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# Challenges of Hybridity in Transcultural Identity: A Case of Displaced Universities

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	wersytety.
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## Introduction

Unification processes in the world community have become irreversible and necessary phenomena. Even the countries of the socialist camp isolated heretofore, including China, have recently been characterized by openness to economic and cultural interactions. Planetary exchange leads to the natural phenomenon of formation of new structures and models of life, common values, policy options, etc. In turn, this creates the challenges of hybridity in intercultural identities.

In the scientific dictionaries of the 21st, the notion of globalization, which universally explains the totality of integration transformations in various spheres of social life, has become quite commonplace. The word

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came to its forefront 35 years ago, in the early 80s of the twentieth century in England, and has long been used throughout the world and has many analogues in many languages. More and more countries are getting involved in the world globalization structure. It is the one that stimulates and shapes the social and cultural reflection of the world scale, reviving and updating the idea of unity and interdependence of mankind. At first glance, the world has always been integrated, but the awareness of this unity was not so broad. In the whole stream of these metamorphoses there is Ukrainian identity too. Our country occupies an intermediate geopolitical position between the West and the East, therefore, such processes can not go unnoticed for it.

An additional circumstance that forces us to address the problem of intercultural identity is the hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine. The return of Crimea and certain regions of Luhansk and Donetsk regions under the control of the Ukrainian government is the main task of modern Ukraine. The return of control over the territories will require the need in reintegration of all sectors of the economy and public life. It is especially important to reintegrate the system of education, including higher education, by reuniting the universities separated through involuntary displacement. However, currently there are no science-based strategies or certain steps taken in this direction.

The phenomenon of displaced universities in Ukraine is not something fundamentally new in the world practice. Similar (but not identical) problems exist, for example, in the regions of Georgia – Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The research of the current state of the displaced Ukrainian universities and their comparison with similar problems in other countries will allow:

- Firstly, to analyze the traumatic experience of the displaced universities;
- Secondly, to see the prospect of the Ukrainian universities which were displaced from the zone of the ATO and Crimea;
- Thirdly, to develop a step by step plan for reintegration, reconciliation and consensus of the academic communities.

After the involuntary displacement of a number of higher educational institutions, the state and the public sector have been actively involved in the process of adaptation of these institutions to new conditions. At the legislative level, the draft Law "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Activities of Higher Educational Institutions (Scientific Institutions) that were displaced from the temporarily occupied territory and from the localities on the territory of which the state authorities temporarily fail to exercise their powers" should be Studia Warmińskie 55 (2018)

noted. (r.n. 4718 dated May 24, 2016). It is worth mentioning the work of the Council of Rectors of the Higher Educational Institutions that were displaced from the area of the anti-terrorist operation. The Council of Rectors of Displaced Higher Educational Institutions was created by order No. 50 of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated January 26, 2016. There are public initiatives in Ukraine aimed at drawing attention to the lives of the displaced Higher Educational Institutions. One of them is, in particular, the project "Displaced Universities", implemented by Public organization CISID and the Coordination Center for Displaced Higher Educational Institutions, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) within the framework of the program Ukrainian Confidence-Building Initiative (UCBI). There is one more interesting project "Displaced Universities Road Map", which is implemented by the Ukrainian Association of Educational Researchers.

However, today the analysis of the sources shows almost complete absence of a scientific discussion as to the impact of the war on the universities and the fate of the displaced universities in Ukraine. However, in foreign publications the problem of the role of higher education in overcoming conflicts and post-war reconstruction is considered by many authors. After the Second World War, the United States relied on higher education and this ensured an unprecedented development of all spheres. With issuing "G.I. Bill", which gave veterans preferences in higher education, the United States took a focused course for intensive university support, which led them to the world leadership (Mettler S., 2005).

In recent years, the relationship between education and conflicts has been widely studied both in academic and in practical literature. In this context, researchers discuss the following key issues related to education, social changes and conflicts: firstly, interaction between education and conflict, that is, education as a victim and offender; and secondly, education as liberation, resistance and revolution; and thirdly, education as a guarantee of building a stable peace and pedagogy for peace. (Pheral T., 2016).

One of the interesting works is the work by Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas *Mediating Collective Memories and Official Histories in Conflict-Affected Societies: Pedagogical Responses to "Individual" Narratives and Competing Collective Memories* (2017). It provides research on approaches to reviewing "competitive stories" in the process of learning. In the center of the discussion there is an epistemological problem: what to do in the situation, if there is more than one story about one event? (Bekerman Z. & Zembylas M., 2017). The researchers assign a special role to higher education in the societies that suffered from conflicts. In particular, Sansom Milton and Sultan Barakat define four main approaches: stabilization and securitization, reconstruction, state building and peace building. Through these four approaches, they found that there are several ways in which higher education can either contribute or undermine the basic processes of postwar recovery. Their main conclusion is that higher education is not a peripheral institution, which should wait until the completion of postwar reconstruction. If no attention is paid to higher education, it can undermine the post-war reconstruction efforts and be the main lost opportunity. (Milton S. & Barakat S., 2016).

Unfortunately, there is a gap between the practical need and the lack of scientific works in this area. Therefore, with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine we have started the project "Development of a Conceptual Model for Reintegration of Ukrainian Displaced Universities". The purpose of the project is to develop a model for reintegration of Ukrainian internally displaced universities and to provide recommendations to the state authorities on practical steps to rebuild the system of higher education.

### Metodology

The article was written on the basis of interviews with the teachers of the six displaced universities – Taurida National Vernadsky State University, Donetsk National University, Donbas State Technical University, Volodymyr Dahl East-Ukrainian National University, Luhansk Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education, Luhansk State Medical University.

When selecting respondents we were guided by the objectives of the study, we selected teachers and students from different universities representing different faculties and scientific directions – mathematicians, sociologists, philosophers, physicists, managers and marketers. During this phase of the study (March – July 2018) we took 17 interviews, 1 of which was rejected for technical reasons. We used encryption to identify respondents.

All the respondents first got acquainted with the subject of the scientific project, its goals and essential circumstances and signed a letter of consent for participation in the study. There were two possibilities: an anonymous or non-anonymous interview. About half of the respondents (especially from the Crimea) wished to give an anonymous interview. Duration of the interview was from 43 minutes up to 2.7 hours, 1.7 hours in avarage. The interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder, except for one case where the respondent refused technical recording, but allowed us to take shorthand. The place of the interview was determined for reasons of convenience for the respondent: it was the premises of the departments, laboratories, educational auditoriums, cafes, etc.

The interview questions were pre-designed according to the project purpose:

1. Describe your experience during the war/ the University displacement.

2. What problem was the most difficult for you and your family?

3. How did you try to handle the challenges?

4. Can you name three main problems when displacing your University?

5. Do you think these problems have already been solved (for you and for the University)?

6. What difficulties did you face when adapting your teaching practice to a new place?

7. Do you have to deal with the problem of identity, culture and language in your everyday life?

8. Do you keep in touch (professionally and personally) with the colleagues who remained in the occupied territory?

9. What was the role of the EU values protected by the "EuroMaidan" in 2014 – freedom, mobility, justice of power – in creating the situation of war and peace?

10. Why didn't these values receive a positive response from people who decided to stay in the occupied territories?

11. How was geopolitical identity formed by education and mass media in Luhansk and Donetsk until 2014?

12. Have you noticed any differences in the interpretation of the war-related events among the teachers of different disciplines at your University: economists, political scientists, linguists, etc.?

13. What is more important for you: to communicate with people in Ukraine who have survived the war or those who have not experienced the war and displacement problems?

14. Do you think we should pay more attention to the diversity of thoughts and judgments in order to protect our freedom, or to form a country of like-minded people in order to protect our borders from aggression in the future?

15. What attracts more attention in your current curriculum, teaching methods and relationships with students and colleagues after you survived the war and displaced? Have your approaches to teaching changed?

16. Do you have any expectations about the reconciliation process in the occupied territories? What role do you think your university could play in this process?

17. How long do you think it can take to reintegrate the separated universities and under what conditions is it possible?

18. Do you have any specific recommendations on how to prevent the expansion or growth of such conflicts or mistakes?

19. What factors could be important to make our research more complete? What should we pay attention to?

The interviewer tried not to break the sequence of the questions, but in some cases it was necessary to ask clarifying questions that arose in response to the unexpected data of the respondent. After the interview, in most cases, the interviewer tried to write down own impressions and errors, which allowed to improve the research further. When analyzing voice recordings, we specifically preserved the peculiarities of the respondents' language, as they convey the context and allow to see the full picture.

### Separate results and discussions

The array of information we gathered during the study is quite significant. In this publication, we want to focus on the identity and hybridity problem, as well as the problem of returning back that is closely linked to them.

So, the question: "Have you ever encountered the problem of the identity of the language culture there? What language did you speak there?" was answered by a respondent like that: "Russian. From my experience I can say how it was on Lugansk-Ukrainian maidan, where people came. And it was a »maidan«. From 30 to 100 people came there and organized their meetings. On the one hand, when I was working at the Small Academy, I was passing by at 12:00and there was a meeting at 12:00. I stopped to have a look and went away. They knew each other there and talked to each other. On the other hand, there was time when nothing happened at all, and then the opposite meetings began, there were mostly people of retirement age, perhaps 200–300 people. And I do not know about other people. Of course, in Luhansk 90% of all the popu-

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lation were Russian-speaking. If you go through the region, you can hear a lot of Surzhik (mixture of Russian and Ukrainian) from grandparents. Luhansk has always been Russian-speaking. And when someone began to come to talk something, demolish monuments – Lugansk people did not like it. I have never seen that there was a problem with the language. I remember that the monuments were a problem then. My vision was that it was not very aesthetically, centrally, professionally. But if you look back now, then of course, the monuments mean nothing compared to the lives of people" (R1).

The majority of the respondents were not able to give a clear answer to the question of returning back, but they were more likely not to return.

"The question here is if they will want to come back? It depends on who relocated and where. For example, someone relocated to better conditions. There are also different teachers. Somebody has a big pension and continues to work. Someone has a family and has a possibility, for example, to rent an apartment in Kyiv and they like it, and they do not see why to leave from here. And others might have health problems and they need treatment, then they would probably be happy to return. People are different and nobody knows how many of them there will beill be. It seems to me that there will be no aggression to those who will return" (R1).

One of the most difficult questions for the respondents was the prospects assessment of the displaced Universities. And this is understandable in view of the fact that this situation depends on the general political situation in Donbas and Crimea.

"Those educational institutions that lost the opportunity to create a new potential – development of distance education, information education – can only become a branch of another University. They do not have a future: the staff nimber is not so huge and the number of students is not so big, there is no promotion. It seems to me, the situation will get worse and worse and finally they`ll reach the point when they will become a kind of affiliate. I do not mean all the Universities. Some higher schools are work quite well. I know that Luhansk Shevchenko University has good distance education. People have lectures and they want to study and come, there are also several platforms for distance learning, several sites" (R1).

Also, from the respondents` responses three scenarios: optimistic, pessimistic and realistic can be tracked.

"We've already tied oneselves into knots over what it's all about. From panic to enchanting sentiment which can change even within several hours of a day. In the end, you are tired of making any predictions, because they do not come true, they are not justified. I'm not going to do any analysis for these scenarios. I have simply cut out this territory and all those people who are there. There are friends there, there are even relatives. I keep in touch with friends who are apolitical. There was a personal situation when I first came back to pick things up. It was September and kids were going to school and there was a feeling as if nothing had happened. I came into my house and I felt as if I had never left it. I hugged the wall, because they were so dear. I called my husband and suggested returning back. He called me stupid and told me to go from there quickly" (R3).

The problem of returning back / non-return is closely linked to the presence / absence of relations with relatives and colleagues who are in occupation. One of the respondents indicates that there is no consistent logical position among people who live now in the uncontrolled area.

"My husband's aunt lives there when all these events began with the capture of the SBU and so on, we met with these relatives and argued over political issues. I decided to defuse the conflict. I told them that you would go to one meeting, and I would go to another, and then we will meet and look for the truth. After all, it is somewhere in the middle. And she called me a fascist and told me that she would refuse even to greet me. And of course, we do not keep in touch. However, when we lived in Starobilsk and then moved to Kyiv, the aunt [...] We arrived to Kyiv and the aunt wondered why we hadn't done that earlier, but stayed in Starobilsk. I was taken aback and reminded her about the preconception that "they eat children here". They curse Kyiv, and then say: "Well, it is better there". There is no logic in their judgments. They are also very disappointed there and realize that all those promises will never be kept. Regarding the forecasts, sorry, but I have had enough of this game" (R2).

As for the question of identity that prevails there, one of the respondents aptly called it "the identity of the refrigerator".

"As for me personally, the majority of the population in that territory, unfortunately, has the identity of the refrigerator. Where I feel comfortable, where I have more profit, there is my Motherland. And in general there is no ideology in a good sense" (R4).

Interestingly, about half of the respondents directly relate the war and Soviet legacy and post-Soviet mentality. However, when it comes to them personally, they deny its influence on their personalities.

"In order to raise the question of self-identity, it is already necessary to have a certain level of culture. There was no question of identity. Studia Warmińskie 55 (2018)

That is, you understand that when the talks about this »Russian world« and the ethnos of Donbas began – it was absolutely artificial, because there was no question of self-identification at all. There was a set of everyday practices that ensure livelihoods. By and large, that was all. Do you think someone got rid of the Ukrainian passport or hastened to change the car numberplates for LPR? God forbid. Even those who shouted »Putin come«. Because the Ukrainian passport gives certain privileges and they can go with the Ukrainian numberplate at least somewhere. They understand the legal field. My friend who works at the prosecutor's office in the LPR, who is travel band, says with tears: »What passport will my son receive?« He suffers. Because he would like his son to get a passport of a normal state and it does not matter Ukrainian or Russian, but not LPR" (R5).

Another feature that we noticed when conducting the research was that the responses of young teachers (under 35) and professors of a more senior age were different. As it should have been foreseen, young faculty members are more flexible and optimistic.

"Regarding higher education and my colleagues. The vast majority of my colleagues are elderly people who are already retired. I had one colleague who said that he liked to go to work, because it was convenient to take his grandson to kindergarten on the way. That is, when Ukraine returns there they will all retire and that's all. There will be a lot of vacancies. I personally waited for 3 years for the happy moment to return to the native Alma mater. Mainly I was disappointed with my scientific supervisor and our roads went in different directions. Therefore, personally, I do not see any opportunity to go back there. But in my opinion, reintegration of displaced higher educational institutions is possible only in the territory in which they existed. Any other reintegration. The universities themselves will not exist, there will be something different" (R2).

At the same time it is important to emphasize the difference of modern "displacement" from the classical evacuation of Universities during war. For example, as was the case during the Second World War. Then the universities did not work in the occupation with the rare exception. And if they worked, then invited German professors taught there. Most of the staff were taken to the east of the USSR. Instead, we now see that at least half, and sometimes most of the teachers of some Donbas universities remained in the uncontrolled territory, and in case of liberation of these territories, we can assume, that they will continue working, as they used to (if they did not directly break the criminal code). How will they interact with those colleagues who are faithful to Ukraine – those who were relocated, and then decided to return? Is it possible to restore friendly and working relationships with the colleagues? The University can become both a center of reconciliation and a center of hostility. The question about the conciliatory role of University communities was answered by one of the respondents as follows:

"If we consider in the context of decades, then yes. If we consider in terms of thinking and new people, cooperation, learning, then it will take at least 10 years. And if, in terms of technical relocation of a University back, the Universities will say that they have not moved anywhere as they are working the same way. I have a teacher friend who returned back and was employed back without any problem. If there is a vacancy there, then this is not a problem" (R6).

In general, 18 universities and several scientific institutions have been displaced from the occupied territories, which is about three and a half thousand scientific and pedagogical workers and almost forty thousand students. Our preliminary conclusions are in line with the findings of other recent studies (Occupied Donbass, 2017, National Monitoring System Report, 2018), which allows us to consider our methodology to be effective. At the same time, we understand that the core part of the study is still ahead, because it's inevitable to gather more eyewitness testimonies and carefully analyze them.

At this moment, we can make such interim conclusions.

Firstly, any evacuation is a force majeure of its own nature, which destructively affects the educational process and scientific work. Even a temporary cessation of the normal functioning of a University requires a long rehabilitation period, which in some cases may last for years.

Secondly, the problem of displaced universities should be considered in the coordinates of two cities – the one from which it was evacuated and the one it moved to. In fact, displacement solved two problems simultaneously: the rescue the University property and loyal personnel – on the one hand, and intensification of higher education in the regions where the University was evacuated – on the other.

Thirdly, it is impossible to relocate a branched University organism fully and completely in a short time – there will always be a certain part that can reproduce itself with time. Under the conditions of ideological confrontation it means that previously integrated University is split into independent parts, which are oriented on the very opposite, even antagonistic ideas. The history of the relationships of the displaced Universities during the First and Second World Wars proves that although they had common roots, they belonged to different value and civilization spaces, then their unification was impossible and inappropriate. Challenges of Hybridity in Transcultural Identity: A Case of Displaced Universities 129

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### HYBRYDOWY KOMPROMIS – TRANSKULTUROWA TOŻSAMOŚĆ NA PRZYKŁADZIE PRZENIESIONYCH UCZELNI WYŻSZYCH NA UKRAINIE

#### (STRESZCZENIE)

System szkolnictwa wyższego na Ukrainie reguluje ustawa O szkolnictwie wyższym z 2002 r., w 2014 r. została ona znowelizowana i ta obowiązuje do dziś. W jej ramach określono nową politykę państwa w sferze edukacji, wypracowano nową strukturę szkolnictwa wyższego oraz zawarto zalecenia w odniesieniu do programów nauczania i ich wdrażania. Podjęto też decyzję o przebudowie sieci szkół wyższych i nową ich typizację, a także nadanie uczelniom większej autonomii w wielu zakresach. Najwieksze problemy ze szkolnictwem wyższym wiażą się z sytuacją w regionie Krymu i Donbasu, bowiem wielu studentów i nauczycieli nie może kontynuować pracy i nauki w macierzystych uczelniach. Stąd podjęto decyzję o przetransferowaniu uczelni do innych miast. Nie są to przedsiewzięcia krótkotrwałe i łatwe. Autorzy, analizując ten problem, podkreślają, że sytuację przeniesionych (ewakuowanych) uniwersytetów zawsze należy rozpatrywać z perspektywy dwóch miast: tego, z którego uczelnię ewakuowano i tego, do którego została ona przeniesiona. W tym procesie zaangażowanych jest wiele osób, ale o ile w niejednym przypadku można ocalić zasoby materialne uczelni, o tyle w drugim – trudniej jest zadbać o pojedynczego człowieka. Autorzy zauważają, że de facto nawet przy najbardziej sprzyjających okolicznościach niemożliwa jest pełna integracja uczelni po przeniesieniu w nowe miejsce, nawet jeśli wcześniej była ona spójnym organizmem. Jednak w obecnej sytuacji jest to jedyna i właściwa droga, umożliwiająca podjęcie studiów i utrzymanie miejsc pracy. Swoje analizy autorzy oparli na przeprowadzonej w 2018 r. ankiecie z sześciu przeniesionych uczelni wyższych. Zasygnalizowane przez autorów problemy dotyczą w rzeczywistości aż 18 uniwersytetów i kilku instytucji naukowych, czyli około trzech i pół tysiąca pracowników naukowych i pedagogicznych oraz prawie czterdziestu tysięcy studentów.

### CHALLENGES OF HYBRIDITY IN TRANSCULTURAL IDENTITY: A CASE OF DISPLACED UNIVERSITIES

#### (SUMMARY) =

The system of higher education in Ukraine is regulated by the Law on Higher Education of 2002, it was amended in 2014 and this is still valid today. Within its framework, a new state policy in the sphere of education was defined, a new structure of higher education was developed and recommendations were made regarding the curricula and their implementation. A decision was also made to rebuild the network of higher education institutions and to make them new, and to give universities greater autonomy in many areas. The biggest problems with higher education are related to the situation in the Crimea and Donbas region, as many students and teachers can not continue to work and study at their home universities. Hence the decision was made to transfer the university to other cities. These are not short-term and easy projects. The authors, analyzing this problem, emphasize that the situation of transferred (evacuated) universities should always be considered from the perspective of two cities: the one from which the university was evacuated and the one to which it was transferred. Many people are involved in this process, but while in many cases it is possible to save the material resources of the university, it is more difficult to take care of an individual. The authors note that de facto, even under the most favorable circumstances, it is impossible to fully integrate the university after moving to a new place, even if it was previously a cohesive organism. However, in the current situation it is the only and right way to study and to keep jobs. The authors based their analyzes on a survey conducted in 2018 with students from six transferred universities. The problems mentioned by the authors concern in fact as many as 18 universities and several scientific institutions, i.e. about three and a half thousand academic and pedagogical employees, and almost forty thousand students.

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