

Conference Paper

Real and Virtual in the Educational Space of Modern Globalized Society

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Abstract

Globalization combines elements of integration and differentiation — common traits, extrapolated to single social groups, undergo a broad system of localization, adapting to the conditions of the new system of existence. In today's globalized society, the real and the virtual are becoming so intertwined that it is increasingly difficult to define their boundaries. Two specific interpretations of the concept of «alternative globalism» are described: the first one is related to the use of this term to refer to social movement; the second one reflects some, including theoretical, critique of globalization, its manifestations and possible consequences. Structural-functional method, prognostic method, elements of schematization and generalization are used to clarify some issues of the philosophical paradigm of the modern educational space in the global and regional perspective. The study has revealed that the anticipation of the future educational space is based on the analytics of actual changes in the status of knowledge. The focus of the research is the processes of mercantilization of knowledge, which indicates the commodity status of knowledge in modern society. The transition of society from consumption of mainly tangible goods to consumption of services, and subsequently to maximum consumption of information, was established. The concept of deterritorialization has shown that the essential characteristic of globalization is the loss of physical space in many social processes. A virtual theory related to the formation of «imaginary worlds» due to the imposition of different cultural and symbolic spaces: ethnic, technological, financial, ideological and media space is investigated. The study has revealed emergence of a «knowledge economy» society as a resource base of modern capitalism and the dialectical relations of «global and local» both in the structure of education and in the social system of the nation-state.

Keywords: real, virtual, globalized society, deterritorialization, information-symbolic exchange, cultural and symbolic flows, functionalism of information, educational space.

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1. Introduction

New information technologies are a promising tool for reforming and modernizing the educational space, which changes the content of education in connection with the transformation of its goals, increasing the quality of education. The post-industrial stage

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of development, which evolves into a «knowledge society», forms a fundamentally new system of values in educational space, based on the individual's self-realization and his \ her own creative potential realization. The universal modernization and globalization, embracing at the end of the XX and the beginning of the XXI centuries, most of the activities of society and man, generated by the successes of scientific and technological progress caused by economic and social transformations, which formed the basis of philosophical paradigms of modern educational standards in accordance with the educational standards situation that requires active participation in the creation of their own educational trajectory, which is based on the formation of basic and special competencies. The philosophical paradigm of modern educational standards is the basis of spirituality, and the cultural aspect of the educational content selection should accordingly be guided by universal values, world and national culture.

2. Methodology and Methods

The research is based on the principles of objectivity, integrity and historicism. Traditional descriptive and analytical methods have been used: analysis, synthesis, abstraction, comparison, systematization, classification and interpretation. Structural-functional method, prognostic method, elements of schematization and generalization are used to clarify some issues of the philosophical paradigm of the modern educational space in the global and regional perspective.

3. Results and Discussion

The real and the virtual globalization society becomes so intertwined that it becomes increasingly difficult to define their borders, as it is difficult to define the actual economic boundaries of modern globalized states. J. Derrida considers this society as a fundamental historical turn: «This capitalist situation (where capital plays an integral role between the real and the virtual) is even more tragic in absolute numbers than it has ever been in the history of mankind. Mankind has probably never been so far from the globalization homogeneity of the «work» state and the «out of work» state that is so often referred to. Much of humanity is «out of work» when it wants to work or work harder, and the rest is overburdened with work and wants to relieve itself a little, or even put an end to the work that is so poorly paid in the market. Any eloquent study of human rights that does not take into account this economic inequality can turn into empty talk, formalism or vulgarity» [2, p. 135].

The interaction between the virtual and the real in modern society is being reopened in the theory of «imaginary worlds». The main attribute of the globalized world is «deterritorialization», which should be understood as a loss of direct interdependence between the social process and a particular space of existence. «In the course of globalization, a «global cultural stream» is formed, which is divided into five cultural symbolic spaces-streams: 1) the ethnic space is formed by the flow of tourists, immigrants, refugees, guest workers, 2) the technological space is formed by the flow of technologies; 3) the financial space is formed by the flow of capital; 4) the media space is formed by the flow of images; 5) the ideological space is formed by the flow of ideologies» [6, p. 485]. Due to the interaction of these structures, different «imaginary worlds» are formed, which are supported by information-symbolic exchange. Localization in the form of religious fundamentalism, nationalism, traditionalism is not the preservation of the previously formed system of society, but is the same qualitatively new formation as globalization. Deterritorialization is equally characteristic of the local and global, and therefore the new attribute of the modern era is not the transition from the local to the global, but rather the loss of the actual territorial attachment of the main spheres of social life, that is, the movement from territorialization to deterritorialization. Moreover, transformation takes place not only in macrogroups, but also among individuals. «Globalization has reduced the distance between elites, changed key links between producers and consumers, severed many links between work and family life, blurred the lines between temporary localities and imagined national legitimacy. The reality seems to be more pragmatic and less didactic, more empirical and less disciplinary than in 50–60 years ...» [6, p. 8–9]. Due to the dominant importance of information in today's globalized society, the boundaries between the virtual and the real become topological, they cannot be clearly laid down, since the virtual value is now no less practical than the real value. This phenomenon is based on the fact that information in its essence is always a virtual sign, which, according to De Saussure, it moves to the symbol. That is, in addition to the tagging function, it collects excessive values and, conversely, gets rid of them. Of course, it is not about information in general, but rather a significant part of it, in particular, that is expressed not in artificial but natural languages [11]. Information becomes the main transit structure of the globalized world; it transports the necessary values for the production and overproduction of goods, shapes prices, influences money, unifies and destroys the boundaries of national economies. As a consequence, the knowledge fetishization as a commodity occurs in the information society. With the emergence of post-industrial society or the Third Wave society described by E. Toffler [4] and D. Bell [1] in the 1960s, the modern world has undergone a total expansion of market laws and

capitalist production for all dimensions of human activity. Therefore, the modern era within the Western world is characterized by the pragmatization of values, which is due to the intensification of social discourses on reform and innovation. The formation of post-industrial society is characterized by the rapid spread of market laws and principles of capitalist production to non-economic spheres of social life. Even at the semantic level, it is increasingly advisable to talk about the production of culture rather than its creation, since the first way of embodying it in the modern world is undoubtedly dominant. Culture has acquired the characteristics of a commodity, and its split into the mass and elitist in the early twentieth century only confirms a similar ideological split. Just as a tangible product can be targeted at different consumers, intangible goods have a common and specific buyer. The thesis that mass culture can be a commodity and «high» culture does not stand up to criticism, since it is the products of «high» culture that most clearly reflect the presence of the mechanism of modern capitalist valuation.

A similar stage of the education commercialization process which naturally leads to the formation of its mass and elitist mode, has been taking place in the educational space since the second half of the twentieth century. The availability of «higher education», which has become the main leitmotif of pedagogical and administrative reforms, is a testament to the process of domination of pragmatism dictated by the involvement of education in the sphere of modern production. Contemporary university education, while on a stage of self-determination, must reflect the state of affairs in society. French researcher K. Musselin in his work «Universities and pricing in the markets of higher education» [9] notes several obvious trends that encourage education to move in the commodity direction. «The two main arguments tend to mobilize documentary evidence of [market] evolution. A few decades ago, it was generally taken for granted that education and research should be typical goods, that is, goods that are non-competitive (their consumption does not interfere with the consumption of others) and indivisible (those who do not pay for the product, less can consume it). As a result, the idea has become dominant in many countries: education should be accessible to as many people as possible, and the cost of modification should be borne by society as a whole, because it is to the benefit of the latter. Massification and free access became the motto» [9, p. 75].

However, free and free access, which has been realized at the expense of society, is massively disappointing, including because of the non-transparency of the collective benefits it brings. Many participants in the educational discourse point out that in such a system representatives of the lower and lower middle classes pay for the education

of upper middle class children, since only the latter have a real opportunity to provide a comfortable educational process for their offspring. In addition, after receiving a diploma of a certain educational level, graduates who receive free education benefit in the first place, not the group of people who have paid for their education. The second obvious factor of mercantilization can be considered to be the increasing economic importance of the main subjects of higher education, including knowledge and science. «Potential applications from basic research and their transformation into innovation and industrial products have led to the expansion and generalization of intellectual property rights to protect the use of new applications and generate funding for those who have developed them. As a result, contractual studies have expanded and the products of these contracts are no longer regarded as uncompetitive and non-exclusive: access to certain knowledge may now be difficult or even restricted in patenting and licensing agreements» [9, p. 76]. Due to this knowledge status, a real-income university simply cannot distribute it for free.

J.-F. Liotard in the 1960s envisaged some fundamental shifts in the axiological structure of the formation and knowledge exchange. He calls these transformations «exteriorization» of knowledge, or «objectification». J. Liotard rightly emphasizes the great sense that knowledge is of considerable importance in modern society. At first glance, it may seem that education deals with the same way of cognitive transmission. As a result of this approach, there is a strict division of functions in modern education. The well-known ideal of «classical» higher education about the unity of «scientist» and «teacher» in one person is gradually losing its true axiological significance. The teacher / scientist is a disadvantageous and ineffective social role in terms of gaining «valuable knowledge». As well as a clear conveyor production is characterized by the rigor of the position and functions of the worker, thus, the modern university, becoming an «educational market», diversifies the functions of its participants. In the conditions of acquiring knowledge of mass commodity status, the purpose of university education also changes. Contrary to the sacred truth of any cognitive goal, productivity is the order of the day for modern higher education subjects [5, p. 48].

The economic existence of education also gives it a new temporal content. The University is now set to optimize resources, both material and temporal. The content of learning is increasingly shifting towards the rapid provision of student tools to solve specific problems. The 'general' vision of a particular subject or specialty breaks down into specific technologies of action that should provide a more pragmatic result for education. However, the slow response of university plans to the latest tools of professional activity call into question such workloads. More and more scholars believe that

the university pragmatization will never reach its goal — the movement «in step with the times», and therefore a general, abstract view of vocational training should again become a central leitmotif [10, p. 120–127]. However, as long as economics determines the direction of the history of higher education, such a return to classical roots is not possible. «Economists have always been interested in return on investment. It is logical that investments in projects or sectors of intangible production are largely determined by the rate of return expected by investors of the return. As a consequence, rates of return on education are a major concern of educational economists and administrators of educational institutions as a whole. The importance of these rates is increased in an environment characterized by increased competition due to restrictions on public resources allocated to education and the increasing threat of austerity» [8, p. 4–5]. K. Marx in the work of «Capital» has revealed the essence of such a social phenomenon as commodity fetishism. This phenomenon implies a change in the mass consciousness of the human relations idea about the value and goods value to the metaphysical things. Consumers think that a thing in itself has a certain consumer value, as if its value is inherently attached to it, but does not occur during a production exchange. «The commodity form and the relation between the values of the products of labor in which it is expressed have absolutely nothing to do with the physical nature of things and the relations of things that follow from it. It is just a certain social attitude of the people themselves, who accepts in their eyes a fantastic form of relations between things... the cost is not written on the forehead, what it is. Moreover, value transforms every product of labor into a social hieroglyph. Subsequently, people try to unravel the meaning of this hieroglyph, to enter into the mystery of their own social product, because the definition of consumer goods as values is a social product of people no less than, for example, language» [3, p. 53-54].

The perception of a market economy at the level of everyday life acquires for a person signs of self-worth, «esoteric» value, similar to religious grace. W. Lewis, write's «From the point of view of the economist, it is easy to understand what is required from the education system — the correct ratio of general and special education, groups of different ages and knowledge of different levels and character... The most serious «but» is that even the economist is not sure if it is appropriate to use market prices as a unit of measurement. Therefore, we should have to address this question to philosophers» [7]. It is obvious that in the information society, knowledge and education is gradually becoming a commodity. One of the proofs of commodity fetishism in intangible production is the formation of modern non-equivalent money (the abolition of the material equivalent of banknotes), the value of which is understood by the mass

consciousness as a result of evaluative interaction between other goods, and not as a result of social relations. It is the opportunity of knowledge to turn into money, which in its turn is a kind of metaphysical absolute of current capitalism, becomes the main economic motivation for the existence of educational institutions, especially given the latter's orientation to «mass education».

4. Conclusions

Globalization is accompanied by the erasure of information boundaries. Every day there is a wealth of information and knowledge in the streams of different signs that were previously available only to certain regions or people with special status. This phenomenon is not a random step in the formation of world information, but a response to humanity's need to «be informed». The commodity consumption boom is turning into an information boom where the virtual becomes a competitor to the real. Individual and collective consciousness, immersed in the maelstrom of 'forced communication', transforms the notion of the value of knowledge. Information does not require a deep understanding of the essence of the phenomena, its main qualities are mobility, versatility, equivalence, ability to use, expediency, and most importantly — relevance.

The study has shown that there are reasons to highlight educational regions. They reflect the dual essence of socio-educational changes in the present: on the one hand, there is undoubtedly a phenomenon of unification of education, which is conditioned by the development of means of communication, the geometric growth of educational markets and the expansion of labor resources. All branches of social life, including education, have a monolithic regional entity. The usefulness imperative is present from the beginning, the production of knowledge is intended to be useful to someone specific (industry, government, society) or to a potential consumer-agent. Urbanization is a natural phenomenon in the context of the urgent demands of neoliberal capitalism, an increase in the profitability of information production and services, which leads to a constant search for markets and labor, which in turn migrates from the agricultural and industrial sectors, which are losing their positions in structure of social production. Therefore, the city is changing not only quantitatively but also qualitatively: the megalopolis of the 21st century is no longer the 'settled place' of large population, it is a system of constant vertical and horizontal social movement. The city is an autonomous way of social existence, which imposes on each inhabitant their fast-changing narratives of everyday life. It is not necessary to reduce the meaning of the historical development of the university to the reflection of the economic system of the city, but the importance

of this genetic connection is undoubted. With the transformation of industrial capitalism into information capitalism, the rise in the value of «urban regions» is gaining ground. In this kind of urban cycle of services, where each of the agents tries to occupy a niche in the flow of «selling information», the university is forced to seek their place. The regional dimension of the European educational space is closely linked to the problem of identity, with the emergence of internationalization as a major attribute of educational evolution. For the identity of the European educational space, a transnational turn is likely to mean the homogenization of scientific traditions, which will particularly affect the diversity of humanitarian traditions. It is revealed that the specifics of the newest epistemological doctrine within the Western educational landscape are closely related to the postmodern way of producing knowledge, the realization of which leads to regular and synchronous transformations in the field of higher education. In the process of rapid integration into the global production of knowledge, universities are undoubtedly determined by new attempts to adapt to the conditions and rules of the information-capitalist game, which now overcomes the limitations of national states.

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