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The Impact of Values on National Reconstruction: Is the Case of South Korea Appropriate for Ukraine?

Abstract

Object: to study the applicability of the South Korean experience of the post-war national reconstruction and development to post-war economic recovery of Ukraine in correlation with those countries' evolutionary positions on the Inglehart–Welzel cultural map of the world and the current state of the global economic environment.

Methods: abstract-logical; the interdisciplinary application of tools of political economy, sociology, theory of modernization and the world-system theory; axiological approach; comparative analysis.

Findings: a comparison of the key cultural and value parameters of the development of Ukraine and South Korea in the context of the tasks of the post-war reconstruction of the Ukrainian economy and the current state of the global economic environment was carried out. The cause-and-effect relationships of the “South Korean economic miracle” with the system of social values were determined. In this context, the possibility of applying the South Korean experience of national reconstruction for the post-war recovery of Ukraine's economy was substantiated.

Conclusions: it was inferred that the potential South Korean “Marshall Plan for Ukraine” could include, along with the financial and material resource assistance from the Republic of Korea, also the systematic use of South Korean experience in post-war reconstruction and modernization of the national economy under conditions of a long-term armed confrontation with “Northern neighbor” and bloc confrontation at the regional and global levels.

Keywords: values, national reconstruction, Confucianism, South Korea, Miracle on the Han River, Ukraine, modernization, post-war economic recovery.

Introduction

The intensifying rivalry for global leadership between the USA and China brought to the fore the problem of comparative analysis of the ethical and value bases of socio-economic dynamics, innovation, and competitiveness of the Euro-Atlantic, primarily Protestant, community, on the one hand, and the East Asian, primarily Confucian, on the other, especially from the viewpoint of competitive advantages of the respective systems of ethical values and their mutual adaptability potential.

In view of the full-scale war being waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine since February 24, 2022, that has already led to huge destruction of the Ukrainian economy, including its critical infrastructure, the problem of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine's national economy and, in this regard, foreign experience of successful post-war reconstruction and modernization of national economy, especially that of South Korea, “arguably, the most Confucian in its legal, political, and cultural practices” (Kim, 2015) is of particular importance and relevance.

The study of value factors of the phenomenally successful reconstruction and modernization of South Korea (the Miracle on the Han River), which took place during 1960s-1990s after the Korean War of 1950-1953, has considerable theoretical and practical significance for effectively overcoming the consequences of the ongoing full-scale Russia-Ukraine war, post-war reconstruction and modernization development of the national economy. This involves the adaptation of the relevant South Korean experience to the post-war Ukrainian realities to support the Ukrainian society on the way to the sustainable development goals.

Literature review

Despite the existence of a number of fundamental academic works devoted to the study of the relationship of Confucianism with modernization, industrialization, and economic growth (by Kyong-Dong Kim, Sungmoon Kim, Jennifer S. Oh, Chong-Min Park, Joseph Wong, Doh Chull Shin, Andrew Swiston, Igor

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Tolstokulakov, Ezra F. Vogel, Wei-Bin Zhang, Ukrainian scholars Leonid Leshchenko, Yuri Mazur, Kan Den Sik et al.), the problems, opportunities, and prospects for applying the modernization experience of South Korea for European non-EU transition economies, particularly for Ukraine, still remain practically unexplored.

In Ukraine, L. Kistersky, V. Marmazov, I. Piliaiev, H. Kis, I. Haliuk, I. Fedulova, I. Sovershenna et al. dedicated their studies to the issue of the phenomenal success of “East Asian Tigers” in building diversified and competitive national economies (Kistersky et al., 2021; Kis, Haliuk, 2020; Fedulova, Sovershenna, 2020). However, the principal research problem herewith relates to adaptation of the respective foreign experience to present and post-war realities of Ukraine’s economy and society that raises a question whether and to which extent the above experience remains appropriate.

Methods

Through the interdisciplinary approach, updated tools of political economy, sociology, theory of modernization and the world-system theory are applied in the article. A special attention in the research is paid to the axiological approach in the study of ethical values’ impact on national reconstruction and competitive development. The comparative analysis is used to analyze main cultural and value factor differences between the Eastern and Western centers of the global leadership and socio-economic dynamics. The abstract-logical, qualitative reflexive analysis is used to analyze graphic & quantitative data and draw the research conclusions.

Results

Any given economy is a set of processes that involve some respective culture, values, education, innovative advancement, history, social organization, political structure, lawful frameworks, and common assets as fundamental variables. These components provide setting, substance, and set the conditions and parameters – a kind of “soft infrastructure” in which an economy functions as a social space of interrelated human activities. In its turn, a culture itself is a social system that shares a set of common values. As points out Agner Fog, “Many cultural variables are related to development, modernization, emancipation, and secularization. These factors are often strongly correlated with each other” (Fog, 2022).

As posited Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, “The most recent wave of democratization does not seem to have been motivated mainly by a desire for greater income equality <...>; it was driven by the fact that a large share of the population gave high priority to freedom itself. This is particularly true of the democratization movements in communist countries, which were acting against regimes that already provided relatively high levels of economic equality—and installed regimes that provided less economic equality but higher levels of freedom” (Inglehart, Welzel, 2010). The Inglehart–Welzel cultural map of the world represents the cultural values of the nations of the world along two aggregate factor dimensions: The traditional versus secular-rational values reflect the transition from a religious understanding of the world to a dominance of science and bureaucracy. The second dimension named survival values versus self-expression values shows the transition from industrial to post-industrial society (World Values Survey, 2022). In the latter people place a relatively high value on individual freedom and self-expression, and have activist political orientations. These are just the traits that the political culture literature characterizes as crucial to democracy (Fog, 2022).

To highlight the global shifts in the crucial cultural factors of socio-economic dynamics of the contemporary world since the 2008 global financial crisis, we compared the Inglehart–Welzel World Cultural Map (Wave 5) constructed according to the results of the World Values Survey conducted around the world from 2005 to 2008 (Fig. 1), and the most recent similar map (Wave 7) based on the World Values Survey and European Values Study held from 2017 to 2022 (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 demonstrates that the most comprehensive quantitative studies of cultural differences between East Asian cultures and Western cultures, countries of the Confucian tradition are currently in the “Golden Mean” of the value structure of the contemporary world and at the top of the scale of secular-rational values juxtaposed to traditional religious beliefs. Moreover, those countries, primarily China and South Korea, are further consolidating the role and influence of Confucian values in their societies, while Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States are increasingly moving away from the previously dominant Christian values in the political, ethno-cultural, and socio-cultural dimensions. This significantly and even radically affects their economy and geo-economic position in the modern world.

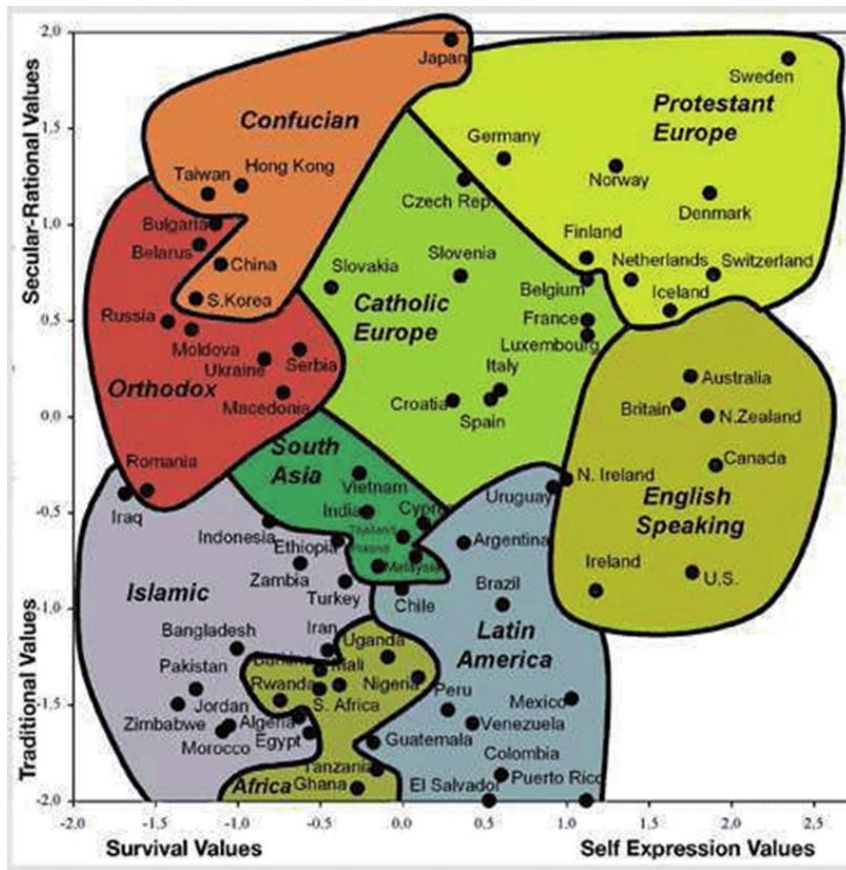


Figure 1. The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map 2005-2008

Note – compiled by Inglehart & Welzel, 2010

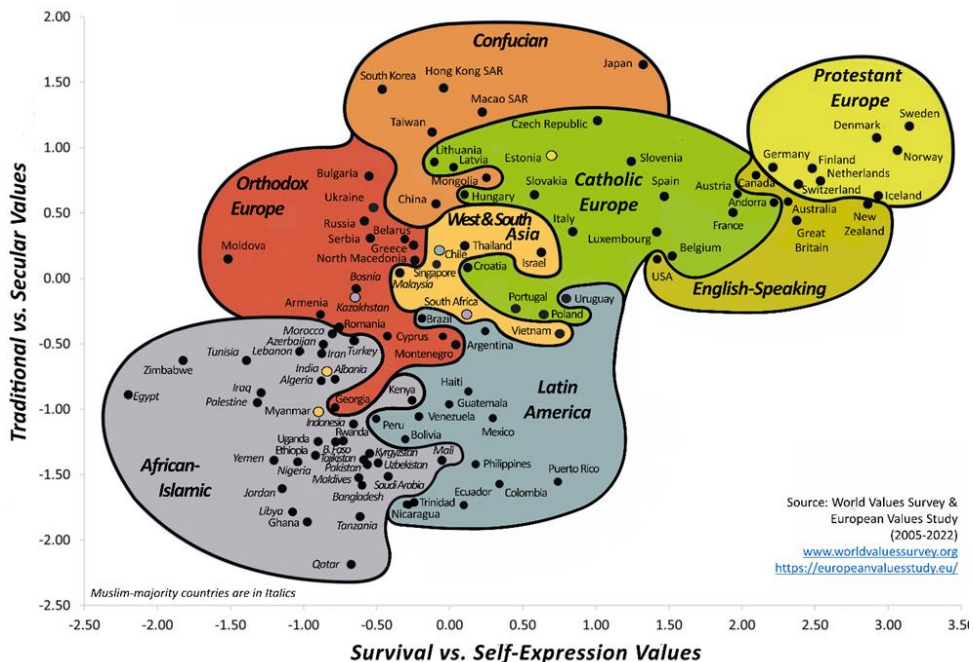


Figure 2. The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map 2022

Note – compiled by World Values Survey & European Values Study (2005–2022). Retrieved from www.worldvaluessurvey.org; <https://europeanvaluesstudy.eu/>

It is clear from Figure 2 that Ukraine and Belarus are close to mainland China on the cultural map of the world – much closer than Taiwan or the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau. As for Kazakhstan, in terms of the strength of secular values as a development factor, is on a scale much higher than

other Islamic countries – in the group of post-communist countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, and in terms of the development of self-expression values, just like Ukraine and Russia, it yields to China and is close to its Central Asian neighbors, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

The proximity of Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and a number of other post-Soviet countries to the main cultural and value factor characteristics of the Confucian civilization countries, on the one hand, and the absence, despite widespread misconceptions, of ethnocentricity in Confucian culture, but on the contrary, its universal character as a secular cultural-value system give hope for the successful application of the experience of socio-economic modernization of Confucian countries, societies and national economies both in Ukraine and in Kazakhstan. This includes, among other things, an in-depth study of the correlation between the purposeful regulation of the dynamics of value factors and economic modernization.

It must be borne in mind that the combination of traditional Confucian values with the modernization ideas of European religious and political-philosophical teachings in the political theory and practice of both China and South Korea became the catalyst for the effective impact of Confucian values on the processes of national reconstruction and socio-economic modernization. In South Korea, these are, first of all, the ideas of German sociology (*Sozialstaat*, or *welfare state*), American Protestantism, liberalism; in mainland China – Marxist socialism “with a Chinese face”.

Thus, over the past 14 years, the stunning economic successes of the countries of the Confucian tradition, primarily the PRC, Taiwan and the Republic of Korea, led to the fact that they found themselves in a position of the Golden Mean on the specified two-factor cultural scale of the world. That is, they essentially brought to life the most important, cornerstone principle of Confucian teachings – the principle of the Golden Mean harmony. At the same time, among the EU states, Hungary is currently closest to China in terms of the proximity of indicators of these aggregated cultural parameters.

Ukraine and Belarus are closer to mainland China than Russia. There has been also a “spreading” of the value consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon world, where Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada have been significantly ahead of the United States in terms of strengthening self-expression values. And the same strengthening has taken place in Protestant continental Europe, while in the United States (it should be considered that the time frame of the survey captured the period of Donald Trump’s presidency) there has been some rollback, weakening self-expression values combined with some strengthening secular values and a decrease in the influence of traditional religious values.

Today, in terms of the ratio of traditional religious and secular values, Ukraine is on the same level as China and close to Hungary and Slovakia. It is also interesting that Mongolia occupies a place on the world cultural map very close to the Baltic countries and Hungary, that indicates a relative nature of the East-West paradigm, which is popular in the West and Eastern Europe. In this regard, a historically rather long stay of the major part of modern Ukraine in the Mongol (Horde) Empire (1240s-1360s) is perceived in a completely different light, i.e., in the peripheral zone of the cultural, civilizational and value influence (mediated through the Mongols) of the Confucian Celestial (China), which at that time was the most advanced country in the world economically and culturally.

The Republic of Korea has accumulated an interesting experience of reconstruction and development in the context of Ukrainian analogies under conditions of the seizure of a part of its national territory by an adversary neighbor and an unfinished war, the actual freezing of the conflict without a peace treaty. The Miracle on the Han River was achieved by: 1) mobilizing political will, 2) effective use of the positive features of the national mentality and value system, especially Confucianism and Korean Protestantism (including in the sphere of social responsibility and solidarity); 3) through deep integration of the national economy into the world economic and financial system based on comparative competitive advantages with a strong role of the state and robust protectionism of the national industries prospectively competitive in the global market.

As Francis Fukuyama posits, the pandemic’s global political stress test has testified that “countries with weak state capacity or poor leadership will be in trouble, set for stagnation, if not impoverishment and instability. <...> To handle the initial stages of the crisis successfully, countries needed not only capable states and adequate resources but also a great deal of social consensus and competent leaders who inspired trust. This need was met by South Korea, which delegated management of the epidemic to a professional health bureaucracy, and by Angela Merkel’s Germany” (Fukuyama, 2020). It means that the classical German social state model taken, along with Anglo-American democracy institutions, back in the 1960s, as a sample for adaptation by the Republic of Korea, has proved its viability before the new global challenges. It should be noted that among Ukrainian scientists there is no consensus on the appropriateness of the systematic use of the South Korean experience of export-oriented industrialization in modern geopolitical, geoeconomic and

socio-economic realities of Ukraine as well as the applicability of the above experience for the post-war reconstruction of the national economy.

As L. Kistersky, V. Marmazov and I. Piliaiev substantiated in their recent research, the combination of Confucian values with the values of modern Christianity, especially in its reformed version of Protestantism (two the most rationalistic and competitive ethical and value systems of Modernity), and the multicultural values of modern globalized society, as it happened in the Republic of Korea, can result in a modernization breakthrough (Kistersky et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, another opinion argues that the restrictive nature of modern multilateral trading system in the sphere of tariff protection for “infant industries”, multiple WTO’s obligations restraining government support of investment and technologies transfer as well as numerous regional trade agreements, like the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (entered into force on September 1, 2017), call into question the expediency of copying the East Asian strategies of export-oriented industrialization in contemporary global economy (Ivanov, 2022).

Indeed, for example, the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) restricts its members from using reverse engineering and other forms of copying innovations that played a crucial role in the development of manufacturing and technological capabilities in the early stages of industrialization in East Asia (Kim, 1998). The WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures expressly prohibits governments from supporting domestic producers by providing export subsidies and subsidies that favor domestic goods over imported ones (World Trade Organization, 2019). Also, the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement stipulates that Ukraine must take measures to implement EU technical regulations (European Union, 2014). Thus, Ukraine provided EU companies with simplified access to its national market and a guarantee of unimpeded repatriation of investments and any profits, while it is still very difficult for Ukrainian exporters to ensure compliance with complex EU quality and environmental standards.

International and regional integration institutional and legal restrictions are, of course, an important factor in the formation of the state policy for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. However, in our opinion, it should not be taken as an absolute, since the institutions themselves and institutional rules are dynamically changing and transforming as the key parameters of the international order, the system of international political, economic and financial relations change, global leadership being restructured, etc. Currently, for example, the WTO Appellate Body cannot hear appeals at all because the term of its last member has expired on November 30, 2020 (World Trade Organization, n.d.).

In addition, restrictions within the framework of the WTO agreements relate to international trade, and not directly to domestic industrial policy with regard to the birth and growing up new “infant” industries) or policy within the framework of integration economic unions aimed at the advanced development of certain countries and regions or the active development of national innovative potential as a basis for a modernization spurt. It is characteristic that among the post-Soviet countries, Kazakhstan, for example, joined the WTO only on November 30, 2015, and Azerbaijan, which has been developing rather successfully and steadily, is not yet a WTO member.

The aggravation, up to the state of a new Cold war and proxy war, of relations between major world actors as well as the geostrategic struggle for world economic and financial leadership leads to the predominance of the geopolitical considerations over purely market ones of comparative advantages, short-term economic and financial benefits. Key economic decisions, even at the corporate level, as, for example, in the case of the problematic purchase of Twitter by Elon Musk, are primarily determined by political factors. Figuratively speaking, in times of existential societal insecurity from the individual to global level, the market value economy is overruled by the economy of values.

Moreover, participants of the WTO system do not always consistently adhere to its key principles, and sometimes retreat from their obligations, resorting to protectionism, especially in times of crisis. *Global Trade Alert*, an independent monitor of policies affecting world trade, recorded in 2009-2020 more than 19,500 new regulatory measures restricting the international movement of goods, services, capital and labor, and only 7,800 measures aimed at the liberalization of international economic relations (General Trading Agreement, 2021).

Likewise, under conditions of extraordinary force majeure (Brexit, Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine war), provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, which were developed, agreed and ratified by contracting parties under significantly different geopolitical, international and global realities, may not be considered untouchable “Holy Scripture”. Moreover, the awareness of the need for greater flexibility and adapt-

ability of institutional and legal instruments to the rapidly changing geopolitical and geo-economic realities in order to preserve the existing normative order is becoming more and more typical for the European (and, more broadly, Western) scientific and expert community. For example, scholars from the European University Institute consider that, “to confront the adverse consequence of the Russian invasion of Ukraine” within the European Union legal framework, finally “rules such as fiscal and state aid rules, will have to be redefined given new challenges and new circumstances” (Del Carmen Sandoval Velasco et al., 2022).

Particularly, 30 partner countries of Ukraine in negotiations on joining the WTO could make exceptions for Ukraine in terms of temporarily lifting the ban on budgetary (state) export subsidies - as for a country that has become the epicenter of an armed conflict of a virtually global level. This decision should be taken at the level of the G7 and the EU, which would include the temporary suspension of certain provisions of the Association Agreement that curb state support for industrial reconstruction and at least the renewal of pre-war export volumes from Ukraine. After all, the restrictions within the framework of the WTO agreements relate primarily to international trade, and not to internal structural policies aimed, e.g., at the active development of national innovation capacity as a basis for a modernization breakthrough, or policies within interstate integration unions aimed at advancing the development of certain countries or regions.

Discussions

Michael Bond distinguished as one of the determining cultural factors of national economic development the “Confucian Work Dynamism” dimension (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987) (as it mainly contained items to be found in the teachings of Confucius) through juxtaposing dynamic, future-oriented values on its positive pole to static, past- and present-oriented ones on the negative pole. In 1991 Geert Hofstede suggested to name this dimension “Long- versus Short-Term Orientation” (LTO), as the already achieved by that time and predicted economic growth in the last three decades of the 20 century was highly significantly correlated with LTO cultural values (Hofstede et al., 2010). East Asian Confucian tradition nations and economies tended to score high on this dimension, suggesting a long-term orientation. Continental European countries had average scores, whereas Anglo, African, and South Asian countries had low scores, suggestive of a short-term orientation (Minkov, Hofstede, 2012). This evidence can be fairly aligned with the deep-rooted experience of medium-term and long-term planning in Japan, China, South Korea and, at the same time, for several decades of the existence of a “socialist planned economy” in the USSR and the states of Central and Eastern Europe.

As later found Michael Minkov and Geert Hofstede, although LTO is strongest in East Asia, the eastern parts of Eastern Europe and Kyrgyzstan also score high. In the above authors’ opinion, that is consistent with “the high levels of educational achievement in Eastern Europe and with its recent economic boom” (Minkov, Hofstede, 2012), prior to the 2008 world financial crisis. Meantime, the LTO measure verifies “a fairly clear contrast between Asia and Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, on the other hand”, from what the authors make, however, the following rather dubious conclusion: “The high scores of the Eastern European countries confirm that an association with Confucianism is not quite appropriate” (Minkov, Hofstede, 2012). To our mind, on the contrary, the proximity of the Eastern European and post-Soviet-Eurasian countries to the East Asian countries in terms of LTO testifies to the high potential of the latter in fruitful perception and implementation of progressive rational-secular elements and values of Confucianism.

Conclusion

In view of the above, the potential South Korean “Marshall Plan for Ukraine” could include, along with the financial and material resource assistance from the Republic of Korea, also the systematic use of South Korean experience in post-war reconstruction and modernization of the national economy under conditions of a long-term armed confrontation with “Northern neighbor” and bloc confrontation at the regional and global levels.

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Е. Борзенко, И.С. Пиляев

Құндылықтардың ұлттық қайта құруға әсері: Оңтүстік Кореяның кейсі Украина үшін келеді ме?

Аңдатпа

Мақсаты: Инглехарт–Вельцель әлемінің мәдени картасындағы осы елдердің эволюциялық жағдайымен және жаһандық экономикалық ортаның қазіргі жағдайымен байланысты Украина экономикасын соғыстан кейінгі қалпына келтіруге ұлттық қайта құру мен дамудың Оңтүстік Корея тәжірибесінің қолданылуын зерттеу.

Әдістер: Мақаланы жазу кезінде абстрактілі-логикалық әдіс, аксиологиялық тәсіл, салыстырмалы талдау қолданылды, саяси экономика, әлеуметтану, модернизация теориясы және әлем-жүйелік теория құралдары пәнаралық қолданысқа ие болды.

Қорытынды: Украина мен Оңтүстік Кореяның дамуының негізгі мәдени-құндылық параметрлері Украина экономикасын соғыстан кейінгі қалпына келтіру және әлемдік экономикалық ортаның қазіргі жағдайы тұрғысынан салыстырылды. «Оңтүстік рейстік экономикалық ғажайыптың» әлеуметтік құндылықтар жүйесімен себеп-салдарлық байланыстары анықталды. Бұл тұрғыда Украина экономикасын соғыстан кейінгі қалпына келтіру үшін Оңтүстік Кореяның ұлттық қайта құру тәжірибесін қолдану мүмкіндігі негізделген.

Тұжырымдама: Әлеуетті Оңтүстік Кореяның «Украинаға арналған Маршалл жоспары» Корея Республикасының қаржылық және материалдық-ресурстық көмегімен қатар, соғыстан кейінгі қайта құру мен ұлттық экономиканы модернизациялаудың Оңтүстік Кореяның тәжірибесін «солтүстік көршімен» ұзақ мерзімді қарулы қақтығыс және аймақтық және жаһандық деңгейдегі блоктық қақтығыс жағдайында жүйелі түрде қолдануды қарастыруы мүмкін деген қорытынды жасалған.

Кілт сөздер: құндылықтар, ұлттық қайта құру, конфуцийшілдік, Оңтүстік Корея, ғажайып хан, Украина, модернизация, соғыстан кейінгі экономиканы қалпына келтіру.

Е. Борзенко, И.С. Пиляев

**Влияние ценностей на национальную реконструкцию:
подходит ли кейс Южной Кореи для Украины?**

Аннотация:

Цель: Исследовать применимость южнокорейского опыта национальной реконструкции и развития к послевоенному восстановлению экономики Украины во взаимосвязи с эволюционным положением этих стран на культурной карте мира Инглхарта–Вельцеля и текущим состоянием глобальной экономической среды.

Методы: При написании статьи были использованы абстрактно-логический метод, аксиологический подход, сравнительный анализ, получили междисциплинарное применение инструменты политической экономии, социологии, теории модернизации и мир-системной теории.

Результаты: Проведено сравнение ключевых культурно-ценностных параметров развития Украины и Южной Кореи в контексте задач послевоенного восстановления экономики Украины и современного состояния мировой экономической среды. Определены причинно-следственные связи «южнокорейского экономического чуда» с системой социальных ценностей. В этом контексте обоснована возможность применения южнокорейского опыта национальной реконструкции для послевоенного восстановления экономики Украины.

Выводы: Сделан вывод о том, что потенциальный южнокорейский «план Маршалла для Украины» может предусматривать, наряду с финансовой и материально-ресурсной помощью Республики Корея, также системное использование южнокорейского опыта послевоенной реконструкции и модернизации национальной экономики в условиях длительного вооруженного противостояния с «северным соседом» и блокового противостояния на региональном и глобальном уровнях.

Ключевые слова: ценности, национальная реконструкция, конфуцианство, Южная Корея, Чудо на Хан, Украина, модернизация, послевоенное восстановление экономики.