HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE FACE OF XXI CENTURY CHALLENGES

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The article examines "order of the day" of higher education modernization processes at the context of two major trends of social transformations at the beginning of XXI century – globalization processes and information society establishing ones. It is shown that as an answer to these tendencies higher education sphere is modernized by form in terms of organizational changes (actualization of distance learning ideas, virtual university model; organizational changes to correspond market realities etc.) as well as by content (changes of pedagogical practices towards formation of personality of new type, transformation of educational content towards formation tolerant and multicultural world-view of students etc.). The author stands on position that there is a need of deep theoretical surveys used methods of philosophy of education to substantiate modernization processes. Mentioned surveys have potential to find the ways of qualitative incorporation of higher education sphere into complicate social dynamics of present days.

Key Words: information society, higher education, globalization, mobility, personality, tolerance, university.

ВЫСШЕЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ПЕРЕД ВЫЗОВАМИ XXI ВЕКА

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В статье рассматривается «порядок дня» процессов модернизации высшего образования в контексте двух основных трендов социальных трансформаций начала XXI века – глобализации и становления информационного общества. Показано, что сфера высшего образования в ответ на них модернизируется как по форме в виде организационных изменений (актуализация идей дистанционного образования, переход к модели виртуального университета, организационные изменения для соответствия рыночным реалиям и т. д.), так и по содержанию (изменения педагогических практик для формирования личности нового типа, трансформация содержания образования с целью формирования человека толерантного, мультикультурного мировоззрения и т. д.). Автором отстаивается позиция о необходимости углубления теоретических поисков методами философии образования для обоснования модернизационных процессов, позволяющих сфере высшего образования на качественном уровне инкорпорироваться в сложную социальную динамику нашего времени.

Ключевые слова: высшее образование, глобализация, идея университета, информационное общество, личность, мобильность, толерантность.

The phenomenon of university plays a significant role at the modern culture. It also has a centuries-old history of being the center of intellectual achievements of

human civilization. During mentioned period this social institution proved one's ability to be an intellectual center not merely for European civilization, but also for the whole world. Now we are the spectators of searching for new guiding landmarks for development of higher education sphere at the context of formation of global education area as well as intensive formation of information society. These trends of higher education modernization at the planet scale are embodied at changes on organizational forms of educational institutions (developing of distance and open learning, actualization of ideas of virtual universities and megauniversities etc.). Also we can see changes of educational practices (targeting on formation of new type personality which is corresponded to requests of modern society (skills to fit well into high-speed social dynamics, well-developed world-view based of tolerance, respecting of Others; competence to design our career and life at the scales of human civilization etc.).

The article objectives are to formulate «order of the day» for modern higher education systems and articulation of top-priority tasks for educational sphere modernization in response to fundamental social transformations together with attempts of practical recommendations searching.

The modernization of higher education sphere is one of the modern trends for society at XXI century. The main goal of this process is to transform higher education institutions to make them adequate to modern stage of society development. The result of this modernization should be new form of institutional organization and updated education content at the universities which current state is described as critical. Most of scientists are alarmed by situation when inert and tradition-based education sphere can not fit into new real-world effects. Some scientists formulate this situation according to evolution theory in following way: "The present-day version of the theory of evolution tells us that the "generalistic", that is the un-choosy species have much greater survival capacity than the species splendidly accommodated to a particular ecological niche, and thus environmentally selective and whimsical. It is tempting to say that the universities fall victim of their own perfect fit and adjustment: it just happened that what they adjusted to was a different, now vanishing, world" [LMI, 2000: p. 40].

We already wrote about inertial nature of educational sphere. The practice of universities is "genetically" linked with tradition, educational freedom, academic ethics etc. and they are inspired by medieval era. Sometimes it is hard for academics let innovations come into everyday education practice. There is an eye-catching example how progress of information and communication technologies are sometimes eliminated from wide using at practice: «Although advancement in technology in the past 30 years has created the potential for change in most service sectors, the rate of adoption of technology in education, unlike in business, has been rated slow. In most schools, teaching-learning remains fundamentally the same as a century ago, even in industrialized countries. In a classroom, one teacher faces some thirty students for fifty minutes, and the textbook is still the dominant basic technology» [*Hallak, Saito*: p. 1].

At the context of our research, we want to underline the importance of especially higher education at present days. It is well-known that education tries to correspond to social requests and people want to get education adequate to modern state of things. Discovering human history, it is easy to postulate that industrial society created an ideal of secondary education which was enough for correct operation with machines and mechanisms using basic knowledge on physics, chemistry, mathematics and others; information society logically creates an ideal of higher education for qualitative operating with information and knowledge. Also we have to take into account that today we have youngest planet population throughout history: more

than a half of population are people under 25 years old, more than 1 billion of people are 18–20 years old. Is not it a challenge for higher education sphere? The response to this challenge is a megauniversity concept. The appearing of megauniversities is megatendence at higher education sphere since nineteenth years of XX century. Megauniversity is an institution with more than 100 000 of students form around the world who are studying using distance learning technologies. New context at higher education can be described in this way: «We have moved rapidly from the traditional view of university life as being on a single campus, face to face, and full time to academic endeavor being routinely multisite, multimodal, multilingual, multicultural, and multinational» [International University, 1997: p. 60]. The university is no longer a homogeneous community of scholars and students sharing a single spirit, the university, becoming a heterogeneous community of people pursuing pluralistic interests and purposes» [International University, 1997: p. 156].

We described some aspects of globalization influence on universities. Universities have to become more flexible at these conditions and global politics have to make some changes at main principles of universities being. And the question is in that: do universities want to become an active participant of modern social transformations or do ones choose formal participation of global changes together with saving traditions? The main objective is to become a global university: not just a comprehensive university that has linkages with the rest of the world, but one that provides education with an international dimension [International University, 1997, p. 89].

Analyzing processes of information society, Don Tapscott underlines that academics have to review their perceptions concerning higher education and they have to pay attention on cohesion between learning and work as well as between learning and everyday life of modern students [*Tapscott*, 1999: p. 239]. Modern human being gets filled by information technologies and educational sphere can not remain uninvolved to this trend: «Contemporary technologies (and routes for participation in popular culture) offer an implicit critique of the traditional organization of schooling. Any student with a $100 cell phone can not only access, but contribute to, knowledge forums like Wikipedia. Whereas schools have traditionally been set up abound a model where expertise is funneled to students through secondary texts and teachers, technologies like Google Earth, print, and video make the world's texts and communities widely available» [Mirror images, 2008: p. 112–113].

Information society is a social arrangement with non-linear dynamics of everyday life and Internet is the best example of this way of being and way of acting. The modern virtual universities cultivate this way of thinking and acting at their educational practices: «The Internet can provide "non-linear" learning environments that are rich in different media forms and interactive in a variety of ways. Such environments may be an exciting and worthwhile challenge for the versatile learner who has "learnt how to learn". However, for many learners they may also be sources of confusion and anxiety» [*Ryan*, 2000: p. 42].

It is well known that globalization has some dimensions of one's actualization, but the economic one is the major one. Global market makes a great influence on majority of social institutions and it is almost impossible to avoid these aligning of forces. According to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS, 2002), higher education services became an item of goods and important element of global market discourse. Concerning this situation Jandhyala Tilak writes following ideas: «Higher education has traditionally been provided by public authorities through public institutions. However, the pressure to expand, coupled with the scale constraints of the state, has compelled many governments to adopt market-friendly re-

forms to support this growing sector. These reforms included cost-recovery and income-generating measures in public institutions and encouragement of the establishment and expansion of private higher education institutions, which do not depend on state funding» [*Tilak*: p. 9]. Managerialism became one of the important strategies of organization at higher education sphere which can be correlated to marketing activity of educational institutions.

Managerialism is an organizational paradigm at modern universities which tries to substantiate that new economic dimensions of global world influence of educational sphere and education institution became more similar to corporations as a result. Rosemary Deem describes this paradigm in this way: «Managerialism insists that "managing" and "management" are, respectively, social-technical practices and the collective agents and institutions responsible for their enactment that are universally required in a modern, economically and technologically advanced society... Mangerialism as a general ideology or delief system that regards managing and management as being functionally and technically indispensable to the achievement of economic progress, technological development, and social order within any modern political economy» [*Deem*, 2007: p. 6].

Managelialism conceptualizes "management" and "managing" as an abstract social institution and practice that is necessarily better than any other form of organizational governance; that is, as a universal mechanism for rationally coordinating and controlling collective action in a modern society [*Deem*: p. 6]. Henry Wasser and other authors underlined that since universities encompass such wide-ranging activities as distance (virtual), continuing education, technological services to industry, outreach education, that require managerial as well as scientific expertise, they employ professional managers, conditioned in an administrative apparatus derived from a market-oriented managerial structure – so much so that some questions whether a point is shortly be reached when this conglomerate cannot be called a university in its historic definition [Higher education, 2007: p. 75].

New social realias and need of substantiation of new approaches to institutional organization of higher education sphere let Don Tapscott formulate six basic principles of higher education in information era. There are:

- erasing of limits between learning and working (new society type is based on brainwork and innovations, at these conditions person is learning doing one's work; person have to learn every minute to work more effectively);
- live a century – learn a century (the knowledge must be updated life-time at new society; there is no separation between period of learning and period of labor activity after getting diploma);
- "to learn" does not mean to visit government-owned school or educational institution (corporation became bases of learning for own workers for realization of continuing education, combination of work and studying);
- educational institutions tries to be abreast with life, but non all of them will achieve it (companies can aidless solve tasks of qualification increasing for personnel thanking to big inertness at educational sphere);
- «collective consciousness» is a fundament for building of organization which is learning (company can be successful when it learns faster then competitors do; whole companies became subjects of education and transform to organizations which learn, upgrade one's activity, analyze experience and mistakes);
- new information environment is able to change educational system and create information infrastructure for learning and working (information infrastructure at the scales of national-state promotes to knowledge update; multimedia-

oriented system of education will became a norm because of one's effectiveness, speed of learning and price according to fast speed of knowledge quantity raising) [*Tapscott*, 1999: p. 240–250].

According to other scientists, the "University of the Future" needs to be accessible, flexible, innovative and job-focused:

- accessible – the students want to get and share content online; gone are the backpacks full of textbooks;
- flexible – a majority of students want courses offered at all times of the day or night and without fixed schedules to accommodate students who work or just prefer learning at different times;
- innovative – nearly half want access personalized instruction or tutoring online perhaps rendering the traditional classroom experience less important.
- job-Focused – Students want a university that is clearly focused on producing students who are prepared to excel in jobs that are needed by industry and society [Rethinking...].

New organizational forms of higher education institutions should take into account prognostic results of philosophic reflection on them. We think that philosophy is able to overcome pragmatism of education politics taking into account possible future scenarios of civilization evolution. We described some basic organizational aspects of higher education sphere face to face with challenges of globalization and information society. It has an actuality to analyze changes at pedagogical practices according to formation new type of personality as a result of educational activity.

Erika Rauthenfeld stands on position that education for modern people entails education for individual empowerment, attaining critical facilities and gaining the ability to make considered judgments which demands form universities that they enable students to acquire cognitive and communicative competence through the social and educational process [*Rautenfeld*, 2011: p. 141]. We stand at the similar position substantiating approach that students as active citizens are able to deal with possible future crisis of their own era adequately estimating human history and presence. We think that searching of pedagogical strategies have to evaluate long-term strategies of society development which can be performed using methodological approaches of philosophy of education.

At conditions of high-speed social dynamics, higher education transformed from the instrument of knowledge transferring into the practice of formation of bases of flexible thinking as well as developed world-view. This world-view has to be oriented on tolerance of relations, productive dialog and critical perception of oneself. Personality has to become flexible not only at thinking but also at any everyday practices, a mobile person is a driving force of global information society. It is true that experience of mobile people is embedded into society and promotes one's development: people with an experience of studying or working abroad help to minimize prejustice, cultural and linguistic barriers between people [*Chistohvalov, Filipov*, 2008: p. 20]. Academic mobility or employment at other country gives new cultural, social or academic experience promoting ones' personal growth and increasing ones' competitive ability at global labor market [*Chistohvalov, Filipov*, 2008: p. 19].

Paradigm of personal mobility brings to the forefront question of formation of tolerant and multicultural type of thinking and acting. We want to underline that tolerance has nothing common with gracious relation to other people: tolerance means active world-view position based on recognizing of general rights and freedoms of other people. The tolerant personality formed over the influence of higher education

is a main aim of educational activity at XXI century. This type of personality is able to make responsible choices in accordance to independent way of thinking without any manifestations of discrimination having psychological and social adulthood.

As a result of our research, we can sum up what has been written. We described general ways of higher education modernization at the level of organization of institutions and at the level of immediate pedagogical activity. We have shown that universities now are trying to incorporate to social dynamics and be corresponded to social requests: we can observe new organizational forms such as megauniversities and pedagogical approaches concentrated on world-view development etc. We stand at position that philosophy has to became a theory and methodology of higher education modernization because mentioned sphere of knowledge is able to operate with complicated social problems like "globalization", "mobility", "knowledge", "information" etc. and human-measured phenomena like "tolerance", "world-view", "multiculturalism" etc.

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