

UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

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Summary

The article deals with the issue of university education and classical university education. The essence of such concepts as “university education” and “classical university education” has been characterized. There have been analyzed history, essence and content of university education as one of the most important component of higher education.

A university is the oldest and most common type of higher education institution. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to analyze the content, peculiarities and trends of higher education development as a whole on the example of university education. The main task of the university is to awaken the desire for science in the youth, to help the graduate transfer scientific ideas to specific fields of knowledge and social practice. A classical university unites three types of generally significant social institutions: science, education and culture.

University education is not only a special institution designed for education. It is considered to be an important component of society culture, a complete sociocultural image.

There have been used different methods in the study: general scientific (analysis and synthesis), methods of theoretical research, terminological, retrospective logical and systematic analysis, continuous sampling method alongside definition analysis.

Key words: higher education institution, teaching process, learning process, research, personality development, culture of society, scientific activity.

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1. Introduction

Education is a part of the means for material life production, which with the help of three interrelated processes of learning, upbringing and development, carries out the purposeful formation of the type of personality necessary for society. The goal of education is the intellectual and moral development of a person. Modern society needs a citizen who has independent, critical thinking, knows how to see and creatively solve existing problems, and is an educated specialist.

University education is the most important component of higher education. A university is the oldest and most common type of higher education institution. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to analyze the content, features and trends of higher education development as a whole on the example of university education.

Nowadays, university education is not only a special institution designed for education. This is an important component of society culture, a complete sociocultural image. Accumulating and transmitting the scientific knowledge of the era as a cultural achievement, universities are a special cultural space that includes huge potential opportunities for the “cultural education” of an individual in the broadest sense, involving him not only in scientific knowledge and

practical skills, but also in the culture of relationships, interaction, behaviour, deed. Representing a special dynamic system, they represent different forms and levels of relationships.

The purpose of the work is to characterize and analyze the essence of such concepts as “university education” and “classical university education”.

To achieve this goal the following tasks were set: to study the concept of university, to identify the difference between university education and classical university education, to analyze various scientists’ approaches to these notions and to research the history of classical university education in Europe.

There are different methods that were used in the study – general scientific (analysis and synthesis), methods of theoretical research, terminological, retrospective logical and systematic analysis, continuous sampling method alongside definition analysis.

2. The notion of university

A university is an ancient and at the same time modern form of the highest quality educational institution, which gives a person a high level of education, practical skills and skills in a mastered specialty. At the same time, the university is a creative spirit, the spirit of humanism, education and culture. It is innovation, combining pedagogics with scientific achievements of the modern level (*Kugai, 2016:111*).

The university idea’s classic scholars, Humboldt, W., Schelling, F., Schleiermacher, F. and Habermas, J. emphasized the educational function of the university training as a model of national education and moral culture of the nation. The opinion about the culture-forming power of science, its spiritual and moral potential, the relationship between reason and morality was especially fruitful, because teaching means “teaching good”. University education (teaching, upbringing) should contribute to the disclosure of an individual inner strength, the formation of his cultural image as a unique phenomenon in the universe, capable of creativity and morally fine deeds thanks to intelligent thinking.

The idea of a university in the modern world, in the space of human culture, is revealed in the very name “Universitas”. The term “university” is based on the Latin adjective “universitas” – “universal”, “relating to everything” (compared to “universus” – “whole”, “entire”, consisting of “unus” – “one”, “only” and “versus” – “directed”, “related to”) (*Sydorchuk, 2014*). That is, the term “universum” covers the meaning “construction and maintenance of universal integrity”.

The concept of university (“complex”) has a different meaning, which has several interpretations. Firstly, in the organizational aspect, the result of various types of higher education institutions’ union began to be called a university. A typical example can be the University of Paris, which arose as a merger of the theological school of the Sorbonne with medical and law schools. Secondly, and very important, the main mission of the university is to attract young people to the combination of all kinds of knowledge. The history of science shows that universities tried to form universal worldview positions for understanding life, the world, space, and man, to provide universal education to graduates who, after completing their studies at the alma mater, joined the elite of society.

3. University education

Another aspect of the “complex” is singled out, which refers to the principles of the organization in university education. First of all, they include the principles that ensure the

continuity of scientific creativity: teaching the latest scientific knowledge and methods of cognition and students' involvement in scientific research activities. Therefore, the main task of the university is to awaken the desire for science in the youth, to help the graduate transfer scientific ideas to specific fields of knowledge and social practice.

Hessen, S. summarizing historical experience, clearly formulated the main principles of university education:

- completeness, diversity and versatility of knowledge offered by the university;
- the spirit of freedom and creativity in the process of teaching and learning;
- the university's ability to self-reproduce by training teachers and scientists from among its students (*Gessen, 1923*).

These principles should be inherent in university education, regardless of the historical era and nature of development.

What should be understood by the completeness and versatility of university knowledge? From the point of view of Helmholtz, H. the completeness of scientific knowledge consists in ensuring the full interaction of researchers from all fields of knowledge, which lead to a common goal. It is at the university that the fullness of the developing science provides, on the one hand, the worldview breadth of the future specialist, and on the other hand, it creates the foundations for the development of certain fields of knowledge. The completeness, diversity and versatility of scientific knowledge are revealed through the content of the university course, just through theoretical, practical and experimental directions of science, which is the basis of an academic discipline.

The second important principle of the university education is the freedom of teaching and learning. The teachers of some universities do not teach the course outlined by the program, but publicly share their own scientific views. Accordingly, the student does not so much study as engages in scientific activity. However, intensive scientific activity requires systematic knowledge in scientific theories and directions of development in scientific thought. Therefore, the modern university preserves, along with the freedom of study, a variety of subject and professional training programs aimed at in-depth mastering the system of scientific knowledge and practical skills necessary for future professional activity.

The practice of other universities is to give preference to teachers, excellent rhetoricians, and skilful popularisers of scientific knowledge who can arouse students' interest in learning the truth. However, in both versions, an important feature of the university is freedom of scientific views' expression, freedom of scientific and pedagogical creativity, freedom of thought and speech.

The third principle of the university education is the ability to self-reproduce scientific and pedagogical staff from among its own students, which symbolizes the potential for self-development and the freedom of science. Obviously, we are talking about scientific schools, which are created in universities, and which perform the functions of "incubators" of scientific and pedagogical personnel (*Turkot, 2011*).

4. Historical retrospective

It is generally known that classical university education dates back to the 11th century. Political, economic, and cultural ties began to expand on the territory of Western Europe those days. Many cities appeared and developed, where trade and crafts evolved. Thus as a result there was an increased demand for knowledge in society. The experience of organizing the first universities gradually spread in the countries of Europe and the world, and later turned into a

classical one. In 1088, the first such university was opened in the Italian city of Bologna. Then universities appeared in other European countries and cities, including Paris (1150), Oxford (1167), Salerno (1173), Valencia (1178), Cambridge (1209), etc. (*Jilek, 1983*).

It is generally accepted that the first universities were classical not only in the time of their creation, but also in their structure. As a rule, they all had four faculties: theological, legal, medical, artistic, or preparatory, which was later called philosophical. The “seven liberal arts” were taught at the arts faculty: first the trivium (Latin grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics), then the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music theory) was added. And it was this system of knowledge that formed the basis of classical university education. Only after graduating from this faculty one could continue studying at one of the other three main faculties.

On the territory of Ukraine, Ostroh Higher School and Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium became the first higher educational institutions similar to the European classical university. Ostroh Higher School was founded in 1576 by Prince Vasyl-Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi. Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium was founded in 1632 by Petro Mohyla, Metropolitan of Kyiv, Halych and all Rus, by uniting Kyiv Brotherhood and Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra schools. Petro Mohyla, in whose honour the Collegium was later named Kyiv-Mohyla College, managed to turn it into an educational institution oriented to the Western European education system (*Khyzhniak, 1988*).

For the first time in Ukrainian lands, the title of “university” was officially granted to the Jesuit College in Lviv. On January 20, 1661, the Polish King John II Casimir signed a diploma granting the Jesuit College “the dignity of an academy and the title of a university” with the right to teach all classical university disciplines at that time, award bachelor’s, licentiate, master’s and doctorate academic degrees (*Chuhaiov, Makarchuk & Hryhorash, 1986:16*).

In the future, the process of creating classical universities in Ukraine continued from the beginning of the 19th century.

The concept of Humboldt, the practical embodiment of which was founded in 1810 by the University of Berlin, is of great importance for the development of classical university education idea. This became an entire era in the development of classical university education. This model spread to all universities in Germany. Humboldt’s model is considered classic because it was the first attempt by the university to achieve its true essence in a purposeful way. Since then, science and research have become the main value orientation for universities.

The classical university prototype cannot be imagined without Newman’s model, which spread the tradition of liberal education to the university. Newman defined the essence of liberal education as the learning process in which intellect should not be directed to the performance of certain functions, but should function for the sake of forming its own, i.e., “university” culture. It is this culture, he believes, that is the basis of liberal education (*Pelikan, 1992:71*).

By the time of creation, the fifth university of Ukraine within its modern borders became the university in Bukovyna, which in the 19th century was part of the Austrian Empire. On the basis of Chernivtsi Higher Theological School, Chernivtsi University was established by order of Emperor Franz Joseph on October 4, 1875. In 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed and Northern Bukovyna was annexed to the Kingdom of Romania, but the university continued its existence since then as a classic Romanian higher education institution.

Before the beginning of Soviet transformations in the educational sector in the 20s of the XX century the above-mentioned Ukrainian universities, according to the educational and historical standards of Europe, were standards of classical university education.

5. Higher education institutions in Ukraine

Traditionally, classical university education is based on natural scientific, social and humanitarian specialties, but modern interpretation of the term “classical” still indicates the presence of economic specialties at universities, which has become a characteristic phenomenon for domestic university education since the 1930s.

At the time of Ukraine’s independence declaration in 1991, there were 10 state universities on its territory. Their activities were modelled on the world classical universities.

For the first time in the official documents of independent Ukraine, the term “classical university” was used in Cabinet of Ministers Resolution dated September 5, 1996 On Approval of the Regulation on the State Higher Educational Institution. According to this resolution “a university (classical university) is a multidisciplinary higher educational institution that provides training specialists with higher education from a wide range of natural, humanitarian, technical and other areas of science, technology and culture under educational and professional programs of all levels, conducts fundamental and applied scientific research, is a leading scientific and methodical centre, promotes the spread of scientific knowledge and carries out cultural and educational activities among the population, has a developed infrastructure of scientific, scientific and production enterprises and institutions, a high level staff and logistical support for such activities” (*Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 1996*). Along with the generally positive definition of the term “classical university” there was a significant inaccuracy, which according to educators did not correspond to the existing world practice, namely, technical areas cannot be present in classical university education.

If Cabinet of Ministers Resolution of 1996 defines a classical university, then the Law of Ukraine On Higher Education of January 17, 2002 clearly identifies only the term “university”, without calling it classical. However, the term definition ends with the provision that both classical and specialized universities can be created. Later, the economic direction of university education was added to the content of the specified term.

According to the latest edition of the Law of Ukraine On Higher Education, the concept of “university”, within which the concept of “classical university” is clarified, has the following definition: a university is multi-disciplinary (classical, technical) or sectoral (professional, technological, pedagogical, physical education and sports, humanitarian, theological, medical, economic, legal, pharmaceutical, agricultural, artistic, cultural, etc.) higher educational institution that conducts innovative educational activities at various degrees of higher education (including doctor of philosophy), conducts fundamental and/or applied scientific research, is a leading scientific and methodical centre, has a developed infrastructure of educational, scientific, scientific and production divisions, promotes the dissemination of scientific knowledge and conducts cultural and educational activities (*The Law of Ukraine On Higher Education*).

Based on the analysis of the given definitions and interpretations, it can be concluded that the modern classical university is a multidisciplinary higher educational institution that carries out educational activities related to the acquisition of higher education degrees of bachelor’s and master’s degrees, the educational and scientific level of the doctor of philosophy from a wide spectrum of natural, humanitarian and economic areas of science, conducts fundamental and applied scientific research. It is a leading scientific and methodical centre that should have a developed infrastructure of educational, scientific and production divisions, an appropriate level of staff, material and technical support, promotes the spread of scientific knowledge and carries out cultural and educational activities.

The focus on the integration of educational process and fundamental scientific research as the basis of university life determines the functions of a classical university, the main of which are:

- production of knowledge;
- accumulation and preservation of knowledge;
- transfer of knowledge;
- spread of knowledge.

These four main functions are characteristic of the ideal model of Humboldt's university and determine the capabilities of the classical university in training the intellectual elite of a society. It is clear that for the implementation of these functions, the university must have the appropriate infrastructure and potential.

6. Conclusions

Thus, a classical university is an advanced, progressive educational centre, a fundamental research institution, a national intellectual centre, a generator of innovations and creativity, a catalyser and guide of rich culture and spirituality. The following criteria of a classical university can be added (*Dvortseva, 2011:35*):

- large-scale staff training through postgraduate and doctoral studies;
- advanced system of retraining and professional development;
- high proportion of teaching staff with academic degrees and titles;
- availability of doctors of science and professors;
- formation of a higher educational institution, as a classical university, for at least 20 years;
- share of educational programs belonging to natural scientific, mathematical, humanities and social specialties should be a larger part of other educational and vocational programs licensed at universities.

Classical universities are the basis of modern institutions of higher education and forms of cooperation development in the Eurasian educational space. This is due to the fact that despite all the differences and intricacies of national state educational standards, despite all the dynamism and national characteristics of higher education problems, the status of a classical university, its purpose and the content of its activities in the higher education system of each country remain unchanged.

A classical university is a higher educational institution that has certain specific features, special mechanisms and forms of functioning. The fundamental quality peculiarities of such educational institutions are, in particular, a high, one might say elite, level of specialists' training based on a thorough methodological basis. That is an opportunity for students to acquire not just basic, but fundamental knowledge in various fields of science with an optimal combination of natural and humanities educational disciplines, the ability to form and spread the long-standing moral and cultural values, the predominance of fundamental, creative research in scientific work.

In addition, the classical university is the main source of replenishment of scientific and pedagogical staff for the higher education system. It acts as a generator of changes in the field of educational organization. These signs of classical university education, the corresponding qualities of graduates make it possible to talk about the special role of classical universities not only in the field of education and enlightenment, but also in the development of modern society. Also, such a university conducts fundamental and applied scientific research, engages in cultural activities.

In view of the above it can be concluded that a classical university unites three types of generally significant social institutions: science, education and culture. The prestige of classical national universities remains at a high level. In their favour, there is a fundamental knowledge base, many years of experience in the field of science and teaching, internationally recognized scientific schools, the best teaching staff, and a solid material and technical base. At the same time, such a factor as knowledge about national universities abroad and, accordingly, the prestige of the diploma, which opens the door to successful employment, also influences the applicant's choice. Classical university education is the centre of intellectual flower of the nation, the source of international contacts, exchange programs and grants.

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