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## **CHINESE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY – POPULAR SCIENCE SUMMARY**

My research project is devoted to the analysis of Chinese philosophy of history, that is systematic reflection of Chinese philosophers and historiographers on the nature of the historical process. In this way I would like to show that not only Western culture, which has produced influential concepts such as Augustinianism, Hegelianism or Marxism, but also Asian culture has developed original and complex philosophy of history. From times of classical research made by Feng Youlan there is no doubt that Chinese culture, like Western, engendered philosophy: the question is whether this thesis also extends the philosophy of history. In the research I intend to demonstrate that Chinese thinkers have argued for the concept of history, which can be called semi-cyclical. This means that each historic cycle simultaneously enters into linear course of history. From the times of the first Chinese philosophers, like Confucius and Mencius and the first historians of the Middle Kingdom such as Zuo Qiuming, the historical process was essentially conceived as a progressive fall of the values which were in force during the Zhou Dynasty. Idealization of the past was officially sanctioned by Chinese chronicles, from the Han Dynasty up to the Ming Dynasty. This involved the permanent modification of historical sources so that they were consistent with a model of constructing history. This model reflects both the Confucian ideals and short-term political interests, what has been criticized by many Chinese thinkers (e.g. Liu Zhiji). During the reign of the Qing Dynasty, i.e. since the seventeenth century, the previous philosophy of history was criticized by such thinkers as Wang Fuzhi, Zhang Xuecheng and Yan Fu. They opted for a vision of human progress, criticizing the idealization of the old times; they were naturalists, rejecting the influence of Heaven on history; they discovered historical importance of economic factors. Their thought not only opened contemporary Chinese philosophy to the reception of Marxism, but also stays in an intriguing relation to the Western philosophy of history. This relation will be also explored within the scope necessary for the subject of my project.

Analyzing philosophical texts and excerpts from Chinese chronicles and annals, I am basing solely on original texts written in classical Chinese. In order to gain this purpose, I will make monthly survey in China, including library queries and consultations with experts. In the process of interpretation of philosophical texts I want to use the method of critical discourse analysis in the meaning of Norman Fairclough, what highlights the connection between discourse and the political and historical conditions that shape it.

The reason why I draw this research out is primarily a gap in the state of research I try to fill in. In both English and Polish, there is no monograph researching Chinese philosophy of history as yet, although there are some articles devoted to particular Chinese philosophers of history. There is also no scientific work in Polish on modern Chinese philosophy, what creates a stereotype of “always ancient” Chinese thought. On the other hand, the issue of Chinese philosophy of history is not purely academic issue, but rather strictly philosophical problem, revealing the theoretical possibility of the philosophy of history, which goes beyond Western ways of thinking. Finally, one should emphasize practical aspects of my research: in this respect, in which the traditional philosophy of history further determines the horizon of political thinking of the Chinese authorities, investigation into Chinese philosophy of history helps us with understanding of many political decisions or even provide justification for some forecasts of civilizational change in the near future.