

HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MODERN GERMANY: SOCIAL-PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

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In this article the author investigates higher education system in modern Germany and shows major factors which had weighty value with assistance to development of democratic education and ways of its perfection. The author analyzes features of modern higher education in Germany and explains solving problems of higher education system in Ukraine.

Key Words: education, education system, democratization, reform, university

When Ukraine became an independent state, it has chosen the democratic way. According to this, Ukraine furthers the development of democracy in different branches and direct in the education. After all, the development of education shows an erudition level in the country. When it is above, then the political system of the country is especially democratic, the state economy develops better and a rate of unemployment is lower. So, the education is a necessary precondition of democratization of the state.

According to this, Sergey Klepko, in his book «The Philosophy of education in the European context», noted, «Education is a basis of modern «economy of knowledge» because only education and good training of population is capable to develop, introduce and use innovations effectively. An innovative trend of economy, which provides a network of universities, laboratories, scientific centers, as well as the modern information infrastructure and a social standard order, which allows to adapt new technologies and ideas for manufacture requirements, will not be kept without education» [Klepko, 2006: p. 57].

Unfortunately, the up-to-date educational system in Ukraine does not meet the modern requirements of democracy by many criterions. Such modern scientists as Oleg Bazaluk, Viktor Andrushchenko, Sergey Klepko, Victor Lutai, etc. pay attention to this problem. Some of these researchers consider that one of the problems of democratization of higher education in Ukraine is the university education problem.

While investigating the decision of this problem, we turn to Germany which is one of the most powerful countries of the world. After all, today Germany is an example of successful and effective modernization and internationalization of higher education which raises competitive advantages of a classical traditional German education system and promotes the general social and economic well-being of this European country. According to it, in his time Otto von Bismarck noted, «First of all, Germany is obliged by the power and glory to the education» [Christian Gefert, 2005: p. 135].

Germany has formed and introduced reforms and programs into the improvement of the education for 60 years, but this way was hard as in other European countries. The reason was that unlike other economically developed European countries, Germany has created its own state and has joined democracy a hundred years later in comparison with Great Britain and France.

Thus, only in 20 years, the state has begun reconstruction of the educational system at democratic level after formation of Germany in 1949. At this time Germany has been already artificially divided into two parts. According to this, the educational-scientific complex was also divided into «capitalist» in Germany where higher education was considered as the factor of socialization and cultural growth in which the contingent of students was not limited, and into «socialist» in GDR where the quantity of students in the higher educational establishment was equal to the quantity of workplaces, and it depended on a planned economy. However, the main idea was higher education development as main means of a professional training of the top skills.

Also educational reform, which has passed under the slogan «We wish more democracy, testifies to a democratic direction of German education in the seventies» [Biriukova, 2010: p. 222]. This slogan has found the reflexion in Genrih Piht's statements which called for the need to form a mental capacity («talent pool») from all levels of population and to create possibility for all comers to study in higher educational institutions. But first of all it was necessary to plan and create higher education modernization. Therefore, certain types of schools such as theological seminars, educational institutes, higher vocational schools and universities had to unite. Their reformers called them «the incorporated higher schools».

The purpose of these «incorporated higher schools» was an access expansion to higher educational institutions, a simplification of mobility of students through granting of capabilities within one university, an improvement of curriculums, an organization of «combined» faculties etc. But the main purpose was an association of higher educational institutions which could promote expansion of privileges of the Berlin type of universities (unity of educational process and research activity). However, it was assumed that quantity of theoretical subjects will be reduced at all universities. Also it was showed preference to institutions which had a profound professional orientation and cheap, short cycles of training. But if cycles of training were long, they are intended for capable and talented students with attraction of research work. Unfortunately, this reform fell short of expectation and because of «general education» has been renamed as «the differentiation in higher education». Thus, independence has amplified in some individual higher educational institutions.

Therefore, the German reform in higher educational institutions had the results at creation of binary structure of higher education with strengthening and expansion of each part in 1970s. However, there were contradictions between different universities from time to time. It reflects in prestige value of universities and the higher specialized schools, qualifications and payments of professors, the exclusive right only universities on award of degree of the doctor. Even granting of the same status to all universities could not solve this problem. Even today, the higher specialized schools have no right to appropriate doctor's degrees at level of universities. Only 90 universities from 190 specialized high schools have the right to protection of the dissertation and academic status giving. Also a constant theme of discussions is financial possibilities

of universities and the higher specialized schools on financing of scientific researches. After all, the higher specialized schools are limited in financing of research work in contrast to universities.

The country association in 1990 became the important impulse in development of German educational system. It was the powerful factor for creation of the new strategic program in the further development German general educational program and an increase in general educational space. The purpose of this new program was creation of the uniform democratic state, national integration which has been directed on overcoming of economic, political, social, ideological, psychological and training disproportions in old and new territories of Germany. Certainly, this program expected transition of East territories to West German educational standards and liquidation of all operating social institutes and structures in new territories.

Thus, there was an adaptation to new ideological, psychological, moral, educational values with acceptance of model of German education in new territories. But it occurred very difficult because, first of all, it is connected with the large economic expenses on association of Germany for the account of reduction of social programs. At this time the big financial contribution has been carried out for execution of the strategic program on integration of old and new territories that has substantially removed educational reform which was prepared in the late eighties. This reform had such priority problems as:

- Increase in a role of fundamental knowledge for the purpose of improvement of qualitative education. It is refusal of their separation because of increase in quantity of new subjects and to give the right of a free choice of students;
- Increase of a role and the importance of knowledge on new technologies, computer science, economy, in a combination to development «initiatives, imaginations, diligence, will, self-discipline»;
- Insertion a subject «ethics» along with a subject «religion» in educational process;
- Improvement of teaching and educational works which lead educational processes.

But one of appreciable factors in development and improvement of educational process was creation of the European Union which was guided by the European values, formed new sights at development of ability of thinking as the European and studying of the all-European cultures. Therefore, essential changes in the field of education have occurred in Germany between the 20th century and 21st century. Thereby, these changes have pulled together German education with the European model. Of course, it has led cooperation with foreign experts and participation in the international researches on overcoming of difficulties at the decision of own problems in the field of education.

As a result, there was a first reform of education in the unified Germany in 2003. The main purpose of this reform was a quality of education. But as to concept definition «quality of education » it is interpreted in documentation forums as a pedagogical category which changes in conformity to different conditions and depending on objects in view that carry out functions in educational structures. By the way, German experts consider quality of education is a block which is broken into four sections: «quality of orientation», «quality of structure», «quality of educational process» and

«quality of result». As a result, it gives possibility more precisely to find and estimate weak points or even the contribution of each teacher.

After all, the Bologna Process formulates new type of the teacher as «From the sage on the stage to the guide on the side». And it is underlined in the national document «Education Ministers' Recommendation of Conference» which have offered «increase of teachers' professionalism », in particular their methodological and diagnostic competences [Gut, 2007: p.87].

Today, all it is necessary in a basis of educational process in higher educational institutions. Nowadays, there are 350 higher educational institutions, which are public (98 per cent of the total higher educational institutions) and private, in Germany. The private high schools should have necessarily the state license for teaching and study in these higher educational institutions which are held on a paid basis. Thus, on the 26 of January in 2005, the Federal court of Germany declared position of the law of higher educational institutions concerning free study inadmissible and allowed to make to the Federal states (known as *Länder*) of the decision concerning a payment for study. At present, every Federal state specifies and plans an average fee of education for a semester. This payment will be set not only at the Federal states level but in higher educational establishments as well.

Higher educational institutions in Germany are classical universities (*Universität/Uni*) which are a basis of systems of higher education as well as technical (*Technische Universität*) and the general (*Gesamthochschule*) universities and 22 high schools, which have a status of university, such as pedagogical institutes (*Pädagogische Hochschule*), medical colleges (*Medienhochschule*), philosophic-theological and church colleges (*Theologische Hochschule*) as well as sport colleges (*Sporthochschule*). By the way, there are high schools of not university type, which consist of 183 professional higher schools, universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschule*) and 46 musical and art colleges (*Kunsthochschule und Musikhochschule*). These high schools give vocational training in fields of business, economy, service, agriculture and an applied art. Of course, some public and private colleges for improvement of professional skills, which unite theoretical preparation with practice on the production, belong to higher educational institutions.

But, first of all, among all this diversity of higher educational institutions the first place belongs to universities because they create the German history, the culture, new discoveries and names of ingenious scientists. As a result, there are 118 universities in Germany. The first by right it is possible to name Heidelberg University (*Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg*), which has been founded in 1398, as well as some other universities, for example: Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich (*Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München*), the Humboldt University of Berlin (*Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*), etc., which have centuries-old history.

German higher educational institutions consist of two-year basic course (*Grundstudium*) which is finished taking an intermediate examination (*Zwischenprüfung*) or so-called pre-degree examination (*Diplom-Vorprüfung*). If a student takes these examinations successfully, he/she will pass to a two-year professional course (*Hauptstudium*). Training of this course, which includes deep studying of specialization disciplines, lasts for 5 semester and finishes taking final or public examinations (*Staatsexamen*) to get diploma (*Diplom*).

Study in German public higher educational institutions as well as a reception of the second higher education is free for German and foreign students because it is based on availability and openness principles. Rules of entrance to higher educational institutions are standard in Germany. Thus, the admission to study at university is the General Certificate of Secondary Education (*Abitur*) which stands out by results of training in gymnasiums or comprehensive schools. However, pupils, who study in comprehensive schools, must learn the gymnasium program that take four examinations in the basic subjects and show the level of knowledge which is fixed conformity with the educational standard.

The academic year of university in German consists of winter semester and summer semester. Thus, each student can study at university in either semester: in winter (from September – October) or in summer (from March – April). According to it there are two terms of giving of documents so it is necessary to be registered till July, 15 in a winter semester or till January, 15 in summer.

There are different kinds of lessons in educational process, for example, lectures, seminars, tests, excursions, etc. Furthermore, senior students are widely involved in different kinds of tutor works with younger students during teaching.

But the main principle of German universities is «academic freedom», that is a system which allows every student to plan the academic life and to define the list of disciplines independently. Moreover, these disciplines will be included into his diploma.

Verbal communication or written works, for which the student receives the course certificate, are used during seminars or practical lessons. This certificate is necessary for taking of final examination and for transition to the following training course. Thus, the course certificate is considered the main control method of quality of training in higher educational institutions during an academic year.

Therefore, the academic degrees which are awarded by German universities differ from degrees which are accepted in the English-speaking countries. After all, at present, in parallel there are two structures of training in German higher educational institutions:

- new two-level system of Bachelor&Master;
- the traditional curriculum with reception of the Specialist Diploma or Master's Degree (*Magister Artium*);

So, in Germany it is accepted to give out a Diploma of Higher Education (*Diplom*) which are received by graduates of the majority of mathematical, natural and economic faculties. But Master's Degree (*Magister Artium*) is the most widespread degree after the graduate of humanitarian faculties.

Graduates of non-university high schools get a diploma where is written type of high school (*Diplom FH*).

When students finish studying on senior courses at university, they can get such scientific degrees [*Grechnikova*]:

- Bachelor's Degree is the first degree which gives base knowledge for specialities and methodical skills as well as the right to professional work. The period of studying continues 3-4 years to get this degree. Furthermore, it is necessary to get credit units (ECTS) from 180 to 240 depending on the curriculum for award of Bachelor's Degree.

- Master's Degree is the second degree. Studying starts after the Award of Bachelor's Degree or after several years of professional work and continues 1-2 years. Students study specialisation and scientific work deeply and must have credit units from 60 till 120. As a result, the Specialist Diploma or Master's Degree is an admission to study in the postgraduate course (*Promotion*).

Of course, students have the right to continue scientific activity in postgraduate course which is considered as the third degree of the Bologna Process in Germany. There are various postgraduate degrees, including Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Science, which are awarded for research in Sciences.

Dissertation preparation is connected with carrying out of independent scientific research which lasts from 2 till 4 years after the Award of Master's Degree. Thereby, the dissertation writing is possible only at universities. As a result, Doctor's Degree is awarded after a writing of the dissertation and successful taking of oral examination or dissertation defend.

Also, there is one more feature which essentially distinguishes German universities from other universities of the English-speaking countries. It is partial or even full absence of academic departments. After all, it is considered, that the chair is a professorial duty, therefore there is no inscription «chair» on doors of German higher educational institutions, but only — «professor». Because it is thought a professor carries out the basic academic load. Moreover, there is no division into faculties at university in Germany. After all, faculties have been cancelled at the most of universities in the 1960s and so-called «specialities» have come on change of them. At present, more than 400 specialities, which can be received in German higher educational institutions, exists in Germany.

Therefore, development of higher education system in Germany, the classical decentralised state which unites 16 states with the right of «the exclusive competence» of an education field, occurred according to historically created social and economic and political conditions which defined a choice of the ways generated by a cultural policy in the country on an extent almost of last 60 years.

Also, not less essential factor is national German traditions, which continue to exist in culture and education field. Furthermore, today, Germany harmoniously unites old university traditions, innovative management methods of education and research activity that leads to high quality of education.



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