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IMPLICATIONS OF ELITE EDUCATION THEORY ON SOCIAL PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

At the core of the “elite education philosophy” is the idea of “selectivity” formed in the course of historical development. The criterion of “philosophy of selectivity” was defined by Plato in the IV century BC and reads as follows: “Philosophy is not inherent in the crowd” (State, 494 a). In the XX century, N.A. Berdyaev, while developing this tradition, in his book “The Kingdom of Spirituality and the Kingdom of the Stubborn”, touched upon the problem of the philosophy of choice and wrote: There are two kinds of philosophy - the philosophy of values and the philosophy of profit. Value means quality, and in practice the philosophy of quantity prevails. This article discusses this.

KEYWORDS

Elite education, philosophy, selectivity, historical development, Plato, philosophy of profit, quality.

INTRODUCTION

Marxism is not a philosophy of values, but a philosophy of utility. It is impossible to even talk about the hierarchy of values with Marxists, because they cannot even tolerate the question of value, they only recognize necessity and utility. Contrary to the

philosophy of Marxism, Nietzsche’s philosophy is a philosophy of values. For Nietzsche, man is the creator of values first and foremost. Berdyaev’s main conclusion sounds as follows: quality always acquires an aristocratic character. Because of this, the

philosophy of selection is a philosophy of values, a philosophy of quality; philosophy of hierarchy. In our opinion, the philosophy of selection is an elite philosophy, and it is no exaggeration to say that it is an elite philosophy.

That is why the focus of the philosophy of selectivity is the problem of quality. It is a self-determining philosophy of objective reality. “There is nothing worse than a utilitarian attitude to the truth,” continues N. Berdyaev. – The truth is not a person’s property, and it will not be right to justify it with the benefit brought by the truth”. There are truths that serve man, but there is also truth that man himself/herself serves.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The philosophy of selectivity is closely related to the ideas of social and personal perfection [2,326]. The religious and moral teachings of ancient great saints - Buddha, Confucius, Pythagoras, etc. can be considered as the founders of this philosophy. It is no exaggeration to say that their “ethics of spiritual perfection” laid the foundation for the anthropological direction in elitology. Ancient philosophy (Heraclitus, Socrates, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle) also made a great contribution to the formation of this trend. The representatives of this same philosophy (especially Plato) also developed the main principles of social elitology. Due to this, the philosophy of selectivity is

practically the methodological basis of elitology, and in some cases (for example, elitpersonalism) it can even act as its synonym.

In different times and in different peoples, elitology was called by different names, but in its essence it remained single and integral. It was considered both the perfect knowledge of the chosen (elite) and the knowledge of the elite itself. Because of this, we can distinguish two stages in the development of elitology as a science: 1) elitology is mainly an esoteric science, that is, the period when it exists as knowledge known to a small number of selected people, whom we call the elite; 2) in this esoteric knowledge, the period in which the independent teaching about its creators, that is, the elite person (saint, prophet, genius, sage, politician-king, etc.), as well as the elite itself, was separated. Over time, this doctrine demanded a separate study of this social stratum, and as a result, the sociological and political science branches of elitology appeared. Thus, from the point of view of gradual development, elitology can be divided into the initial and general form of special mysticism – “elitology of knowledge” and the science of the elite itself – “elitology of the elite”. Because of this, the history of the development of elitology is actually the history of the development of the philosophy of selection. Moreover, in the early period of the formation of the philosophy of selectivity, the boundaries of their subject fully coincided with each

other, which allows to describe the philosophy of selectivity on the one hand as “elitist philosophy” and on the other - as “elite philosophy”.

So what is the basis of elite education itself? Here we would like to draw attention to the problem of “psychological distance” that arises and exists between mass and elite types of social consciousness. Special attention has been paid to this problem at all times. For example, Heraclitus of Ephesus analyzed the relationship between the individual and the crowd. Moreover, the entire philosophy in the process of its creative research appears as a product of the elite mind, which is understandable only to this elite mind. At this point, the words of Plato, the chief elitologist of antiquity: “...philosophy is not peculiar to the crowd” (State, 494a), because “those who are talented in philosophy are useless to the majority (crowd)” (Ibid., 489b) come to mind involuntarily.

As we mentioned above, one of the theorists of elite education theory or the philosophy of selection is Plato [3. 133-138]. In his opinion, the personal value of such a “philosopher-man” (a true aristocrat of consciousness) is determined by the fact that he and others like him “do not seek refuge in the path of existence, as many people think, but the most important thing for people is to achieve perfection and maintain it throughout life”, they consider (rules, 707d). For this reason, the philosophy of selectivity can be described as a set of theoretical foundations of all

cases related to the manifestation of “psychological distance” in the hierarchy of moral values of society.

The elitization of any consciousness begins with the activation of the quality of the cognitive process, as well as the emergence and definition of “psychological distance” on this basis (many philosophers and psychologists, for example, G. Lebon, K. Mannheim and others wrote about this at different times). The term “hierarchical personalism” can be particularly useful in describing this process.

The main themes of the theory of elite education are: 1) analysis of the “psychological distance” that arises and exists between mass and elite types of social consciousness; 2) the question of the structural structure of elite consciousness; 3) “elitopersonalism”, that is, the problem of the chosen person and his/her creative basis (N. Berdyaev); 4) the problem of spiritual hierarchy (Plato’s “eidetic thinking” and Grigory Nissky’s “epignosis”; 5) the problem of “superpowerful man” - studying the nature of genius and sainthood; 6) “elitopedagogical” process, i.e., practical application of conclusions about the elitogenesis of a certain person. If we look closely at each of the above-mentioned theses, we can witness that in all cases it is directly or indirectly a great person's reflection on the nature of his wisdom. All this forms the basis of elitism of consciousness and is the subject of the philosophy of selection.

The main principles of the doctrine of elitization of consciousness can be found in Plato's elite-pedagogical concept, the theory of educating an ideal person.¹ Plato understands the issue of elite selection as a process of education that excludes the accidental entry of "foreign elements" into the ranks of the elite. The interpretation of Plato's ideas in the spirit of the philosophy of selectivity allowed the elite to acquire only elite thinkers, that is, the three-syllable structure of elitology (relevant knowledge), such as: 1) familiar with the basic principles of the theory of elites; 2) is considered a carrier of elite ideology; 3) it is appropriate to include persons who have mastered the main principles of the philosophy of selection. The essence of the problem of false or quasi-elite is that the subject of these "elites" usually does not know the basics of the philosophy of selection.

Because of this, it is appropriate to look at elitology first of all as "elite education or selectivity", that is, to approach it from the point of view of the analysis of elite consciousness, and only then to take into account the socio-political aspects of reality, which often do not correspond to these initial data. With the last mention, elitology goes directly to the problem of its own importance - the problem of false or quasi-elitism, since we can include about 90% of the "power elite" (mainly bureaucratic "elite") in this category, since it is the main and reliable source of selection.

If the goals of education are inextricably linked with the life goals of this society, since "understanding the educational system of this society is equal to understanding its way of life" (S.I. Gessen), education in a democratic society acquires a democratic character, and in an aristocratic society - an aristocratic character. On the other hand, certain elements of aristocracy or democracy can exist in both democratic and aristocratic social systems.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in the conditions of the rule of democratic way of thinking, the idea of aristocratic education cannot contradict the core idea of this society. Elite education in a democracy is as natural a phenomenon as a mass school ("democratic", "people's" school) in an oligarchic, authoritarian or totalitarian society. On the contrary, in the conditions of a democratic system, the existence of an elite education system in its structural structure only promotes and promotes the democratic principles of social reality. The transition of these systems to each other does not undermine the power of a certain system or "socio-economic formation", but rather enriches it.

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