

(?)INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE (POST)MODERN WORLD: RE-, DE-, COUNTER-, ANTI-, SUB-, SUBVERS-, DIVERS-, ALTER-...

The article is devoted to the problem of institutional processes in the sphere of higher education in the (post)modern world. The authors raise the question of the way of naming and describing these processes in the space between “re-”, “de-”, “counter-”, “anti-”, “sub-”, “divers-”, “alter-”, “subverse-”, without exhausting the possible understanding and interpretations exclusively by the categories they have found. Three key questions that the authors pose are the questions “ubi vadis?”, “quomodo vadis?” and “quo vadis?”, that is, the questions of the origins, method (image) and direction (trends) of institutional transformations of higher education. Here the authors pay special attention to the influence of the processes of globalization and the development of the space of communications and “high technologies”, deforming the social autonomy of the education system and the phenomenology of the compatibility of the Student and the Teacher. The social prerequisites of these processes are studied separately, in particular the growing role of education and, along with it, the growing hopes and expectations that have led to the transformation of the system of relations within the education system itself and to a change in the distribution of powers and decision-making opportunities between the subjects of the educational process. The focus is also on the diversification and marginalization of discursive equipment and facilities using the example of the rhetoric of inclusiveness and diversity and also the rhetoric of “sustainable development”. The processes of the educational institution themselves are studied as triggered by the invasion of globalist marketization using the example of the (re)constitution of new research areas, the increasing importance of national-cultural factors and local specificity, “customization”, which give rise to complications and deinstitutionalization of international mutual recognition systems. In such contexts, the authors argue, that universities are looking for new grounds for recognizing themselves and their activities, which is aggravated by the emergent phenomena of the pandemic situation. The authors conclude that traditional forms of higher education are losing their relevance and alter-institutionalization of education is taking place with the emergence of parallel “corridors” and alter-industries. This is aggravated by such factors as the internationalization of curricula, digitalization of education, institutions of continuous education, massification, reconfiguration of new educational inequalities, destruction of selection systems due to a decrease in social exclusivity, as well as diversification-institutionalization due to the diversification of educational programs.

Keywords: *education, institution, institutionalization, modernity, postmodernity, transformation, diversification.*

(Post)modernity, with its transgressions, generates and transforms social institutions that seemed immutable and indestructible. The intuition of eternity, naturalness and unconditionality, generated by the scale and power of modernity in all its diversity, is undergoing the most difficult and diverse tests at the beginning of the 21st century.

This also concerns the system(ities) of education, which historically developed to the extent of the complexity of the systematicity of society itself, which researchers have long accepted as a self-evident fact [Vanderstraeten, 2023]. This is precisely why social philosophers and sociologists recognize education, despite its incomparable power (both in the mathematical and in the socio-physical (according to A. Comte) sense) comparatively with the economy or politics, as one of the key subsystems of society.

And it is certainly true that education is generally recognized as one of the leading social institutions and even mega-institutions, integrating and aggregating many other institutions (understood as normatively organized, practically ordered and systematically structured

connections of behavioral expectations) – such as, for example, teaching or apprenticeship, lecture or seminar. The institutional status of education is not questioned by social philosophers and sociologists either retrospectively (that is, referring to the processes of educational development), or currently, or prospectively.

Meanwhile, social reality itself challenges this banal obviousness. Ukrainian universities are faced with a variety of processes that have not yet received their full-fledged philosophical, socio-philosophical, sociological expertise. It is these processes that allow us to raise the question of the institutionalization of education in the context of re-, de-, counter-, anti-, sub-, diversion- and many others. For example, the paradoxically formally enshrined (and not yet institutionally enshrined, by the way) requirement to take into account informal education in the preparation of educational programs is a clear indicator of precisely such processes. On the one hand, this is the **re**institutionalization of qualifications and recognitions in the most embryonic state; on the other hand, this is the **de**institutionalization of existing qualification tools and mechanisms; on the third hand, this is the **counter**-institutionalization of the mechanisms of selection and construction of a biographical (and therefore, socially differentiating) trajectory; on the fourth hand, it is **anti**-institutionalization in the sense that the status and recognition of *informal* education is *formally* established despite the existing deep institutional processes, mechanisms and stability; on the fifth hand, it is **sub**-institutionalization, since within the educational institution, albeit launched “from above”, the formation of a subsystem of institutional relations occurs; on the sixth hand, it is **divers**-institutionalization, since within the educational institution, alternative trajectories and methods of achieving a socially recognized and approved (according to T. Parsons and R. Merton) result arise.

That is why it is important to analyze some of the bases for these processes, as well as their prerequisites, as well as their potential results and consequences, and, finally, the specifics of their development. It was precisely the implementation of such a complex socio-philosophical examination that ultimately became **the goal** of this article.

For this purpose, we turn to a systemic analysis of the processes presented above as in a drop of water – the whole ocean. And it cannot be said that such a formulation of the question will be fundamentally new. Thus, two years ago the UN posed this question in a radical way – that is, at the very root of meanings – namely as a question of a “new contract” for education and as a re-production of the “imagination of our future” [Reimagining Our Futures, 2022]. The questions of the globalization of education and the place of education in (new) globalities and glocalities [Bourn, 2022] continue to be relevant. The “digital revolution”, which has long since turned into a revolution of the “subjectivity of things”¹ and the revolution of “artificial intelligence” (repeatedly and not without reason questioned, but still influential in micro-practices, including institutional and educational ones) [Böhmer 2023], offers ever new and increasingly catastrophic² consequences. All this makes the topic we have chosen relevant both ontologically, that is, from the point of view of social demand, and epistemologically, that is, from the point of view of epistemic opacity at the moment.

Re-, de-, counter-, anti-, sub-, divers-, subvers-, alter-: ubi vadis?

The genesis of this complex of processes is polyaspectual and multidimensional. The question of “where from” is not fully disclosed, which is not surprising, given their multifactorial and multifaceted nature.

Thus, it is difficult to deny the influence of globalization processes, even if they have acquired completely unexpected aspects and turns in recent years (and even, perhaps, decades) [Bourn, 2022]. Globalization has made a colossal contribution to the erosion of the rocky and steep landscape of sociality on a global scale, “smoothing out” folds (in the sense of J. Deleuze) and unevenness, creating space and networks for ever-increasing speed (in the metaphor of

¹ So fashionable in recent decades in sociology – right up to the idea of the “parliament of things” of the recently deceased French philosopher Bruno Latour.

² Precisely in the semantic meaning of this ancient Greek word, meaning “complete revolution”.

P. Virilio). The main instrument in the hands of this gigantic “roller” was the market, which, even in the conditions of the Ukrainian education system, has made a significant contribution to the deinstitutionalization of many pledges and prerequisites for the social autonomy of the education system (as described by P. Bourdieu) and to the implementation of its heteronomization. In fact, the above paradigmatic example is precisely part of the marketization of education and the commodification of educational activity, its product and generation.

But no less important are the processes of development of the communications space and “high technologies” [Böhmer, 2023; Cai Yiyu, 2023]. They also served as a kind of “can opener” with which the environment (using N. Luhmann's terminology) “exposed” the conservatism and rigidity of the education system. They participated in the production of a unified – real or potential – space of the education market. They brought play into the sacred rite of education, “mixed” reality, “shifting” the temple of science towards the casino and the amusement park. Finally, it was they who destroyed the phenomenon of the jointness of the Student and the Teacher, both by creating opportunities for separating physical and communicative spaces, and, conversely, by uniting different segments of physical and communicative spaces, previously radically separated and demarcated.

However, not only technical but also social prerequisites are significant. Thus, the growing role of education in the last two or three centuries has naturally given rise to growing hopes and expectations from education on the part of society – to the point of placing responsibility on education (or at least co-opting education into the relevant “commissions”) for issues of ethics, social justice, equalization of inequality, and so on [Sanjakdar, 2022]. However, education in the form in which it was constituted and institutionalized in the 19th and 20th centuries (and above all in the countries of the conventional Western model of modernity) was certainly not capable of coping with this mission. On the contrary: as fundamental research, especially by continental philosophers and sociologists, shows (see, for example, researches by J.-C. Passeron and P. Bourdieu), education, including dialectically continuing its “power” of hermeticity and autonomy, thereby reproduced social inequalities, camouflaged injustices, naturalized and reified the social system. This is evidenced by a whole series of modern studies (see, for example, [Hird, 2023; Popkova, 2023]). And this, by the way, also gave rise to dissident movements in it, such as “feminist pedagogies,” “pedagogies of the oppressed,” and so on. However, it is obvious that such conceptual proposals, while interesting heuristically, are not at all a panacea due to their particularity.

An equally important social and socio-cultural prerequisite is the transformation of the system of relations within the education system itself. Thus, the shift towards “partnership”, “equal”, “subject-subject”, “student-centered” relations led to the need to develop a “change strategy” [Bringle, 2022]. And this, in turn, led to a change in the distribution of powers and decision-making opportunities between the subjects of the educational process, which mechanically entailed diversification-institutionalization, in which the conventional “old” institutional forms coexisted and continued to be reproduced alongside the little-known and little-recognized “new” and even “not-yet-institutionalized” ones.

Finally, another important prerequisite is the diversification and marginalization of the *discursive* equipment and furnishing of the institutional educational structure. Thus, interventions in the educational discourse from, for example, the rhetoric of inclusiveness and diversity [Weuffen, 2023] or the well-known rhetoric of “sustainable development” [Dibbern, 2023] for Ukrainian education are in this sense truly indicative and illustrative. It is also indicative that such rhetorics often turn out to be, as in the case of the officialization (but not full *sub*institutionalization) of informal education in the structures of formal education, dual in their status: “acceptable” and “recognized” formal institutions – and at the same time *under*institutionalized social structures and systems. Such a paradox of “institutionalization *from above*” is quite typical in the post-Soviet space, which gives rise to the possibility of interpreting these processes as *divers*-institutionalization.

Re-, de-, counter-, anti-, sub-, divers-, subvers-, alter-: quomodo vadis?

It is within the limits and frameworks created by the above-described factors that the processes of the institution of education take place. In particular, **counter-, sub-** and **alter-** institutionalization are the processes launched by the invasion of globalist marketization – including through the mechanisms of grant (re)distribution of profitability and economic demand for specialties, material (non)reinforcement of research areas and even ways of thinking about certain topics [McCambly, 2022]. This produces and constitutes fundamentally different and new mechanisms and institutions of academic and extra-academic (but influential for the sphere of science and education) inequality, lays down new criteria for the functioning of educational institutions and even influences decision-making in selection (of personnel, topics, categories of thinking, etc.). It is from this angle, for example, that the reconstitution and reinstitution of new (in quotation marks and without) research areas can be considered using the example of “sustainable development” (see the illustrative example in [Tijmsma, 2023]).

A paradoxical – or, more precisely, dialectical – consequence for the institution of education of the processes of globalization is the increase in the significance of national-cultural factors, local specificity and special situationality (see how this is studied using the example of journalism education by [Korkonosenko, 2023]). This, in turn, leads to only the formalization of “credit-modular accounting”, and consequently to the anti-institutionalization of the credit-modular system, which, while outwardly remaining a sum of prescriptions, in fact turns out to be a disintegrated and heterogeneous set of different models of behavior and expectations, only at the level of form preserving homogeneity and coherence.

In particular, such specification and “local customization” give rise to complications and deinstitutionalization of not yet fully institutionalized systems of international mutual recognition of achievements and education systems [Jæger, 2023]. The interweaving of political, social, economic, and cultural interests is especially evident here. In this sense, it is indicative, for example, how medical education, not for qualification-medical or even for specific subject-matter reasons, but purely for political and economic reasons, turns out to be narrowly recognized and limitedly legalized. Here a “half-position” arises in which many education systems freeze – especially peripheral and semi-peripheral ones in globality. Namely, the destruction of protective barriers in the locality of these systems in the absence of recognitions and legalizations received “in return” in the global world.

In such a situation, universities are feverishly searching for new grounds for recognizing themselves and their activities, their legitimate argumentation and apologetics. For example, the actively promoted activities of a university for the benefit of local communities, groups and territories are from this series. There are also more exotic and unexpected variants of such legitimization – see, for example, [Saut, 2023]. Traditional institutional indicators, markers and mechanisms of legitimization, although they remain significant (especially in the autonomous and hermetic field of science and education), however, in the public space, and in the media discourse, and in the political space, they are forced to give in or at least make way for new ones, not yet fully institutionalized, but already providing alternative logics of affirmation and practice. From this point of view, the example of Johns Hopkins University is extremely illustrative. It “made a name” with its vigorous activity at the beginning of the pandemic situation in 2020, right up to the urgent and prompt creation of a dashboard, which turned into one of the objects of “Internet pilgrimages” – and at the same time, the posters of this university, its way of declaring itself to the world, distinguishing itself.

By the way, the pandemic situation has posed a new challenge and question not only to this university. Thus, Western researchers note that it was the pandemic that became the catalyst for the intensification of the use of technologically equipped educational scenarios [Doig, 2022], which in the direct practice of the Ukrainian education system gave rise to institutional and role conflicts between expectations from the student and the teacher, between the “possible” and the “required” in normative structures, between the “acceptable” and the “preferred” in behavior models, and so on. A typical example of this is the conflict between the “socially mainstream”

and “desirable for some” options for “taking a course” (using online; using online asynchronous; using direct contact; and so on), as well as all attempts to “compare” them, correlate these results, “drive” them into a single grading scale.

Re-, de-, counter-, anti-, sub-, divers-, subvers-, alter-: quo vadis?

Thus, educational institutions adapt and change their structures to meet new economic, political and cultural conditions. Some traditional forms of higher education are losing their relevance, for example, old forms of educational institutions that are unable to cope with new challenges. The philosophy and sociology of education are rightly sounding the alarm, saying that “numerical thinking” kills the very essence of education in a completely G. Lukacs-like logic of quantification of education [Chun, 2022]. The globalization of education, manifested in international university rankings, student and teacher exchanges, the creation and promotion of international educational standards, turns into “nicheization” of education, the emergence of professional “educational product promoters”, “education managers” and the transformation of education into “educational services” even in such profound and “service-demanding” areas as, for instance, art [Laot, 2023]. This, in turn, produces an alter-institutionalization of education, in which parallel and in no way combined or intersecting “corridors” arise, within the walls of which typical trajectories of formally comparable bearers of qualifications, titles and statuses develop.

This *alter*-institutionalization is also facilitated by the commercialization of education, which took root under the attractive slogans of private investment and commercial structures in the system of higher education, but in reality, gave rise to an entire alter-industry of paid educational services, as well as the commercialization of research and scientific projects. To this day, not only alarmist sentiments on this matter are still strong in the scientific community, but also openly apologetic positions [Burrell, 2022], expecting breakthroughs and qualitative renewal of education and science from “business ethics”.

A related issue is the internationalization of curricula, which, initially unfolding as an expansion and integration of international educational programs, student exchanges, joint diplomas and projects with foreign universities, has turned into “ritual, myth, doxa and ceremony” [Musiał, 2023] in the current education system, that is, a set of symbolic rites sanctified by a devastated tradition, solemnly and deafeningly suppressing any dissent about themselves and reproducing themselves-for-their-own sake. Here the “managerialization” [Yao, 2023] of education merges and rhymes with ceremonialized internationalization, and the increasing role of quantified and quantifying instruments turns education into the ruins “of a great idea” [Säfström, 2022].

In such a chaotic design and Dasein of education, not only a “panacea”, but also factors of aggravation turn out to be:

- digitalization of education as the development of online education, the creation of platforms for distance learning and the use of technologies to improve the educational process, because this digitalization turns out to be a “replacement” of the human mind with “artificial intelligence” [Arunagiri, 2023], in full accordance with the prophecy of E. Fromm, who predicted a society in which people will turn into “well-fed and well-dressed automatons”, and automatons and machines will be valued higher than people;

- "institutions of continuous education" and "institutionalization of educational practices for any age category" are transformed into "dealers of another dose" – in full accordance with the specifics of the educational market of "trainings", "marathons" and "online courses". This, on the one hand, gives rise to specific relationships and expectations regarding the "continuous acquisition of education" (even if extremely empty and meaningless), and on the other hand, – it destroys institutional stability regarding university education that has been developed over centuries;

- the same applies to the massification of education, which, starting as an expansion of the availability of higher education for broad sections of the population, an increase in the number of students and the diversity of educational institutions, has led to the reconfiguration

and reconstitution of new educational inequalities (including “digital inequalities”), an increase in the number of axes along which inequalities are constituted, as well as the simulacrum of mass education, its emasculation and devastation;

- the reduction of social exclusivity led to the fact that together with the liquidation of the status of universities as elite and closed institutions, together with the creation of conditions for mass admission and education by various social groups, the systems of selection and reasonable competition were destroyed. The exclusivity and operational closure of universities, as it turned out, were one of the supporting structures of the specific institutionalization of the higher education system, and their liquidation (or, at least, erosion) did not lead to the expected results but gave rise to new – chaotic and rhizomatic, much less “accessible to correction” and academically “substantiated” – principles of exclusivity;

- the diversification of educational programs has become not only the emergence of new disciplines, areas and fields for training but also the reason for the *divers*-institutionalization of educational activity itself. The institute as a space of production of a comparable order has ceased to be reproduced; the same qualification records and markers have been “enriched” (in fact, have become more complex) with additional markers: the subject of the “record”, the conditions of the “record”, the clarifying “protocols” to this record. For example: it is important not only what the specialization is, but which university provided this specialization, within the framework of which courses, with which teachers, and so on.

The increasing complexity of the landscape will also affect other regions of educational activity. Thus, the retraining and adaptation of specialists, as well as the introduction of retraining programs and courses for people who need to change professions or acquire new skills in a rapidly changing world, will raise the question of the comparability of qualifications, and of social “recognition” and “convertibility”. The growth of “interactive teaching methods” (for example, project work, work in small groups, the use of technology, and an increase in the number of practical classes) will lead to the rewriting and revision of such educational institutions as apprenticeship, teaching, scientific school, and so on. The growth and diversification of competition between universities will lead not only to universities competing for students, teachers, and research grants but also to the “politicization” and even “political economization” of education.

By the way, in the “arbitration” of the political economy of education, institutions not so much of education production as of education quality assessments will become increasingly significant, where various mechanisms for assessing the quality of educational services (certification, assessment, accreditation, ratings, “feedback” from students and employers) will turn into increasingly powerful “fetishes”, “rituals” and “ceremonies” that control the fate of entire scientific schools, dynasties, research problems and topics. And “flexible educational trajectories” with the ability to choose individual courses or modules, build personalized educational trajectories, and so on will become a prerequisite for the crystallization of an entire alternative social group – “educational activity managers”, “educational trajectory designers”, “educational service logisticians”, whatever they may be called in the end.

We have not touched upon many factors related to institutional transformations of education. These include the profiling of education¹ and the growing importance of issues², and the emergence of new models of financing and managing scientific activity, and the growing problem of student debt who received an education on a fee-paying basis. However, even the review we have carried out, which is certainly superficial, is enough to see the contradictory nature, political (in the broad sense of the word) commitment not only to the institutionality of education itself, but also to its reflection, the complexity of its re-, de-, alter-, counter-, anti-,

¹ As the formation of specialized programs and courses aimed at preparing students for specific professions or areas of activity.

² In particular, the introduction and dissemination of courses and programs aimed at developing the ethical and moral aspects of professions, increasing the social responsibility of students.

divers-, subvers-, sub-, etc. institutionalization. This topic is turning from a purely narrow scientific reflection into an object and instrument of the struggle of education in the form in which humanity has known it for centuries, for survival. And even this existential act itself is worth rereading the institutionality of education as a phenomenon and as a discourse.

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Article arrived: 10.09.2024

Accepted: 20.10.2024

**(?)ІНСТИТУЦІОНАЛІЗАЦІЯ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ В (ПОСТ)СУЧАСНОМУ СВІТІ:
РЕ-, ДЕ-, КОНТР-, АНТИ-, СУБ-, СУБВЕРС-, ДІВЕРС-, АЛЬТЕР-...**

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Стаття присвячена проблемі інституційних процесів у сфері вищої освіти у (пост)сучасному світі. Автори порушують питання про спосіб найменування та опису даних процесів у просторі між «ре-», «де-», «контр-», «анти-», «суб-», «диверс-», «альтер-», «субверс-», не вичерпуючи можливі осмислення та інтерпретації виключно знайденими ними категоріями. Три ключові питання, які ставлять автори – це питання «ubi vadis?», «quomodo vadis?» та «quo vadis?», тобто питання витоків, способу (образу) та напрямку (тенденцій) інституційних трансформацій вищої освіти. Тут автори особливу увагу приділяють впливу процесів глобалізації та розвитку простору комунікацій та «високих технологій», які деформують соціальну автономність системи освіти та феноменологію спільності Учня та Вчителя. Окремо вивчаються соціальні передумови цих процесів, зокрема зростання ролі освіти та разом з ним зростання надій і очікувань, що призвело до трансформації системи відносин усередині самої системи освіти та до зміни розподілу повноважень і можливостей вирішення між суб'єктами освітнього процесу. Також у фокусі виявляється диверсифікація та маргіналізація дискурсивного оснащення та обладнання на прикладі риторик інклюзивності та різноманітності, а також риторики «стійкого розвитку». Самі ж процеси інституту освіти досліджуються як ті, що запускаються вторгненням глобалістської маркетингової на прикладі (ре)конституювання нових напрямів дослідження, зростання значимості національно-культурних факторів та локальної специфічності, «кастомізації», що породжують ускладнення та деінституціоналізації систем міжнародного взаємного визнання. У таких контекстах, як стверджують автори, університети шукають нові підстави визнання себе та своєї діяльності, що посилюється емерджентними феноменами пандемічної ситуації. Автори роблять висновок, що традиційні форми вищої освіти втрачають свою актуальність і відбувається альтер-інституціоналізація освіти з виникненням паралельних «коридорів» та альтер-індустрій. Ускладнюють це такі чинники, як інтернаціоналізація навчальних програм, цифровізація освіти, інститути безперервної освіти, масовізація, реконфігурація нових освітніх нерівностей, руйнування систем селекції внаслідок зниження соціальної ексклюзивності, а також диверс-інституціоналізація внаслідок диверсифікації освітніх програм.

Ключові слова: *освіта, інститут, інституціоналізація, сучасність, постсучасність, трансформація, диверсифікація.*

Стаття надійшла до редакції: 10.09.2024

Схвалено до друку: 20.10.2024

Як цитувати / In cites: Golikov, S., & Golikov, A. (2024). (?)INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE (POST)MODERN WORLD: RE-, DE-, COUNTER-, ANTI-, SUB-, SUBVERS-, DIVERS-, ALTER-. *The Journal of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Series Philosophy. Philosophical Peripeteias*, (71), 198-206. <https://doi.org/10.26565/2226-0994-2024-71-17>