

**EPISTEMOLOGICAL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY,
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCES**

ISSN 2618-1274 (Print), ISSN [2618-1282](#) (Online)

Journal home page: <https://visnukpfs.dp.ua/index.php/PFS/index>

ФІЛОСОФІЯ

Максим Вікторович Дойчик

Завідувач кафедри філософії, соціології
та релігієзнавства,
Прикарпатський національний університет
імені Василя Стефаника,
вул. Шевченка 57, Івано-Франківськ,
76018, Україна

E-mail: maksvdoc@ukr.net,

Maksym Victorovich Doichyk

Head of Philosophy, Sociology
and Religious Studies Department,
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University,
57 Shevchenko Str., Ivano-Frankivsk,
76018, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5081-1336>

Оксана Ярославівна Дойчик,

Доцент кафедри англійської філології,
Прикарпатський національний університет
імені Василя Стефаника,
вул. Шевченка 57, Івано-Франківськ,
76018, Україна

E-mail: osdoichyk@yahoo.com,

Oksana Yaroslavivna Doichyk

Associate Professor of English Philology
Department Studies,
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University,
57 Shevchenko Str., Ivano-Frankivsk,
76018, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7921-1868>

УДК 17.026.4

**EPISTEMOLOGICAL PREMISES FOR THE CONCEPT OF DIGNITY
IN JOHN LOCKE'S PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE**

Received 17 January 2021; revised 27 February 2021; accepted 14 March 2021

DOI: 10.15421/342101

Abstract

The article presents the analysis of the epistemological basis for the concept of dignity in the philosophical discourse of an outstanding English enlightener John Locke. His views on natural rights and freedoms as well as on human dignity, formed within the framework of the Enlightenment formative shifts, haven't lost their heuristic potential, and moreover, reveal their relevance in the context of the tendencies prevailing in the contemporary dynamic world. In the process of investigation the following methods were applied: dialectical, hermeneutical, phenomenological, and comparative. The research has revealed that John Locke's concept of dignity, as well as the conception of educating a worthy citizen, directly correlate with his epistemology. Despite the fact that the phraseological unit "tabula rasa" wasn't mentioned in Locke's works directly, though having been repeatedly attributed to him, the intention emphasized in this Roman phrase is present in his views. This phrase lied in the basis of his fundamental view that moral ideas couldn't be inborn. Rejecting the metaphysical basis for human morality, John Locke argued that social differentiation as well as a person's virtuous or wicked behavior were not rooted in human nature, but on the contrary, were formed by the social environment, especially by the upbringing. This idea presupposed having equal cultural, educational, political, and legal conditions for a person's social start. Only human striving for happiness could be considered innate. This desire, in its correlation with social progress, was seen as transforming the idea of human dignity. Having been established, Western capitalism gives rise to new competitive possibilities of self-realization, not available for most people before. Consequently, dignity has been increasingly identified with rationality and the level of education and upbringing, as well as with personal and professional success.

Key words: *epistemology, human being, equality, dignity, freedom, tolerance, personality.*

Епістемологічні засади концепту гідності у філософському дискурсі Джона Лока

Анотація

У статті проаналізовано особливості епістемологічного обґрунтування концепту гідності у філософському дискурсі видатного англійського просвітника Джона Лока. Його погляди стосовно природних прав і свобод, гідності людини, сформовані в умовах формаційних зрушень Нового часу, не тільки не втратили свого евристичного потенціалу, але й з новою силою виявляють свою актуальність

у світлі тенденцій сучасного динамічного світу. У процесі роботи над статтею було використано як загальнонаукові, так і філософські методи дослідження (герменевтичний, феноменологічний, діалектичний, компаративний). У ході дослідження виявлено, що концепт гідності та концепція виховання гідного громадянина у філософському дискурсі Джона Локка прямо пов'язані з його епістемологією. Хоч у його працях немає жодної згадки про фразеологізм “*tabula rasa*”, авторство якого йому неодноразово намагалися приписати, проте інтенція, на якій акцентує увагу цей римський вислів у нього присутня. Саме вона для англійського просвітника стає підставою заперечення вродженості моральних ідей. Відкидаючи метафізичну причину людської моральності, Джон Локк стверджує, що соціальна диференціація, добродетельна або недобродетельна поведінка особистості аж ніяк не вкорінені в людській натурі, а породжені соціальним середовищем, зокрема, впливом виховання. Тому усі повинні мати рівні культурно-освітні та політико-правові умови для соціального старту. Вродженим в людині є тільки прагнення до щастя, яке в діалектичному взаємозв'язку із суспільним прогресом стає основою трансформації уявлень про гідність. Утвердження західного типу капіталізму створює нові конкурентні можливості самореалізації, недоступні раніше для більшості людей. А отже гідність все більшою мірою починає ототожнюватися з раціональністю, рівнем освіти та виховання, особистісним і професійним успіхом.

Ключові слова: епістемологія, людина, рівність, гідність, свобода, толерантність, особистість.

Эпистемологическое обоснование концепта достоинства в философском дискурсе Джона Локка

Аннотация

В статье проанализировано особенности эпистемологического обоснования концепта достоинства в философском дискурсе выдающегося английского просветителя Джона Локка. Его взгляды относительно природных прав и свобод, достоинства человека, сформированы в условиях формационных изменений Нового времени, не только не потеряли своего эвристического потенциала, но и с новой силой проявляют свою актуальность в свете тенденций современного динамического мира. В процессе работы над статьей применялись как общенаучные, так и философские методы исследования (герменевтический, феноменологический, диалектический, компаративный). В ходе исследования установлено, что концепт достоинства и концепция воспитания достоинства гражданина в философском дискурсе Джона Локка прямо связаны с его эпистемологией. Хотя в его произведениях нет ни малейшего упоминания про фразеологизм “*tabula rasa*”, авторство которого ему неоднократно приписывалось, но все же интенция, на которой акцентирует внимание, указанное римское изречение у него присутствует. Именно оно для английского просветителя становится основанием отрицания врожденности моральных идей. Отрицая метафизическую причину человеческой моральности, Джон Локк утверждает, что социальная дифференциация, добродетельное или недобродетельное поведение личности ни в коей мере не укоренены в человеческой натуре, а порождены социальной средой, в частности влиянием воспитания. Поэтому все должны иметь равные культурно-образовательные и политико-правовые условия для социального старта. Врожденным в человеке является только стремление к счастью, которое в диалектической взаимосвязи с общественным прогрессом становится основанием трансформации представлений о достоинстве. Утверждение западного типа капитализма создает новые конкурентные возможности самореализации, недоступные раньше для большинства людей. Достоинство все больше начинает отождествляться с рациональностью, уровнем образования и воспитания, личностным и профессиональным успехом.

Ключевые слова: эпистемология, человек, равенство, достоинство, свобода, толерантность, личность.

Introduction.

The faith in human's capacity for becoming better, for constant learning and development according to the principle of ethical rationalism, has always been inherent in European spiritual culture based on the synthesis of Ancient and Judeo-Christian meliorism. Such faith gained

special strength during the Enlightenment, when every person was gradually emancipating and becoming aware that they could determine their life path by themselves.

In the present paper we aim at analyzing the epistemological basis for the concept of dignity in the philosophical discourse of an outstanding

English enlightener John Locke. His views on natural human rights and freedoms, formed within the framework of the Enlightenment formative shifts, haven't yet lost their heuristic potential, and moreover, still reveal their relevance in the context of the tendencies which prevail in the contemporary dynamic world. New civilizational and natural challenges create an unprecedented existential tension, give rise to a paradoxical situation of devaluation and, at the same time, absolutization of human life, dignity, and freedom.

In the XVIIIth century the philosophy of Enlightenment were gradually apt to recognize the possibility of infinite moral, intellectual, and social perfection of every person on the basis of the rational educational method. One of the inspirers of this axiological view was John Locke (1632-1704). The unequivocal aim of his enlightening ideal education is "an honest, useful, and worthy man, and lover of his country" [Locke 1824c: 6], who would consider doing "all the service he can to his country" [Locke 1824c: 5] to be an indispensable duty and a matter of honor. These intentions, substantiated by the philosopher, are more than ever relevant in our time, when the waves of moral devaluation, caused by the cynical expansion of the limits of what is acceptable, one after another cover more and more islands of stability of social life.

Review of recent publications.

The need to study the epistemological substantiation of the concept of dignity in the philosophical discourse of John Locke is motivated by the long intellectual discussions of recent decades on the content of the phenomenon of dignity.

Some scholars consider dignity to be an innate metaphysical quality, equally characteristic of every human being and functioning as the fundamental basis of natural rights and freedoms of a human being (see the works of Qianfan Zhang [Zhang 2016], Leon Kass [Kass 2004], George Kateb [Kateb 2011], Martha Nussbaum [Nussbaum 2011], Ralf Stoecker [Stoecker 2011], Herbert Spiegelberg [Spiegelberg 1986]). Whereas others consider any attempt at discussing the issue of dignity to be vain (Ruth Macklin [Macklin 2003], Stephen Pinker [Pinker

2008], Doris Schroeder [Schroeder 2012]).

The range of researchers (Gela Bandzeladze [Bandzeladze 1979], Maksym Doichyk, Ihor Goyan [Doichyk 2008; Doichyk 2018; Doichyk & Goyan 2018; Doichyk & Doichyk 2019], Yurgen Habermas [Habermas 2012], Maryna Savelyeva [Savelyeva 2018], Daniel Sulmasy [Sulmasy 2012]) believe that dignity should be regarded as the initial transhistorical concept that functions similarly to such fundamental categories as good, justice, goodness, beauty, that don't need to be defined.

Considering different worldviews and methodological positions, these researchers attempt at comprehending epistemological, cultural-anthropological, philosophical, and legal premises for human dignity; and within this context the ideological experience of John Locke has remarkable heuristic potential.

The purpose of the research is to investigate the epistemological substantiation for the concept of dignity in the philosophical discourse of an outstanding English enlightener John Locke.

The results and discussion.

John Locke's belief in the possibility of educating a worthy person ("a gentleman") is deeply grounded in his epistemology. The scholar argued against "the truth of the innateness doctrine" [Locke 1824a: 41], claiming that maxims or innate truths are never known or noticed before the use of reason [Locke 1824a: 44]. Therefore, all knowledge, as well as moral principles, is acquired rather than innate, since "the ideas themselves <...> are not born <...> but got afterwards" [Locke 1824a: 49]. In this context experience proves that a person masters these ideas only having learned and assimilated them. According to Locke, all "moral rules need a proof, *ergo* not innate" [Locke 1824a: 54]. If the innate ideas ever existed, they would be inevitably recognized by every single person, which is obviously not the case, as proves the philosopher: "virtue generally approved, not because innate, but because profitable". [Locke 1824a: 49].

Given the obvious fact, that even being aware of moral practical rules, people tend to break them "without shame or fear", none moral principles can be supposed innate, since "it being

impossible that men should confidently and serenely break a rule, which they could not but evidently know, that God had set up, and would certainly punish the breach of” [Locke 1824a: 58].

Locke describes instances of enormities practiced without remorse, reflecting on how robberies, murders, rapes, etc. could be “the sports of men set at liberty from punishment and censure” [Locke 1824a: 56]. The philosopher proves that there is no evidence for any innate moral principles being imprinted, asking rhetorically a very burning question: “Where then are those innate principles of justice, piety, gratitude, equity, chastity? Or, where is that universal consent that assures us there are such inbred rules?” [Locke 1824a: 57]. In fact, if moral principles of a worthy life were of innate nature, it would have led to creating a harmonious society long ago. Though, both in the past and in the present such social model has been strived for only as a dream; whereas the thorny history of mankind serves as a convincing evidence of this fact.

Nevertheless, Locke does recognize innateness of some ideas: “nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness, and an aversion to misery: these indeed are innate practical principles, which (as practical principles ought) do continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions without ceasing: these may be observed in all persons and all ages, steady and universal; but these are inclinations of the appetite to good, not impressions of truth on the understanding” [Locke 1824a: 54]. This eudemonism of Locke’s presents his epistemological perspective on human dignity rather clearly.

According to the English philosopher, all the rest human innate strivings are “so far from being moral principles, that if they were left to their full swing, they would carry men to the overturning of all morality”. Locke’s enlightening approach suggests considering moral laws to be certain social “curbs”, the purpose of which being to restrain “these exorbitant desires”. Moral rules predetermine the possible limits of worthy human behavior, control it by means of reward and punishment. The latter should “overbalance

the satisfaction” expected from the breach of the law. The acquired knowledge, “imprinted on the minds of all men as a law”, is supposed to ensure adherence to the common idea of a worthy behavior [Locke 1824a: 59].

Locke claims that despite the fact that moral rules are not “written on their hearts”, most people assimilate them and become convinced of their necessity in the same way they learn about other things: discovering the traditions, customs, and laws of their country, as well as under the influence of the upbringing. Since “persuasion, however got, will serve to set conscience on work, which is nothing else, but our own opinion or judgment of the moral rectitude or pravity of our own actions” [Locke 1824a: 56]. The philosopher proves that virtuous behavior is generally approved and accepted not because of its innateness, but rather because of its profitability and a person’s “selfinterest”, since it is beneficial to approbate moral rules and to “reap advantage to himself” enjoying “the conveniencies of this life” [Locke 1824a: 55]. Thus, moral principles and beliefs are usually considered to be formed on the basis of everyday experience, but, in fact, those principles are being developed in early childhood in the process of upbringing and education aimed at shaping “unwary, and as yet unprejudiced” child’s mind, for “white paper receives any characters” [Locke 1824a: 63]. The philosopher argues that our principles cannot be innate, for the mind “cannot draw conclusions from principles, which it never yet knew or understood” [Locke 1824a: 66]. Becoming older, people tend to forget why they behave the way they do and what has influenced their present conduct, because “those opinions were taught them before their memory began to keep a register of their actions” [Locke 1824a: 63]. They would rather consider their innate natural inclinations to be the source of their proper behavior than admit the past influence of upbringing and customs determining their will.

Reflecting on the epistemological perspective in Locke’s views, we cannot but mention that the phraseological unit *tabula rasa*, having been repeatedly attributed to the English enlightener, wasn’t mentioned in Locke’s works directly, though the intention emphasized in this Roman

phrase is influential in his views. Due to proper education and upbringing everyone is given the possibility to discover grand ideas.

Questioning Plato's principles of transcendentalism, Locke argues that the idea of God is not innate but "is agreeable to the common light of reason and naturally deducible from every part of our knowledge". Locke is convinced that "the visible marks of extraordinary wisdom and power appear so plainly in all the works of the creation, that a rational creature, who will but seriously reflect on them, cannot miss the discovery of a deity" [Locke 1824a: 69]. Having made the discovery, a person proves that s/he "had made a right use of their reason, thought maturely of the causes of things, and traced them to their original; from whom other less considering people having once received so important a notion, it could not easily be lost again". According to Locke, God furnished any person with the capabilities "which will serve for the sufficient discovery of all things requisite to the end of such a being" [Locke 1824a: 70]. The philosopher substantiates the principle of meliorism, acknowledging that under certain circumstances every person has the possibility to gain access to high truths and rearrange their lives accordingly.

Though, there are people, having "body and mind so vigorous, and well framed by nature" that this "strength of their natural genius" is enough to be naturally "carried towards what is excellent" and to be "able to do wonders", these examples are unique and are exceptions rather than tendencies [Locke 1824c: 6]. According to Locke, "of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education" [Locke 1824c: 7]. Due to the education, the main difference is "to be found in the manners and abilities of men". Therefore, starting in the early childhood, "great care is to be had of the forming children's minds", because it shall influence their lives "always after" [Locke 1824c: 19].

Locke's perspective on education rejects the idea of innate inequality, known yet since Antiquity, and emphasized the great importance of a social environment, as well as the influence of society on every person's development. According

to these egalitarian intentions, every person gains the chance to fulfill the dreams of developing one's personality as well as of choosing one's life path in the new and changeable capitalist world – since it is not only the world of grand diversities, but the world of vast possibilities, especially for those who strive to write down their story on a white paper.

Locke emphasizes that setting "the mind right" is the most important part of education process, since the body should be kept "in strength and vigour" so that "it may be able to obey and execute the orders of the mind" [Locke 1824c: 19]. The mind allows or prohibits certain actions aiming at satisfaction of human desires. The ability to differentiate between what is necessary and what is only pleasant should be developed in children's minds "from their very cradles. The very first thing they should learn to know, should be, that they were not to have any thing, because it pleased them, but because it was thought fit for them" [Locke 1824c: 22]. The natural restraint in their desires is acquired through education and becomes "easy and familiar by an early practice" [Locke 1824c: 22]. According to Locke, the main principle of virtue and dignity correlates with the power of "denying ourselves the satisfaction of our own desires, where reason does not authorise them" [Locke 1824c: 22], thus, the mind, trained right since the childhood, "may be disposed to consent to nothing, but what may be suitable to the dignity and excellency of a rational creature" [Locke 1824c: 19].

Locke considers it absolutely unacceptable that educators apply humiliation or corporal punishment to the upbringing of a child. These methods are "the most unfit of any to be used in education", because "if the mind be curbed, and humbled too much in children; if their spirits be abased and broken much, by too strict an hand over them; they lose all their vigour and industry" [Locke 1824c: 25]. Having been punished and humiliated in childhood, such "dejected minds, timorous and tame" are in a much worse state than those "extravagant young fellows, that have liveliness and spirit", who have more chance to "come sometimes to be set right, and so make able and great men", whereas "low spirits are hardly ever to be raised, and very seldom attain

to anything” [Locke 1824c: 25].

Education, in Locke’s opinion, is “the great art”, the most important outcome of which is to find “a way how to keep up a child’s spirit, easy, active, and free; and yet, at the same time, to restrain him from many things he has a mind to, and to draw him to things that are uneasy to him” [Locke 1824c: 25]. The philosopher emphasizes that the most efficient instrument of education a worthy citizen is recognition of honor and disgrace, which are “the most powerful incentives to the mind, when once it is brought to relish them” [Locke 1824c: 27]. Locke is convinced, that if educators succeeded in getting “into children a love of credit, and an apprehension of shame and disgrace”, they have most definitely “put into them the true principle, which will constantly work, and incline them to the right” [Locke 1824c: 27]. This rational approach to educating dignity has the following important utilitarian perspective: those who are commended for their virtuous behavior “will necessarily be beloved and cherished by everybody, and have all other good things as a consequence of it”; on the contrary, those who fall into disesteem and win disrespect for their miscarriage, who do not care for their credit “will unavoidably fall under neglect and contempt: and, in that state, the want of whatever might satisfy or delight him, will follow” [Locke 1824c: 28]. Taking care of one’s reputation becomes the most important thing in life, more important than taking care of one’s estate, because the size of the gained wealth is directly dependent on one’s credit.

Each person must persistently and continuously cherish their reputation and good name. The reputation is one’s personal capital, achieved through recognition and approval “that other people’s reason, by a common consent, gives to virtuous and well-ordered actions”. Personal reputation, approved by others, is considered “the proper guide and encouragement of children, till they grow able to judge for themselves, and to find what is right by their own reason” [Locke 1824c: 29].

Investment in one’s reputation, and hence, in one’s good name, has lied in the axiological basis for the worthy lifestyle, and has characterized the behavior of a successful person of Western

civilization – a person who is focused on long-term success in competitive human relationships, with God always being the ultimate judge.

The development of capitalism has identified dignity with being enterprising as well as with having the potential to gain success. Only those people who are not satisfied with a position of an employee have been thought to have dignity, since this position has been considered rather difficult and humiliating; especially was it so at times of primitive accumulation of capital. Worthy people do not tend to endlessly exploit their faded aristocratic authority, but are apt to reveal their ingenuity and courage to establish themselves as bourgeois entrepreneurs. Dignity is acquired and protected by a person who is able not only to inherit the wealth that plummets day by day, but also knows how to increase and develop what is available. From this perspective, a person should apply his/her knowledge and skills in practice to achieve material results. The practical implementation of skills would indicate the development of utilitarianism and pragmatism. Thus, personal success becomes a criterion of dignity: “knowledge of our capacity is a cure of skepticism and idleness. When we know our own strength, we shall the better know what to undertake with hopes of success” [Locke 1824a: 39]. Locke emphasizes that “our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct” [Locke 1824a: 39]; and the main task is to acquire the knowledge necessary for succeeding in a certain sphere: “if we can find out those measures, whereby a rational creature, put in that state in which man is in this world, may, and ought to govern his opinions, and actions depending thereon, we need not to be troubled that some other things escape our knowledge” [Locke 1824a: 39]. Wealth increase as well as transformation of the world would bring both profit and glory; therefore they are the virtues outlined in commonplace and generally accepted understanding of dignity from the perspective of capitalist worldview.

Laziness, lethargy, complacency, contemplation, and even stoic apathy, valued by Antiquity, are no longer considered to correlate with dignity as seen at the Age of Enlightenment, because dignity begins being interpreted from

the pragmatic perspective that emphasizes the importance of activity and success of every person. The above mentioned intentions of the Age of Reason are put into words by John Locke: “Men’s happiness, or misery, is most part of their own making. He, whose mind directs not wisely, will never take the right way; and he whose body is crazy and feeble, will never be able to advance in it [Locke 1824c: 6]. A worthy person is seen as swift, active, passionate and, most importantly, cold-minded and pragmatic, though not cold-hearted, so that s/he would quickly and clearly calculate possible benefits and probable losses. Thus, on the basis of rationalism, the principles of utilitarianism and pragmatism are becoming established at the Age of Reason. People who have created themselves, implemented their skills in successful businesses, overcome obstacles and difficulties can be proud of themselves and be worthy of recognition. In this context, pragmatic utilitarian approach to defining dignity is clearly traced.

The Enlightenment is a period of relative emancipation of the individual. Due to the development of a new, Western, type of capitalism all people, albeit formally, obtained the right to be considered human and to be respected. According to Locke, the main prerequisite for personal initiative, and therefore, for dignity, is freedom. Human dignity cannot be considered beyond liberty, since every person is part of a society: “freedom of men under government is to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it; a liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man” [Locke 1824b: 227]. Opposing freedom to dignity means neglecting the human being as a whole. Freedom regardless of dignity is alienated from man. Dignity separated from freedom is incomplete dignity. In this context freedom and dignity are interdependent.

The state of total freedom is so called “natural liberty” of a person which means being free “from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for

his rule” [Locke 1824b: 227]. Having natural freedom allows “uncontrollable disposing of one’s person or possessions” according to one’s preference “within the bounds of the law of nature”, which means that no person has liberty to “destroy himself, or so much as any creature in his possession”. This state can also be called a state of natural equality, i.e., “creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature”; and only God (“the lord and master of them all”) might “by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above another, and confer on him, by an evident and clear appointment, an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty” [Locke 1824b: 217-218]. The “equality of men by nature”, in Locke’s view, is “evident in itself and beyond all question”, thus being the “foundation of obligation to mutual love amongst men”, acknowledging mutual duties “we owe one another” on the basis of “the great maxims of justice and charity”. All people are born equal and independent, therefore “no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions: for men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise Maker”. The above mentioned rules “of reason and common equity” are considered to be that very natural “measure God has set to the actions of men, for their mutual security” [Locke 1824b: 218-220].

It should be mentioned that Locke’s perspective on human dignity became trendy in the Enlightenment society not immediately but gradually. It took time to overcome traditional clichés, so the formation of a new image of a person constantly required significant intellectual, moral, political, and legal effort.

From the standpoint of the Enlightenment society, the right to reveal one’s sense of dignity is, formally, enjoyed by everyone (on this point capitalism is fundamentally different from the hierarchical stratification of feudalism), but, in fact, only successful people are considered to have real dignity. Thus, despite the declared principle of formal egalitarianism, the pragmatic aspect of dignity and the emphasis on being successful dominate in the views of Locke as well as of many other Enlightenment philosophers. Entrepreneurial success is considered the magical

force which helps a person be recognized as worthy and allows being proud of oneself, appreciating oneself, feeling much freer and more self-sufficient, as compared to others.

Regarding freedom as an absolute, Locke reflects on the idea of moral improvement of a person, which identifies individual interests with social ones. The philosopher attempts to prove that the variety of subjective isolated personal interests and objective social trends can be synthesized, and the best human capabilities, such as reason and activity, can overcome any of the existing contradictions. It is natural for a person to be changeable, life-affirming, and full of strength. Thus, people are supposed to develop all their innate capabilities through activities.

In the context of the breakdown of the traditional system of relations the world becomes unpredictable, but such situation does not stop or frighten the active, purposeful, intelligent person of the Enlightenment, who treats this uncertainty as the source of new opportunities to gain success in life. The mind, which balances passions and allows a person to control oneself, plays a crucial role in giving priority to good over evil, in realizing the importance of taking into account the interests of society beyond one's own individual interests. A person, having the sense of dignity and reasonably experiencing this spiritual power, guided by wisdom, is able to enjoy life to the fullest. Locke emphasizes, that all that can be done, and should be aimed at, is "to make the best of what nature has given, to prevent the vices and faults to which such a constitution is most inclined, and give it all the advantages it is capable of". On reasonable basis, "everyone's natural genius should be carried as far as it could" [Locke 1824c: 31]. The English philosopher is convinced that "the principle of all virtue and excellency lies in a power of denying ourselves the satisfaction of our own desires, where reason does not authorize them" [Locke 1824c: 22]. In this context, respect for human reason as well as the principle of ratiocentrism can be considered the basis for Locke's interpretation of dignity, because wisdom and knowledge, and rationality in general, are identified with dignity in his works.

In fact, in Locke's philosophy of dignity, the pessimism, arising from the fact that real

individuals tend to have unworthy motives and ambitions, is overcome. He is convinced that people are unable to provide themselves with everything necessary for life and everything to which human nature aspires, i.e., "a life fit for the dignity of man". That is why, "to supply those defects and imperfections which are in us, as living singly and solely by ourselves, we are naturally induced to seek communion and fellowship with others" [Locke 1824b: 22]. Every person being part of a society, the selfishness of individuals is overwhelmed by a good, unifying, ultimate utilitarian social goal.

Another important achievement of the Enlightenment, and one of the important lessons of the Reformation, is the tendency to regard the principle of tolerance, based on the freedom of conscience, as an important premise for recognizing human dignity. Although the concept itself has been known since Antiquity, but a particular emphasis was given to it as a result of the religious wars of the Reformation.

Much attention was paid to substantiating tolerance as an important premise for recognizing dignity in Locke's *Epistola de tolerantia* and later in his *Toleration Act*, approved by British Parliament in 1689.

According to Locke, tolerance is not only the recognition by the state that everyone has the freedom to legally conduct their own civil and private affairs the way they prefer to, but also the obligation of the state to protect this freedom from any encroachment or restriction. In fact, freedom, including freedom of thought and religion, was recognized by Locke as an inalienable human right. Institutional implementation of tolerance regulations in the British state allowed overcoming intolerance and humiliation on religious grounds, created a favorable legal space for the coexistence of citizens of different faiths, and united the country. "Thus", says Oleksandr Tyaglo, "tolerance revealed its potential as an effective tool for achieving political harmony allowing the representatives of various forces to preserve their legitimate freedom and the right to be themselves" [Tyaglo 2001: 3]. The experience of the Enlightenment has proved the efficiency of the rational approach to eliminating inequality, discrimination, deep resentment, and

religious humiliation among citizens. Moreover, this experience has made it obvious that in order to achieve civic unity and affirm the dignity of a nation, every citizen's dignity should be recognized. Later this idea became a leading one in the American constitution of 1787 and continued to play an important role at all stages of the formation of Western civilization [Doichyk 2018:197-198].

The rationalism of the Enlightenment, regarding reason as the basis of human existence, gives rise for the formation of ideas of progress and personal improvement. Its driving force is mind, as compared to a perpetual motion machine, that produces better and better results. The idea of possible moral improvement of the individual and society in harmony is best developed in the grand projects of the reformist progress of the human race, created by Claude Helvétius, Jean de Condorcet, Johann Herder and Immanuel Kant: the progress up to the society of solidarity [Goyan 2011: 75].

Conclusion.

Thus, as it has been proved in this review, the capitalist spirit of the Enlightenment is gradually

transforming the notion of class dignity. Dignity in John Locke's philosophical discourse is no longer seen as hereditary or ancestral; but due to the new Enlightenment ideology, as well as to rejecting the epistemological principle of "innate ideas", and to the introduction of new approaches to education and training, dignity tends to be considered as an individual and professional quality. In this aspect, the philosophy of John Locke also forms the principle of professional egalitarianism, i.e., profession makes people equal and worthy regardless of their origin or caste. High intelligence, freedom, equality, tolerance, responsibility, dedication, individual initiative, focus on success with equal starting opportunities, concern for one's reputation – these are the socially significant components of "dignity" in the ratiocentric paradigm of the Enlightenment. This paradigm, influenced by John Locke's epistemological approach, is gradually gaining utilitarian and egalitarian shape. His methodological approach still retains its strength and efficiency not only in scientific discourse but for practical implementation as well.

References

- Bandzeladze, G.D. (1979). *O ponatii chelovecheskoho dostoinstva*. [On the concept of human dignity]. Tbilisi: Mentsyereba (in Russian)
- Doichyk, M.V., Goyan, I. M. (2018). Egalitarians'kyi pidkhyd do rozumynnya hidnosti lyudyny u sotsial'no-etychnii kontseptsii Dzhona Lokka. [The idea of human dignity in John Locke's social-ethical conception: egalitarian approach]. *Hileya: naukovyi visnyk. Zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, 138 (11), 12-16. (in Ukrainian)
- Doichyk, M., & Doichyk, O. (2019). The idea of dignity in contemporary scientific discourse. *Epistemological studies in Philosophy, Social and Political sciences*, 2(2), 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.15421/341919>
- Doichyk, M.V. (2018). *Ideya hidnosti v istorii yevropeyskoyi filosofii*. [The idea of dignity in the history of European philosophy]. Vydannya 2-he, dopovnene. Ivano-Frankivsk: PNU im. V. Stefanyka (in Ukrainian)
- Doichyk, M.V. (2008). Tolerantnist' yak vyjav hidnosti natsii. [Tolerance as the manifestation of nation's dignity]. *Hileya: naukovyi visnyk. Zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, 15, 273-280. (in Ukrainian).
- Habermas, Yu. (2012). Kontsept chelovecheskoho dostoinstva i realisticheskaya utopiya prav cheloveka. [The concept of human dignity and realistic utopia of human rights]. *Voprosy filosofii*. (in Russian). Retrieved from http://vphil.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=474
- Goyan, I.M. (2011). *Istoryko-filosofs'ka refleksiya psykholohizmu: na peretyni filosofii i psykholohii*. [Historical-philosophical reflection on psychologism: on the crossroads of philosophy and psychology]. Ivano-Frankivsk: Symfoniya Forte. (in Ukrainian)
- Savelyeva, M.Yu. (2018). Mif i ratsyonalnost' v lohike istoricheskoho stanovleniya ponyatiya "dostoinstvo". [Myth and rationality in the logic of historical development of the concept of "dignity"]. *Praktychna Filosofiya. Naukovyi zhurnal*, 3 (69), 79-91. (in Russian)
- Tyaglo, O. (2001). Tolerantnist' c'ohodni. [Tolerance today]. *Den'*, 87, 19 May, 3. (in Ukrainian)

- Kass, L. (2004). *Life, liberty and the defense of dignity*. San Francisco, CA: Encounter Books.
- Kateb, G. (2011). *Human Dignity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Locke, J. (1824a). *An Essay concerning Human Understanding Part I* [1689]. In: The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, London: Rivington (12th ed). Vol. 1. Retrieved November 18, 2020 from https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/761/Locke_0128-01_EBk_v6.0.pdf
- Locke, J. (1824b). *Economic Writings and Two Treatises of Government* [1691]. In: The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, (London: Rivington, 12th ed.). Vol. 4. Retrieved October 12, 2020 from https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/763/Locke_0128-04_EBk_v6.0.pdf
- Locke, J. (1824c). *Some Thoughts Concerning Education, Posthumous Works, Familiar Letters* [1690]. In: The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes, London: Rivington, (12th ed.). Vol. 8. Retrieved November 10, 2020 from https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/1444/Locke_0128-08_EBk_v6.0.pdf
- Macklin, R. (2003). Dignity is a useless concept. *British Medical Journal*, 327, 1419-1420.
- Nussbaum, M. (2011). *Creating Capabilities. The Human Development Approach*. Harvard University Press.
- Pinker, S. (2008). The stupidity of dignity – Conservative bioethics' latest, most dangerous ploy. *The New Republic*, 238, 28-31.
- Schroeder, D. (2012). Human Rights and Human Dignity: an Appeal to Separate the Conjoined Twins. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 15, 323–335.
- Spiegelberg, H. (1986). Human Dignity: A Challenge to Contemporary Philosophy. *Steppingstones Toward an Ethics for Fellow Existents*. Springer, Dordrecht, 175-198. Retrieved November 16, 2020 from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-009-4337-7_10
- Stoecker, R. (2011). Three Crucial Turns on the Road to an Adequate Understanding of Human Dignity. In Kaufmann, P., Kuch, H. Neuhäuser, Ch., Webster, E. (Eds.). *Humiliation, Degradation, Dehumanisation: Human Dignity Violated*. Library of Ethics and Applied Philosophy. Springer, Vol. 24. Pp.7-21.
- Sulmasy, D.P. (2012). The varieties of human dignity: a logical and conceptual analysis. *Med Health Care and Philos*, 16 (4), 937-944.
- Zhang, Q. (2016). *Human Dignity in Classical Chinese Philosophy: Confucianism, Mohism, and Daoism*. Springer.