# SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY





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### Socio-Philosophical Analysis of a Foreign Student Image in Focus of the Modern Educational Space

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Introduction. All of the processes such as actualization of the problem of education humanization, the growth of its virtualization and digitalization, the change in the value orientations of the individual, are included in the structure of the educational circuit of modern society. Integrality in understanding education as a social institution involved in a person existentially and ontologically can mean not only increased interconnections, but also a change in the nature of relations between the subjects of the educational space, when modern specialists become able to effectively combine traditional knowledge with science and modern technologies. The intensity and significance of such changes undoubtedly requires philosophical understanding, for philosophy acts as a worldview component striving for value ordering and world cognition. In this context, the study of a foreign student image as a subject of the modern educational space seems relevant. Materials and Methods. General scientific research methods are used: analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, discourse analysis method, comparative analysis method, focused interview method.

**Results.** Socio-philosophical understanding of one of the subsystems in the structure of Russian student community (the social group "foreign students", taking into account the challenges of our time) was carried out. Various aspects of the concept of "educational space" have been investigated, the image of a foreign student as a subject of the modern educational space of Russia has been formed. As a result, ways have been proposed to effectively build the educational process of foreign students in the context of a new sociocultural reality taking into account the consideration of the mechanisms of their sociocultural adaptation.

**Discussion and Conclusion.** The image of a foreign student can be defined as a construct influenced not only by the national worldview, attitudes and beliefs, fundamental historical events, the mentality of the generation, but also by the cultural and educational environment in which they learn, which directly determines their social and professional orientation, forms models behavior in the present and in the future. The experience of working with foreign students shows that when planning and organizing the educational process, they need a special approach. This study is of practical importance when working with foreign students at Russian universities.

**Keywords:** education, educational space, foreign student, student community, student, identity, mentality, sociocultural space, communicative personality

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Оригинальное теоретическое исследование

## Социально-философский анализ образа иностранного обучающегося в объективе современного образовательного пространства Н.В. Новикова

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#### Аннотация

Введение. Актуализация проблемы гуманизации образования, рост его виртуализации и цифровизации, изменение ценностных ориентаций личности, – все эти процессы входят в структуру образовательного контура современного общества. Интегральность в понимании образования как социального института, причастного человеку экзистенциально и онтологично, может означать не только усиление взаимосвязей, но и изменение природы отношений между субъектами образовательного пространства, когда современные специалисты становятся способными эффективно сочетать традиционные знания с наукой и современными технологиями. Интенсивность и значение таких изменений, бесспорно, требует философского осмысления, ибо философия выступает как мировоззренческая составляющая, стремящаяся к ценностной упорядоченности и познанию мира. Проведение в данном контексте исследования образа иностранного студента как субъекта современного образовательного пространства представляется актуальным и своевременным.

**Материалы и методы.** Применяются общенаучные методы исследования: анализ и синтез, индукции и дедукции, абстрагирование и конкретизация, метод дискурс-анализа, метод компаративного анализа, метод фокусированного интервью.

**Результаты** исследования. Проведено социально-философское осмысление одной из подсистем в структуре российского студенчества — социальной группы «иностранные студенты» — с учетом вызовов современности. Исследованы различные аспекты понятия «образовательное пространство», сформирован образ иностранного студента как субъекта современного образовательного пространства России. Как результат, предложены пути эффективного построения образовательного процесса иностранных обучающихся в условиях новой социокультурной реальности с учётом рассмотрения механизмов их социокультурной адаптации.

Обсуждение и заключение. Образ иностранного обучающегося можно определить как конструкт, находящийся под влиянием не только национального мировоззрения, установок и убеждений, фундаментальных исторических событий, менталитета поколения, но и культурно-образовательной среды, в которой он обучается, что непосредственно определяет его общественную и профессиональную направленность, формирует модели поведения в настоящем и в будущем. Опыт работы с иностранными обучающимися показывает, что при планировании и организации образовательного процесса к ним нужен особый подход. Данное исследование имеет практическую значимость при работе с иностранными студентами в российских вузах.

**Ключевые слова:** образование, образовательное пространство, иностранный обучающийся, студенчество, студент, идентичность, ментальность, социокультурное пространство, коммуникативная личность

**Для цитирования.** Новикова Н.В. Социально-философский анализ образа иностранного обучающегося в объективе современного образовательного пространства. *Научный альманах стран Причерноморья*. 2024;10(3):21-28. <a href="https://doi.org/10.23947/2414-1143-2024-10-3-21-28">https://doi.org/10.23947/2414-1143-2024-10-3-21-28</a>

Introduction. Education is the most important resource for a person and society, their relationship is key in the formation and development of personality, therefore, any changes in the functioning of these systems mutually affect each other. The modern stage of social development puts forward new challenges for universities, dictates new trends in education, among which the following are especially important: interaction of subjects of the educational space takes on new forms and formats; new educational technologies are emerging; information availability is growing; educational opportunities are expanding; artificial intelligence is rapidly penetrating the educational environment, transforming it, etc. It becomes obvious that modern education is influenced by the principles of the information society, in which the information and communication environment must be considered as a means of building the contour of the educational space using new information and telecommunication technologies, which turning into the substantive basis of the communication system build the infosphere with such features as openness, individualization of education, redundancy of information load. At the same time, the many times increased importance of the field of education in modern society should be emphasized.

A.S. Gasparyan, First Deputy Chairman of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation Commission on Education and Upbringing, participating in a meeting of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation "Development of Education as a Key Challenge to the Sovereign Development of Russia. The year of the teacher and mentor", 01.11.2023 stressed that "the challenges that Russia now faces are primarily challenges in the field of education". Thus, the field of education becomes a tool that allows you to build a future for the younger generation, and conveying important meanings and values to the minds of students is the primary task of teachers.

Integrality in the understanding of education as a social institution can mean not only strengthening the interconnections and interchangeability of the educational space subjects, but also changing the nature of the relationship between them, when modern specialists become able to effectively combine traditional knowledge with science and modern technologies. The intensity and significance of such changes in the realities of the modern educational space undoubtedly requires philosophical understanding, for philosophy acts as a worldview component striving for value ordering and world cognition. The reflection of these phenomena can be seen not only in the determination of the main vectors of modern society development, but also in the introduction of relevant methods of scientific knowledge. Taking into account these and other challenges in this study, we will outline ways to effectively build the educational process of foreign students in a new socio-cultural reality taking into account the mechanisms of their socio-cultural adaptation.

**Materials and methods.** In order to reveal the concept of a foreign student, their characterological features, general scientific methods are used: the method of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, the method of discourse analysis, the method of comparative analysis, the method of focused interview.

**Results.** Carrying out the socio-philosophical understanding of one of the subsystems in the structure of Russian student community (the social group "foreign students") through the prism of the challenges of the information society and transformational processes in the modern educational space seems relevant. To reveal the research topic, we highlight the main aspects of the concept of "educational space", gradually explore the image of a foreign student as a subject of the modern educational space.

The essence of the "educational space" concept taking into account the challenges of modern society. The phenomenon of educational space in modern science has a terminological variety and various methodological approaches to its study. For example, phenomenological philosophy (E. Husserl, M. Heidegger) defines "the obligation of temporal relations between elements of space: on the one hand, time expresses the connection of elements in space, and, on the other hand, the integrity of space itself" [1; 2]. This approach makes it possible to consider educational space outside the category of time. The category "space" is considered by V.I. Molchanov as a "transcendent, ecstatic hierarchy of differences that does not need temporalization" essence [3]. S.V. Frolova, E.Yu. Ilaltdinova come to the conclusion that "space is the relationship and interdependence of the subjective and objective principles in the hierarchy of meanings created by them" [4]. We agree with the opinion of the researchers and believe that the educational space is not a closed vacuum; all subjects of a given space are connected, they are in motion and mutual influence. This understanding of the educational space essence is key to consistently addressing the issues raised in this work.

In this regard, it is logical to consider the educational space in its dynamics. The works of such authors as A.L. Abramovsky, S.B. Bondarenko, M.K. Gorshkov, O.I. Ilnitskaya, I.I. Kalny, F.V. Lazarev, S.A. Lyausheva, I.S. Nechitailo, N.V. Nalivaiko, N.Ya. Oleinichenko and others are devoted to this issue.

The dialectic of the educational space development is expressed in transformational processes that are associated with various social processes, such as the accelerated introduction of innovations, the widespread use of information and technological means in education as well as a sharp increase in the level of international academic mobility, the development of the internationalization of education, leading to the expansion of the geographical coverage of education, turns the educational space into a world one. B.L. Vulfson comes to the conclusion that the world educational space "denotes the totality of all educational and upbringing institutions, scientific and pedagogical centers, government and public educational organizations in different countries, geopolitical regions and on a planetary scale, their mutual influence and interaction in conditions of intensive internationalization and globalization of different spheres of public life" [5].

The introduction of information and communication technologies into the educational process initiated the development of new educational methods and pedagogical practices, models and formats of education, led to an essential change in educational strategies under the influence of the technical component, and generally transformed the educational system. The work of A.V. Vereshchagina, L.I. Kemalova, V.N. Nechipurenko, C.I. Samygina, M.L. Yakovenko is devoted to the problems of digital transformation of modern education.

It also becomes obvious that these processes are closely related not only to the quality of education and the effectiveness of training, but also to cognitive activity, intellectual abilities and thinking of students. Thus, D.V. Ivanov believes that

critical thinking decreases under the influence of various information and communication tools, and the availability of information leads to stereotyping of thinking. All this generally reduces both the cognitive component and the critical barrier of a person [6].

The expansion of the modern educational space boundaries has become largely possible, on the one hand, due to the introduction of telecommunication technologies in the educational process and, on the other hand, due to the fact that universities have become the main tool for international humanitarian cooperation. The modern university is not just a place of knowledge transfer, it is an institution that forms ideas about the world and paves the way for the future. In this regard, the formation of a new generation of highly qualified and motivated specialists with critical thinking skills, capable of introducing innovations in solving economic and social problems of society as well as skills of interaction not only in the national, but also in the international environment, all this greatly increases the importance and role of educational organizations in modern society.

Another confirmation of the increased humanitarian role of the university in modern society is the fact that today the state sets large-scale tasks for Russian educational organizations to strengthen the country's position in the global educational space and to promote the values of Russian education and science as well as guidelines for the growth of the number of foreign citizens studying in the Russian Federation (Concept of foreign policy, National security strategy, Concept of humanitarian policy of the Russian Federation abroad, documents of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, etc.).

The result of these initiatives of state bodies of Russia was the presence of a steady trend of increasing the foreign students' share in the academic environment. These circumstances dictate the need to form a conceptual understanding of both the problem of preserving the ethnic identity of a foreign student, their adaptive reactions in a new educational field, and studying the impact on the student's cognitive abilities of the social processes of the post-industrial, information society. Statistics on the number of foreign students studying at Russian universities (for example, according to data for 2021, 324 thousand people studied at Russian universities) allow us to conclude that the modern educational space not only receives the features of multicultural, but also contributes to the emergence of a number of new contradictions, for example, between the role of national and global in education, openness and closeness in society, which, according to the author, should be taken into account in modern studies close to the subject of this work.

Student as a subject of the modern educational space. In scientific works, the image of a student as a subject of the educational space and an actor of positive transformations in public life of the region and the country in recent studies is not considered so often. Despite this, it should be noted that in the modern educational field, young people play one of the key roles, they are active participants in the educational and scientific processes at the university. These and other issues of the image of youth were considered in the works of V. Brozhik, S.M. Herzen, N.A. Zhuravleva, V.A. Koval, D.L. Konstantinovsky, N.V. Korzh, V.S. Magun, M.G. Rudnev, G.A. Cherednichenko.

There are socio-psychological characteristics among distinctive features of a modern student's image: social activity, academic mobility, flexibility, creativity, innovativeness, active use of modern information technologies, the desire for self-development, flexibility and the ability to self-organize. The above description of the appearance of a modern student allows us to conclude that the portrait of a young man studying in the modern education system poses new challenges for teachers in building the educational process, requires the use of modern pedagogical technologies that allow the student to effectively develop and realize themselves in scientific and educational projects.

Philosophical understanding of a modern student's image requires an analysis of the cultural heritage of generation X (representatives of the generation of teachers) and generation Z (representatives of student youth). At the same time, one of the important components of the specifics of modern students (generation Z) can be the recent dynamics of the student's value orientations, which are formed throughout the entire educational path from the beginning of training to the moment of determining the stable presentation of the student's career preferences at the formal completion of a certain level of education. It should also be borne in mind that the process of forming youth values is greatly influenced by the information flow coming through various information channels (primarily social networks), which make it possible to immediately provide access to any information based on the latest technologies.

An important characteristic of a young person's being, which at the same time reflects the realities of the modern era, was the minimization of real, "live" communication, when the Internet space turns into the main tool for socialization, often replacing the traditional process of value formation, which often leads to an ironic attitude of young people to serious social problems. The popularity of social networks, the communication process virtualization, the speed of obtaining information, affect the consciousness and attitude of a young man, affect their spiritual, moral and cultural guidelines.

It should also be noted that at present there is an active development of student self-government, there is a revival of social youth movements, through which not only the formation of a personality, its upbringing is realized, but also an active and responsible youth community is formed. The social characteristics of such a community are respect for the traditions and culture of Russia, love for the homeland, involvement with the fate of the Russian state, continuity of traditional family values, mutual assistance and mutual respect, creative work, goodness and justice, patriotism, unity of the peoples of Russia, historical memory.

Thus, the following points can be identified as the main conclusions of recent studies. A modern student focused on social and educational success and efficiency, taking an active position in the learning process, is aimed at innovative development in the development of a future profession. The acquisition and implementation of a body of knowledge is carried out by the student not only during the theoretical development of the material, but also during the solution of urgent problems within the framework of specific projects from enterprises and organizations. At the same time, the student offers original solutions, working in a team with other students under the guidance of experienced professional mentors and teachers. This leads to an increase in the efficiency of the educational process and improves the professional self-realization of the graduate in the future.

The image of a foreign student in the educational space of Russia. The growth of the contingent of foreign citizens at Russian universities determines the need for a separate theoretical and philosophical understanding of the foreign student concept as well as the need for the determination of the epistemological status of a new educational space for a foreign citizen, the integral components of which are educational, professional and sociocultural aspects of adaptation, which include several coordinates: regulatory, perspective-orienting, activity-stimulating and communication-information. The very process of foreign students' adaptation should be accompanied and constantly supported by a set of teaching and educational activities. This postulate requires the university to make systemic decisions on the formation of a barrier-free environment, the development of individual programs, and the creation of a comfortable environment for foreign citizens. For example, the introduction of such a system, in which foreign students of senior courses act as tutors for newcomers, makes it possible to develop personal and educational potential, both for newly arrived students and for senior students, creating favorable conditions for bilateral socio-cultural adaptation.

It seems that in the conditions of an information society, the concept of a communicative personality also serves as an important component in revealing the concept of a foreign student. In science, there are several definitions of the communicative personality's essence.

- 1. The communicative personality is the result of social laws. M.M. Bakhtin emphasizes that a person, entering into interaction with other personalities and cultures, creates themselves and affects others.
- 2. The communicative personality can be defined as the creative development of an ethnic group. In this case, the connections and relationships of language, culture, ethnic group are considered. The concept of the communicative personality harmonizes interethnic relations, actualizes the cultural content of the surrounding world.
- 3. The communicative personality can be characterized through an increase in speech responsibility which is transformed into a condition for the formation and development of professional activity [7].
- 4. The communicative model is also revealed in many social manifestations including in the variety of socio-cultural measures for adapting life processes to a new professional environment.

It seems important to emphasize that the understanding of linguistic mentality serves as a connecting element in the construction of the educational process which in science acts as a communicative process. Considering the language as a cultural phenomenon obliges to take a special look at the worldview guidelines of a representative of a different ethnocultural value. The feeling of belonging of an individual to a certain ethnocultural community combined with the possibility of manifesting their personal skills and language skills is the key to harmonious coexistence, facilitates adaptation in a new sociocultural space including educational environment. Considering a foreign student as a subject of communication in interaction with other subjects serves as an important prerequisite for the formation of a human personality (Yu. Habermas, K.O. Apel and others).

The analysis of the concept of a foreign student as a communicative personality is closely related to the concept of «culture.» The existing connection between the development of culture and the development of education was emphasized by S.I. Gessen, when he wrote that "to understand the education system of a given society means to understand the structure of its life" [8, p. 25], that is why we can say that these processes are largely interconnected and parallel. N.B. Krylova is also of view that "culture is a condition of education, education is a condition of culture" [9, p. 132]. The concept of the inseparable connection of culture, language and thinking, the problems of the influence of culture on

the development and adaptation of personality were considered by such researchers as M.M. Bakhtin, Yu.M. Lotman, B.D. Elkonin, A.N. Leontiev, V.V. Davydov, V.P. Zinchenko, N.B. Krylova; the study of sociocultural approaches to adaptation processes was carried out by A. Maslow, T. Shibutani, P.A. Sorokin, A.V. Mudrik, A.A. Rean, S.I. Rozum. These studies emphasize the need to consider educational space and culture in interconnection.

In this regard, it is important to consider the connection between culture and thinking, for example, in the work of V.I. Postovalova, language is considered as a way of "primary conceptualization of the world and rationalization of human experience, an exponent and guardian of spontaneous unconscious knowledge about the world, historical memory of socially significant events in human life" [10, p. 37]. Such a property of the language shows its connection with "thinking, and, therefore, with culture, in connection with which the cumulative function is otherwise called culture-bearing" [10, p. 28].

Speaking about the concept of human intelligence in a comparative cultural perspective it should be noted, first of all, that in many languages there is not even a word that would mean intelligence. Definitions of intelligence largely reflect the values of culture. For example, in Chinese, the concept closest to intelligence is a hieroglyph which means "possessing a good mind and talents". For Chinese, the concept is often intrinsically linked to such personality traits as imitation ability, perseverance, and social responsibility. In African culture (West Africa), the term akkal is used which has a wide meaning and is a combination of intelligence, personal knowledge and skills as well as social skills [11, p. 79]. As we can see, there are very different concepts about intelligence in different cultures, it is very difficult to find a single basis for comparing intelligence in different societies, since different personal traits that contribute to successful behavior are valued in different cultures. Moreover, the concepts of successful behavior are also very different. Such ethnocultural specifics must be taken into account in the learning process of foreign students. Being aware of cultural features of a foreign student makes the process of understanding this concept multifaceted.

The multifaceted nature of the foreign student category is associated not only with the choice of behavior strategy, but also with the problem of ethnic identification. The notion of "identification" was introduced by S. Freud, later C.G. Jung expanded the meaning of this term and considered it as "a repository of hidden memories in which the experience of the whole nation is contained" [12]. However, the concepts of "ethnic identity" and "national identity" are not equivalent. Ethnic identity is a category that characterizes a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group or community. The study of the concept of "ethnos" was carried out by many Russian and Western philosophers such as L.N. Gumilyov, A. Toynbee, N.A. Berdyaev.

It should be noted that a person begins to realize their ethnic identity precisely in a multicultural environment, for example, in the process of learning in a non-native country, being in a state of interethnic communication with representatives of another culture. Thanks to this communication, a foreign student assesses the significance of ethnicity which forms their uniqueness and distinguishing features from the group. The role of ethnic identity is also expressed in its function to protect a person in an unfamiliar reality, to orient in the world, to streamline the flow of information [13]. At the same time, it is important to emphasize the fact that in the process of learning there can appear both a positive ethnic identity (testifies to successful adaptation and socialization in the new educational space) and the loss of ethnic identity (leads to negative consequences for the student in self-perception of their personality).

**Discussion and conclusion.** Summing up the results, relying on the theory of social construction of reality of Luckmann and Berger [14], we come to the conclusion that the image of a foreign student can be determined as a construct influenced not only by the national worldview, attitudes and beliefs, fundamental historical events, generation mentality, but also sociocultural, cultural and educational environment, in which they learn, which directly determines their social and professional orientation, forms models of their behavior in the present and in the future.

If we rely on the work of A. Schütz, [15], then these models of behavior can be represented schematically, when a student analyzes and systematizes their own "knowledge baggage", moving on their life path from the processes of subjectivization of the experience gained to its objectification as a result.

Experience with foreign students shows that they need a special approach when planning and organizing the educational process. The most effective method in this case can be determined as follows: the teacher needs to identify and in every possible way maintain the original national image through a set of activities that will contribute to the emergence of a sense of community with native nationality. At the same time, there is a feeling of empathy for its members, there is a feeling of kinship and common destiny with them. Thus, the personality of a foreign student will strive for integrity in the new sociocultural environment and educational space of a foreign country.

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