teachings were described and compared.

Both Confucian and Russian thinkers proceed from originality of their cultures comparing to Western culture. It is explained historically as a result of different class structure of their societies. Cultures have their major emanations in Russian Orthodoxy and in Confucianism (cultural monism). Both stress prevalence of ethics and even its gravitation to esthetics as a basis of mentality, importance of ‘life philosophy’.

Both traditions describe their cultures as collectivist. Collectivism explained as ‘organic entity’ or as sobornost (cathedral unity). Private property as a basis for individual freedom is neglected. Capitalist economic efficiency is not among the priorities. Democratic principle of majority is seen as ‘undemocratic’. Attitude to socialism in principle is rather positive.

The main problems in accepting Western culture are seen differently in China and Russia. In Modern Confucianism it is a problem of incorporation or acceptance per se, and in Russia it is ‘domestication’ of the Western culture already existing inside Russian culture. Chinese thinkers discuss different types of rationality in Chinese and Western cultures, Russians in general do not accept rationality as a cultural value. At the same time modern science is never mentioned as a problem for Russian culture, and it is among priorities in Modern Confucianism.

General attitude to Western liberalism is also very representative. The Russians are inclined to see Communism and Liberalism as one tradition, the Chinese rather see them separately and prefer to contrast them.

In the conclusions the author stresses the importance of Russian Orthodox religious tradition in forming Russian modern philosophy and its characteristic features, draws attention to the fact that Western culture is not a homogeneous one. The prospective areas of introduction of Modern Confucianism into current Russian political thought are many and they are of similar interest. Some of them are rooted even deeper than pure political philosophy (ontology, for example). Though paradoxically, the most positive influence of Modern Confucianism on Russian philosophy can be foreseen in the area of their difference. During the 19th and 20th centuries importance of the state problem in Russian philosophy grew up, but its religious dimension gradually withdrew. Eurasianism is the shortest way to introduce this problem.

The third part of the research is the analysis of Confucian capitalism rhetoric in the 1999 parliament elections in Russia. The 1995 elections had to be excluded from the research,

* See 六、Literature
since that election campaign in mass media was absolutely negative anti-Communist, practically no other topics have been mentioned then. The 1999 elections media had a negative attitude to E. Primakov and Fatherland – All Russia (OVR) political bloc, whose program was labeled as “Asiatic Capitalism” or “Chinese Capitalism”. Though OVR election program borrowed a lot from Eurasianism, the media mostly identified “Asiatic Capitalism” with active state participation in economy. Currently, not only OVR but its former rivals as well agree with necessity to “reinforce the state” and president Putin is often described as a proponent of “Chinese Capitalism”. Reinterpretation of negative “Asiatic Capitalism” in terms of positive Confucian or Eurasian Capitalism is objectively in the interest of the Russian political elite.

Part 1 has been accepted and will be published in Problemy Dal’nego Vostoka (Far Eastern Affairs Journal, Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Far Eastern Studies: ISSN 01311-2812) either in issue 6 (2001) or issue 1 (2002) under the title “Confucian Capitalism and Russia”. Part 2 has been accepted and will be presented at "China: State and society" conference hosted by Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences in February 2002 under the title "Russian philosophy and New Confucianism: Prospects of comparative studies". The whole paper is supposed to be published as a brochure (in the research monograph series) by College of Afro-Asian Studies of Moscow University, though depending on the financing.

五、Novelty of results and approaches consists in:
1. Formulation of double role of Modern Confucianism in East Asian modernization and prospects of this topic research within the Confucian Capitalism concept.
2. Formulation of scholarly problem and providing reasons for comparative study of Modern Confucianism and Russian philosophic thought.
3. Assessment of current Russian intellectual and political situation as positive for intercultural dialog.

六、Literature:

黄国光著 儒家思想與東亞現代化 – 臺北：巨流圖書公司，民國 77 年
(Kwang-Kuo Hwang. Confucianism and East Asia Modernization. – Taipei : Chu-Liu Book Co., 1988.)
何信全 著 儒學與現代民主 - 當代新儒家政治哲學研究 - 台北：中央研究院中國文哲研究所籌備處，1996