

MOBILITY TURN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY AS AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

Denys Svyrydenko — Doctor of Philosophy, Associated Professor,
National Pedagogical Dragomanov University
(Kyiv, Ukraine)

E-mail: denis_sviridenko@ukr.net

The main idea of the research is to uncover the series of challenges produced by the social dynamics with one's mobile nature. Using methodological potential of social philosophy author attempts to demonstrate the essence and logics of mobility turn as a metaphor of contemporary society development. Author shows the radical changes at social-cultural dynamics which are also conceived by the modern social sciences (sociology of mobilities, series of postmodern concepts such as nomad etc).

Using methodological approaches of philosophy of education author formulates "order of the day" of the mobility challenges at higher education sphere. Author shows that educational sphere also becomes mobile transforming the character of one's vital activity, but also actualizing some special phenomena such as academic mobility. Formulating "order of the day" of mobility challenges to modern higher education, author demonstrates the horizon of future researches due to complex nature of researched problem.

Keywords: mobility, mobility turn, academic mobility, nomad, higher education, contemporary society.

One of the most important features of the contemporary society is mobility. Mentioned phenomenon needs to be comprehended at the context of one's productive relations with ideas of Postmodernism as well as globalization. It is easy to find that mobility is becoming not only one of the key tendencies of global world, but getting being a powerful resource of the individuals' development as well as societies in whole. Thereby, Michael Byram and Fred Dervin write following: "Particularly with the digital revolution in the mid 1990s and the proliferation of the eponymous "mobile" as well as the increasing globalization of the world, mobility has progressively become dissociated from physical mobility, from the notion of domicile and territory, broadening its domain to include not just people and capital, but also social practices, objects, information, signs, ideas. As a result, mobility is now interpreted as a fashionable concept, even a myth, evoking above all fluidity, continuity, and seamlessness" [Students, 2008: p. 14].

The problematic of mobility becomes central at the researches of the modern social dynamics. It is caused due to social practices transformation into mobile ones as well as actualization of the movement role for people and products of their everyday activity. These facts initiate the discussion against the methodological orientations of the modern social sciences. At the global world order the national product becomes a product of world interaction and none governments pretend of the self-containment status for the products, services and capital production, and mentioned disposition

© Svyrydenko Denys, 2016

needs higher and higher levels of mobility for businessman, consultants, students and tourists [Migratsii, 2009: p. 61].

John Urry (one of the main founders of sociology of mobilities) gives some interesting data: at 1800 the average citizen moved not far than 50 meters a day from own homes, but nowadays people easily move 50 kilometers a day; today all the Earth people move 23 billions kilometers a day and the forecasts show, that this number will raise fourthly up to 106 billions at 2050 [Urry, 2012: p. 68]. This English sociologist underlines, that contemporary social relations are spatially organized and mentioned structuring influence on the nature of social relations, thus space increasingly reviewed as a unity of flexible (movable) elements [Urry, 2012: p. 115]. Mentioned author underlines, that radical spatial transformation of the modern individual lifestyle takes place and that movements get more and more important for the society we live today. We want to underline that initial researches of mobility phenomenon were performed of the second part of 70-th — beginning of 80-th of previous century. These researches tried to substantiate the common and special aspects of movement activity taking into account the social, economic, cultural and political conditions, but modern ones pay attention on the dynamics of mobility.

Contemporary society lives at “the coordinates” of mobility and modern individual needs to transform one’s own everyday practices to stay at the advance-guard of the social development, to perform successful carrier steps etc. The reports of some international organizations are demonstrated, that at the 21-th century life success depends from the people’s ability to build the life strategies (as well as educational ones) taking into account the mobility tendencies at the modern society. Thomas Faist pays the special attention of mentioned fact: “There is also a great deal of public policy concern suggesting that mobility is the key to improved living standards in the countries of origin. A case in point is the debate on migration and development since the early 2000s, instigated by the World Bank and taken up by other international organizations, nation-state governments, the European Commission and various civil society organizations... In a nutshell, the perception is that highly educated and professionally successful people move across borders easily and possess the relevant competencies for cross-border communication and exchange. Their transnational education and career paths secure them a social position at the upper end of the social ladder” [Faist, 2013: p. 1643].

According to “mobility turn” at the modern humanities and social sciences, mobility starts being comprehended as part of individual, information, idea, value attribute and it is very heuristic to uncover the mobile nature of social dynamics: “Much twentieth-century sociology has been based upon the study of occupational, income, educational and social mobility. This literature regarded society as a uniform surface and failed to register the geographical intersections of region, city and place, with the social categories of class, gender and ethnicity. Further, there are crucial flows of people within, but especially beyond, the territory of each society, and these flows relate to many different desires, for work, housing, leisure, religion, family relationships, criminal gain, asylum seeking and so on. Moreover, not only people are mobile, but so too are many “objects”, “images”, “informations” and “wastes”. Mobility is thus to be understood in a horizontal rather than a vertical sense, and it applies to a variety of actants and not just to humans” [Urry, 2000: p. 186].

The representatives of the series scientific schools were comprehended the importance of mobility at the modern society. Most of them interpret mobility as one of the key bases of the everyday being for modern individual, one's basic value, instrument for modern politics etc. For example, Paolo Freire wrote following depending the level of modern social dynamics: "The world reduced to the village size. The time compressed. Yesterday is becoming today. Tomorrow is arisen. Everything happens extremely rapidly" [Freire, 2004: p. 113]. We share this judgment and want to add that at the 19-th century trip to the next city was an important event, the trip to the next country was important for the 20-th century, but trip to another continent is not very important for average citizen at the 21-th century.

The scientist's attention directed on the mobility problems is natural and aimed to find the answers on the social requests of modern society. Zygmund Bauman wrote, that mobility became an important factor of social stratification, being a material for building and transforming of everyday hierarchies (political, social, economical, cultural ones) [Bauman, 2005: p. 237]. According to John Urry, the intensive replication of "mobilities" is not as important as social relations and types of sociality produced by them [Urry, 2012: p. 361]. The contemporary civilization transited to the level of own organization when society and one's individuals became more and more mobile. At these conditions, mobility starts being comprehended as an objective need for performing of adaptation processes at the complex social dynamics. Thus, new complex types of social relations appear.

It looks logical to say that mobility stopped being a tool of society disorganization (producing unpredictable dynamic nature of social relations). It is time to understand it as a phenomenon, which is able to be a basis of the interaction at the modern society. According to Bauman, the speed of movement, ability to act effectively interpedently from distance, freedom to change location (absence of localized circumstances, easiness of their overcoming) are the main factors of stratification at the global and local dimensions [Bauman, 2005, p. 49]. Mentioned thesis is very important from the methodological point of view and is useful for the modern social studies. The ability to move is an ontological feature of living matter, thus immobile human can't be comprehend as living one at the 20-th century (in metaphoric sense).

At the same time, Chatrine Withol de Wenden stands on position that mobility still can't be comprehended as a determinant of the social development — the movement and migration processes still have modest scale, but the more transparent borders are the more unpredictable nature mobility processes become: «Yet mobility is neither invasion, nor conquest, nor the subversion of the rich developed world: only 3% of the world population, 175 million people, take part in migration in its various forms: family reunification, refugees and displaced persons, migrant workers, students, businesspeople and experts. The more open the frontiers, the more people circulate and the less they settle: this leads to pendular migration, back and forth, mobility as a way of life» [Withol de Wenden, 2004: p. 5].

Thus, we have enough arguments to say that mobility of individual is a condition for harmonically fitting into the modern society: mobility of person is an important ability to solve fundamental problems of own existence as well as everyday one. The same position demonstrates Adrian Fawell, writing that modern theorists of globalization try to review migration and mobility as the basis of own speculative theories forgetting

that ones are the real phenomena; main questions of globalization can be empirically formalized using migration and mobility concepts [Fawell, 2001: p. 397].

It is hard to avoid the fact of connection of mobility ideas with the series concepts of postmodern philosophy. According to the most of representatives of this philosophical tradition, the end of the 20-th century and beginning of the 21- th one are the age of new social arrangement origination. The new anthropological paradigm appeared in parallel way. According to mentioned, Marek Kwiek writes that new world we tend has many names and semantic senses: some theorists call the processes of last twenty years using "postmodernity" term (Liotard and Bauman, but the last one also uses "liquid modernity" term), another authors use "second modernity" term (Beck), "reflexive modernization" term (Beck, Hiddens, Lash), "glocalization" term (Robertson) or "global age" term (Waters), "network society" term (Castells), "knowledge or information society" term (Drucker) or even "post- national constellation" (Habermas) [Kwiek, 2009: p. 24].

At the context of our research of mobility turn at the modern society, we understand postmodernism at one's wide sense, as a methodological strategy. We have no research tasks to discover deeply the relation between the mobility ideas expanding and concepts of society, proposed by the representatives of the postmodern philosophy, but we have to demonstrate some arguments to show the mentioned connection in general. For example, Bauman writes the following depending the mobile nature of the everyday life of modern individual: "life as a game" at the postmodern society have on regular rules for the game, thus the life strategy can be a reducing of time of discrete social games, avoiding of long-term obligations: not to tied to specified place, not to live the same life, not to have the same profession, to avoid life stability and loyal relations [Bauman, 1996: p. 24].

The mobile practices become the norm of modern individuals and modern society everyday being. The flexibility becomes the biggest value when all the components must be flexible and mobile for easy group (ungroup) activity; people have to avoid strong connections between the components; hardness and stability are the damnations of the nowadays reducing the speed of adaptation processes in conditions of high social dynamics [Bauman, 2005: p. 290-291]. Mentioned authoe writes following relatively the non-stable dynamic nature of the social connections: if the modern "problem of identity" was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern "problem of identity" is primary how to avoid fixation and keep the options open; the catchword of modernity was creation, the catchword of postmodernity is recycling [Bauman, 1996: p. 18].

Analyzing the metaphors of mobility at the modern sociology, Urry writes, that one of the heuristic metaphors at sociology is nomad (or tourist) one: nomad is a pilgrim without the destination point, traveler without the route, but tourist pays for one's freedom, pleasure form travelling and ability to create the network of senses personally; they both move through the alien space, they can be close physically, bit not mentally [Urry, 2012: p. 114]. At the same time, Bauman says that pilgrims embody the spirit of Modernity, but the tourists ate the symbols of Postmodernity: the pilgrim is the best metaphor of modern lifestyle with one's identity construction problems, but the nomad, tourist of gamer is the best life strategy of limitations avoidance and fixation [Bauman, 1996: p. 26].

So then, we draw the contours of the modern complex social phenomenon named as mobility turn. We demonstrated, that mobility influences on the most of the spheres of social life radically transforming the ontology of contemporary social being. At the second part of the research, we are going to pay attention on the influence of mobility on the sphere of higher education. We take into account the fact, that mobility turn in modern society causes actualization of the academic mobility phenomenon on the background of understanding the students as nomads. According to nomadic vision of students, European students are comprehended as the hunters for new experience who are mobile, young, able for complex adaptation processes, able for internal changes, oriented on the integration of international experience into the whole educational results, who can act as autonomous individuals, social actors, researchers of another cultures and languages [Murphy-Lejeune, 2001: p. 38]. According to estimates, the quantity of the international students worldwide will rise up to 8 millions at 2020 [International handbook, 2007: p.128].

Mentioned trend has positive aspects as well as negative ones. From one hand, nomad students get new cultural experience becoming the bearers of the universal values and global competencies. From another hand, their national identity gets more and more blurred. In addition, most talented students will meet the challenge to stay at more developed country. Also, it is hard to image the mass flows of British, German or French student to less developed countries at least for educational experience.

The key documents which describe the vision of future higher education, postulate that mobility should be a fundamental principle of higher education development. Academic mobility would promote the idea of openness to the future, knowledge exchange, deep intercultural interaction, creation of the productive connections between the education and non-linear social-cultural dynamics. According to mentioned, academic mobility can become a mean for development of education in harmonic way, resonating the challenges of contemporary society.

It is important to underline that extension of academic mobility ideas at the global educational space need to have formulated, theoretically proved and implemented political instruments, which would be able to grant the normative, institutional and other aspects of mobility. David Crosier and Teodora Parveva underline, that there is a need to develop the holistic policy resonated with the wide range social aspects like state migration policy: "Policy for mobility cannot be made in a vacuum. While all areas of policy-making can be seen as inter-related, this is particularly true of mobility and a number of areas of social welfare policy, particularly immigration policy. Many countries that have developed policy to stimulate mobility in the higher education sector have also implemented policy to control and limit immigration, but few mention any tension or even any relationship between these policy areas. Indeed, despite the close relationship between mobility and immigration policy, only a few countries mention attention to immigration legislation as a means of creating a supportive legal environment for mobility" [Crosier, 2013: p. 53].

Other researcher Erica Rauthenfeld underlines, that mobility became a key characteristic for all the European citizens, but it has a special role directly at education policy: thanking to academic mobility programs, mobile students receive "from the first hands" the cultural experience of another European countries which promotes students' understanding of unity and diversity, stimulates the formation

of own European identity with rational connection to own culture and traditions [Rautenfeld, 2011: p. 149].

Trying to formulate the conclusions, we underline that at the scopes of the research we wanted to formulate the “order of the day” of mobility turn at the beginning of the 21-th century and demonstrate the influence of this tendency on the educational sphere. In our opinion, the modern Europe as an ideological concept became possible thanking to movement and mobility. The concept we call European identity was formed thanking to population movement, migration and exchanges (student ones especially). European cultural space is also built on the basis of mobile European education area.

And, of course, the mobility as a social phenomenon must be placed at the focus of the future researches. We associate ourselves with the following idea depending the perspectives of future researches: “For future consideration, the question arises whether mobility is a new norm, that is, whether nomadism is replacing sedentarism as one of the dominant principles of social order. Is mobility really a human universal, as anthropologists tell us? And from a sociological point of view, is it true that spatial mobility is a marker of success in navigating the global world? Is immobility then a hallmark of disadvantage and exclusion? What is this new norm normalizing? In the end, it is people who decide whether mobility is simply an outflow of a neoliberal agenda or a way to enhance the opportunity structure to move or to stay” [Faist, 2013: p. 1644]. That is why, if Ukraine (or another country) wants to receive one’s own place at the “family” of democratic European states, it should care about the development of educational sphere. The openness and effectiveness of academic mobility programs are one of the important steps of this way. We understand that academic mobility is a very complex phenomenon which can’t be reduced to discrete steps, techniques and political decisions. Academic mobility is not only the simple students, teachers and staff exchange between the different countries. It is a complex, multifaceted process of intercultural interaction at the global educational area, which initiates many questions for one’s effective implementation. The research of mobility turn at contemporary society cannot be successfully researched at the scopes of one scientific article. Saying about the mobility turn at the sphere of higher education, we see that many facets should also be discovered: academic mobility initiates the questions at migration discourse, multicultural relations, economic, education policy and other ones. This article is an attempt to initiate the scientific dialogue around the “nodes” of implementation of mobility turn at education.



References



- Bauman Zygmunt. From Pilgrim to Tourist — or A Short History of Identity / Z. Bauman // Questions of Cultural Identity / In S.Hall and P.D.Gay (Eds) — London: Sage, 1996. — pp. 18–36.
- Bauman Zygmunt. Individualizirovannoye obshchestvo / Z.Bauman; Per. s angl. pod red. V.L. Inozemtseva. — M.: Logos, 2005. — 390 s.
- Bazaluk O., Blazhevich T. Cosmic Education: Formation of a Planetary and Cosmic Personality. / Philosophy and Cosmology 2012 — Kiev: ISPC, 2013. — P.147– 160.

- Bazaluk Oleg. Neurophilosophy in the Formation of Planetary-Cosmic Personality / Future Human Image 1 (4) — Kyiv: ISPC, 2014. — P. 5-13.
- Crosier David. The Bologna Process: Its impact on higher education development in Europe and beyond / David Crosier, Teodora Parveva — [Electronic resource]. — Access mode: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002206/220649e.pdf>
- Faist Thomas. The mobility turn: a new paradigm for the social sciences? — *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. — 2013. — Vol. 36. — Issue 11. — pp. 1637-1646.
- Favell Adrian. Migration, mobility and globaloney: metaphors and rhetoric in the sociology of globalization / Adrian Favell // *Global Networks* — 2001. — No.1 (4). — pp. 389-398.
- Freire Paulo. Pedagogika svobodi: etika, demokratiya i gromadyanska muzhnist / P. Freire; per. z angl. O. Demyanchuk. — K.: Vidavnychiy dim «KM Akademiya», 2004. — 120 s.
- International handbook of higher education — Dordrecht (The Netherlands) : Springer, 2007 . — pt. 1: Global themes and contemporary challenges / ed. J.J. Forest, P.G. Altbach. — 2007. — 405 p.
- Kwiek Marek. Universitet i derzhava: vivchennya global'nikh transformatsiy / Marek Kwiek; per. z angl. Tarasa Tsimbala — K.: Takson, 2009. — 380 s.
- Migratsii bez granits. Esse o svobodnom peremeshchenii lyudey / Pod red. Antuana Peku i Polya de Gyushtenera: — [Electronic resource]. — Access mode: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001557/155779R.pdf>
- Murphy-Lejeune Elizabeth. Student Mobility and Narrative in Europe: The New Strangers (Routledge Studies in Anthropology) / Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune — Routledge, 2001. — 288 p.
- Rautenfeld J. Erika (von). The construction of European identity in higher education in Germany and Great Britain / J. Erika von Rautenfeld. — Marburg: Peter Wiehl, 2011. — 256 p.
- Students, Staff and Academic Mobility in Higher Education / Michael Byram and Fred Dervin (eds.) — Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008. — 313 p.
- Svyrydenko Denys. Higher education in the face of XXI century challenges / Philosophy and Cosmology — Kyiv, 2014. — Vol.12 — pp. 258-263.
- Svyrydenko Denys. Globalization as a factor of academic mobility processes expanding. Philosophy and Cosmology — Kyiv, 2015. — Vol.14 — pp. 223-235.
- Urry John. Mobile Sociology / John Urry // *British Journal of Sociology*. — 2000. — No. 51 — Issue No. 1 (January/March). — pp. 185-203.
- Urry John. Mobilnosti / John Urry; per. s angl. A.V.Lazareva, vstup. statya N.A.Kharlamova. — M.: Izdatel'skaya i konsaltingovaya gruppa «Praksis», 2012. — 576 s.
- Withol de Wenden Chatrine. The Frontiers of Mobility / Chatrine Withol de Wenden. — [Electronic resource]. — Access mode: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001391/139147e.pdf>