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Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

PROFESSIONAL ELITE OF THE XXI CENTURY AND CURRENT ISSUES OF EDUCATION ELITOLOGY

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Abstract

The modern era is increasingly defined by scientists as a transition time from late industrialism to early post-industrialism. It is characterized by the change of axiological norms reflecting the essence of the confrontation between oligarchic and meritocratic tendencies. Such fundamental changes in the system of values are reflected in the state of science, which studies the process of formation and functioning of elites. There is a need to revise previously tested methodological approaches and to clarify the topics of research projects. Currently, a publication interest increased in such section of general elitology as educationelitology. This interest is primarily associated with the actualization of the topic of elite/ VIP education in the assessment of various elite communities' professional competence. In this regard, the *object* of this work will be the actual aspects of modern education elitology, and as the *subject* – the confrontation of oligarchic and meritocratic value systems emerging in the conditions of increasing post-industrial trends. The methodological basis of the study was a set of methods consisting of dialectics, hermeneutics and comparative studies, allowing to reveal the essence of the problem of elites and their leaders' professional education.

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1. Introduction

Educated elite is the key to stability and prosperity of any system. Most of the elite is criticized for the low level of professionalism, immorality, questionable competence and reputation. Elitological studies usually addressed the elite subject's quality of education from the formal position and only stated specialization and prestige of the university the person graduated from. Yet the growth of meritocratic trends requires a more detailed and in-depth study of the real culture and education of individuals evaluated by the society as elite ones.

Even the supporters of the classic personalism pointed out that it is in Socrates that we first discover the definition of what will be designated as "personality" in the Renaissance. Socrates is a nugget. His "dimoni" (genius) is a premonition of the future elite personality (the Apology of Socrates, 27d-c). Thanks to him there emerged a classical philosophy (the Athenian school), which changed the mindset of the following centuries. His disciple Plato already tried to streamline the chaotic process of personality becoming elite within the walls of his famous Academy. And he managed to create a system that existed for centuries on (about 385 BC – 529 AD). Even today, Plato's Academy is a model for the training of specialists at the elite level. In this paper, we intend to consider the role of education elitology in the evaluation of elite selection (as a process of personality elitization), to reveal the essence of the ongoing correspondence discussion between supporters of oligarchic elitism and meritocratic elitism. Plato and modern elite science will help us in this attempt.

In some previous works, we have already considered the issues of the Russian scientific elite development (Karabushenko, Arushan, & Vartumyan, 2015) and modern state of the scientific community in general, as well as some sociological problems of the elites' professional effectiveness (Karabushchenko, Lebedeva, Bicharova, Podvoisky, & Rezakov, 2017) as well as the problem of axiological evaluation of their underlying traits (Karabushchenko, Lebedeva, Bicharova, Podvoisky, & Rezakov, 2017). In this study, we intend to identify the role of high-quality (elite) education in shaping their professional strengths in the transformation of late industrial society into early post-industrialism. The *object* of this work will be the actual aspects of the modern elitology of education, and as the *subject* – the confrontation of oligarchic and meritocratic value systems emerging in the context of growing post-industrial trends. The *purpose* of this study is to analyze the humanitarian educational paradigm associated with professional training. In this regard, we have to clarify the fundamental difference between the influence of elite on the selection of elites and the formation of their professional culture; to see how the mission of the University changes in the conditions of early post-industrialism; to highlight the problem of elite oligarchic universities' role in the formation of modern power structures; to analyze meritocratic prospects of the future. To solve this problem, the authors of this project used various *methods* — dialectics, comparative studies, hermeneutics, historicism, some statistical data. The authors insist on the modern Russian elitological science, considering the elite as a special kind of professional activity.

2. Problem Statement

Elite and elitism in the context of elite selection.

The dispute between the supporters of elitism (privileged social exclusivity) and elite (personal dignity) has been going on since the time of the sophists and Socrates. The dispute is about whom and on

what grounds-conditions to give a high-quality education that makes a person an elite personality and the elite subject. Sophists (Protagoras, Hippias, Gorgias) stood on the oligarchic principle — high-quality education is only for the elite (elite's caste-system reproduction of itself), Socrates and Plato advocated an open (liberal) principle of education — it is intended for all gifted individuals, regardless of their social origin and material capabilities (Karabushchenko, Lebedeva, Bicharova, Podvoisky, & Rezakov, 2017, p. 9).

At present, the discussion between the elitism and the elite continues in the format of cultural and civilization discourse between the oligarchic and the meritocratic principle of elite selection. In fact, we are talking about which way to the elite is the most preferable and what quality parameters the elite should have in order to maximize their creativity and professional capabilities. Since the elite is the most prestigious and the most nodal in its importance force of socio-cultural relations, the questions of what it should be, how it should be formed and how to carry out their professional functions, has become one of the central ones in social science. Each elite's genesis has its unique features. It's like human fingerprints. By these "patterns" we can judge what is a particular elite group and its individual member. It is these "patterns" of a particular person that the elitology of education deals with (Ashyn, 1998).

In the world history, the elite have always been at the forefront of all major events. Yet the *elite* is just a form of the idea of domination. The content of this idea is *the elite nature* (the inner supremacy), while the process of development and harmonization of form and content is defined as *elitization*, i.e. *elitogenes*. Modern elitology is a science that seeks to reveal the essence and content of the above-mentioned triad "Elite (form) – Elitism (content) – Elitization (Genesis)". Today the most adequate way of elite selection is its genesis through the system of quality education. Therefore, one of the most important sections of elitology is not political elitology, but the elitology of education, which we understand as the elite personality engineering.

The elite is, first of all, the system. The elite do not exist without a system. But any system begins not with the organization structure approval or with the distribution of intra-elite powers, but with the identification of knowledge structure, possessed by a particular elite community. It is knowledge that forms the elite, articulates the goals and objectives of their activities, determines and evaluates the result of its professional involvement. Plato pointed out that the political elite is not so much an enforcing mechanism of power as a special system of knowledge ("science of tsars"), and such people have to learn specifically. It is the presence of this knowledge that distinguishes the ruler from his subordinates. Plato also argued that there should be no social barriers or hierarchical preferences in obtaining this special education.

In the middle ages, continuation of the Academy idea development was the University. The university became a source of personnel of the alternative aristocracy of the elites (lawyers, doctors, theologians), which didn't come from the elected nobility originally, but were extremely necessary for the normal functioning of the society and the political system of that time. At the University we find the same scheme of the creative corporation of students and professors, which developed within the walls of Plato's Academy. Within the framework of this corporation, everyone was interested in constructive creative development. And all of them were developing despite the difficulties encountered everywhere. And the main purpose of this education was the production of the spiritual elite. Later, in the XIX century, John Henry Newman (1801 – 1890), a famous English philosopher and educator (who was teaching at Oxford

University for many years) argued that the mission of the University is *to educate gentlemen*, i.e. the potential elite. In the information age, the elite's dependence on education will only rise, establishing its links with high scientific technologies. In the information society, the elite is not enough to be only political or economic, it is necessary and important to be scientific, or at least scientifically educated. The information world has no place for amateurs. This is the world of high-quality professionals. The desired result can not be achieved by self-training and self-education only. It is necessary to go through the system of universal University and special education.

Historians have long noticed that the educated elite is the key to civil stability and national security of the country. The more primitive the cultural and educational level of the elite is, the greater the threat of unprofessional response to the challenges of the era will be. In the XXI century, a lot will depend on how really high-quality educated members of the elite groups are. The twentieth century showed that the democratic flirtation of elites with the masses leads to their own becoming a mass (moral impoverishment, craze about PR-technologies and catastrophic IQ reduction). Paradigm shift – "the revolt of the masses" to "the revolt of the elites" - in the first place, will mean the establishment of an excellent quality of elites themselves, overcoming their properties and qualities, which are not characteristics of elites.

Plato believed that at the critical stages of world history, the main goal of elite education is to adequately respond to the changes taking place in the world and to train new staff taking these changes into account. And he himself was one of those who actively and very successfully promoted these innovations in public life. Within the walls of his Academy not only new ideas were born, but also new people who were the carriers of these advanced ideas and knowledge. Our time all the while also resembles the time in which Plato lived. We live in a transitional period –the time of changes from the late industrial age to the early post-industrial society; Plato lived in the era of transformation of classics into Hellenism. Both epochs demanded a radical reassessment of the whole system of values. Plato and his students coped with this task. The collective scientific mind of modern humanity is still searching for an answer to the identification of the meaning of its epoch.

Here again, as before, it all depends on the quality of elite ruling the humanity. Elites are still late with the formulation of the answer to the challenge of the era. They are still lost in conjectures concerning its basic meanings and sense. There is an elite that has become elected in a rigid and open system of competitive selection, and there is an elite created by the appointment of the authorities. Between these elites, there is the same abyss as between the water canal and the sewage. The selection of elites is a multistage process of selection of the best from the good. It begins with the process of everything extraordinary and unusual being isolated and separated from the ordinary and usual; it begins and goes on as a process of isolation and strengthening the abilities of the individual, leading to the assertion of his personality.

In the world history of elite breeding there are two vectors of development: 1) the first comes from the oligarchy and can be called "controlled chaos" (creating the competition among young oligarchy apologists) and 2) the second vector comes from meritocracy and it can be conventionally designated as synergetic elite. It is the synergetic that tells elitology how meritocracy goes through the incubation period of its development (Hayes, 2012). A distinctive feature of the process of self-organization in the humanitarian system is subordinate to the principles of a self-sufficient person's creativity, what was

described quite thoroughly by a Russian philosopher Berdyaev (1994) in his fundamental work "Meaning of creativity.

First of all, we associate the idea of the University and the scientific elite with elite education. From a post-industrial perspective (Young, 1958; Bell, 1976), meritocratic world order implies activation and strengthening of the University and the scientific elite's role in the architecture of the future. In the future, the University should become a universal leading unit of economic production, determining the socio-political system and cultural space. It is at the University that meritocracy should show its strength and its authority for the first time to make other elites accept its values and implement them in life.

3. Research Questions

The Idea of a University.

Initially, the University (lat. *Universitas*— totality, generality) was conceived as a comprehensive study of systematic sciences (Rudy, 1987, p. 15-16). It was conceived as a free corporation of students and professors, united by common interests and goals. The idea of freedom (a German model) and discipline (a French model) were reconciled on the basis of obtaining the necessary advanced knowledge. At the same time, University education remained a very expensive pleasure for a long time, which only wealthy people could afford.¹ Elite as the desired goal made the idea of the University originally. The existence of the University is justified if it produces the elite. The University is the most perfect mechanism of elite selection. The world has not yet come up with another systematic way of selecting the best. The main task of the University is to promote the birth of meritocracy.

In our time, science is becoming more important than politics; the University is more important than the political bureau, and the student is no longer perceived as an area of the rod application, but as a quality investment into human capital. All the leaders of the present are the students of the past, and all present students are potential leaders of the future. It all starts with a student bench and national leaders have all gone through it. How can we see the future national leader among the students? Not always the best students at the school become leaders in practice.

The mission of the University should be based on its main idea - the production of a personality, evaluated as the subject of the elite by the society (scientific, cultural, managerial). University is a means of realization of a person's life project. University is a place of the existence of the so-called proto-elites. Proto-elite is a community of potential candidates into an elite group; those who have not yet realized their elite potential but have come to the University in order to update and enhance their personal skills. The task of the University is to promote the disclosure of these traits, to help, and not to interfere with their formation.

In modern elite western universities, the idea of the elite as the goal of their professional activity is brought to its utter absurdity, because it has been completely subordinated to the interests of the oligarchy. Elite are those universities that have excess funding, i.e. use financial advantage as their professional superiority. All western universities, included into the top 100 best universities in the world, are elitist in

¹ Historians note that university education was initially only for very wealthy individuals. And only from the beginning of the XX century. The accessibility of higher education to the broad masses of the population has continuously increased (Rudy, 1987, p.117). Prior to this, a major obstacle to this was its high cost. So, in the UK education in the XIX century. was available only to aristocrats, and only at the beginning of the XX century University of London has made higher education more accessible to the mass consumer (Rudy, 1987, p.118-119).

their essence. There is one legitimate question: how correct are the criteria of these ratings, corresponding with the Anglo-Saxon realities? It was noticed that those who create the rankings (orders them), most often win the contest. The ideological confrontation between the elite and the elitism as a global dispute of the meritocratic and oligarchic principle for the right to create and lead elites remains unchanged.

What are the fundamental differences between elite and elitistic university? We will try to clarify the terminology and understand its essence. Recalling that the elite points at personal dignity, the superiority of the individual over its status we mean that the advantage here is not social, but personal traits; elite is content dominating form. Elitism is primarily a status advantage derived from the hierarchical superiority of caste privilege; it embodies the ambitions of prestige; elite here means domination of form over content. Elitistic education only formalizes the already existing superiority, giving it the appearance of legality, while elite education forms a creative personality, creating its elitism by updating its personal, not ancestral merits. The main negative result of the elite education oligarchic model development is the emergence of a whole generation of political elite with an extremely low practical level of professional competence. The intellectual and moral crisis currently observed in the world elite directly follows from the fact of the elite education quality decline. *Not the best people come to power, but the people necessary for the oligarchic system.* The XXI century will require elite with a high scale of education (Ponedelkov, Averin & Magomedov, 2016). Prior to this, the selection of elites was according to the principle of "survival of the most powerful", while post-industrialism requires that the smartest come to power. It is this Plato insisted on, when he claimed his famous principle of "philosopher on the throne".

Analysis of existing practices shows that elite universities are nominated by their high-quality education, elitistic ones— by using their financial superiority. Elite universities nurture the scientific elite themselves, elitistic ones — buy it. Elite universities suffer from "brain drain", elitistic ones profit and enrich on this. The activity of elite universities is aimed at the creation of meritocracy; the activity of elitistic universities is aimed at the reproduction of elites serving the oligarchs. Elite universities are free corporations of students and teachers united by common scientific creativity; elitistic universities area division of oligarchic structures that mimic the activities of elite universities. Elite universities live in the mode of social economy, elitistic ones — in the mode of material and financial abundance.

The marked fundamental differences between the elite and elitism principles of assessment, formation and activity of the elite determine the very difficult nature of their correlation. The dispute is obviously of a principled nature. The present time is the time of transformation of developed industrialism into early post-industrialism: it is marked by still strong bursts of activity of the oligarchy ("elite of blood"), seeking to prevent meritocracy (elite of knowledge) to get finally established as the dominant and managing initiative. The activity of the oligarchy is protective: they are still trying to maintain their power in the socio-cultural traditions of the twentieth century.

4. Purpose of the Study

Oligarchic elitistic universities.

Numerous ratings conducted by Anglo-Saxon structures are designed to once again show and prove their world superiority. Rating is another mechanism of pressure onto the world and of promoting its standards, its system of values. At the same time, from year to year, the "best" universities only change

places, which looks very democratic, but they do not give the advantage to anyone (Akopova & Chernyavskaya, 2014). Rating is self-promotion. And self-promotion of the west is mainly oligarchic, not meritocratic, as exclusively financial capabilities of their elite communities are advertised. Deprive these elites from the printing press and their power will collapse and then they will come up with a thousand new ways to once again be on the top of the world historical process.

The existing ratings state one general pattern: a direct connection between the quality of education and the number of financial injections. For example, the endowment of Harvard University in 2012 amounted to \$ 32.7 billion, which is comparable to the state budgets of some African countries. American elite universities can only exist with the excessive financing, i.e., always having a significant money supply in reserve. They are so spoiled today with such excessive funding that they have lost all sorts of protective instincts of survival in crisis situations. If there was any collapse with the United States — they would have all their university education system go bankrupt first.

The history of this issue shows that oligarchic universities originally had financial and material advantage, which predetermined their elite status. Thus, the founder of Stanford, one of the most prestigious American universities, – magnate Leland Stanford (1824 – 1893) donated to the University about \$ 20 million in 1891 (equal to \$400 million in 2005). After such a powerful financial injection it's quite logical to become and remain elitistic, it's not possible to avoid it. This example shows that the American oligarchy demonstrates social responsibility and invests significant financial resources into the system of education, health care and culture. This is precisely what their patriotism means – the prestige of the country is also measured by the elitism / elite nature of the educational system. University is the face of the state. The quality of education it provides in the twenty-first century will determine the quality level of the country as a whole.

The experience of American universities in dealing with oligarchs needs to be taken up by other national systems. It is not about blind copying, but about how to make your large capital open to social and cultural projects of your time. In Russia, there is an obvious lack of social responsibility of state corporations and oligarchs, who in the pursuit of super profits ignore the development of culture, education and health.² Yet reaching out to the oligarchs' conscience is only possible by scaring them a lot (Ashyn, 1998, p. 11).

The struggle of oligarchy and meritocracy is a struggle between the elitism and the elite, as a dispute between privileges and dignity, status and person. The difference between elitistic and elite is that elitistic education is an education for the existing elite, while elite education forms a new elite personality without reliance on its original social position. So there is education for the rich and there is education for the smart. Ideally, both systems should match. But most often, in practice, we see a break in this system. Even within the same educational institution, these two types can exist as its internal substructures. In such circumstances, one part of the system works for the oligarchy, the other — for meritocracy. The whole question is how long they will exist peacefully and which of these two options will ultimately take over and suppress the other (or begin to successfully simulate it).

²According to Forbes magazine, in 2016 the rating of the richest people in Russia included 77 dollar billionaires.

5. Research Methods

Corporate culture.

In addition to excessive financing, to support the status of an elitistic university, it is also necessary to have a certain corporate culture – for students it is compliance with a certain "code of honor", for teachers – the maximum implementation of their creative abilities in academic research activities.

According to the first corporate basis, from the first day of their study at the University, the student mass is obliged to observe a certain code of conduct that stimulates the development of noble personal qualities: responsibility, integrity, duty, honor... An example here is the famous *Honor Code* of Princeton University (Acknowledging Your Sources, 2016). Another important aspect of students' corporate culture is the development of leadership qualities in them, which is considered an indispensable condition for cultural and psychological selection of elites. Since the early 1990s, in Russia, the higher school introduced numerical program which promoted leadership among students. Experts recognize that making young people leaders is a matter of increased responsibility.

According to the second corporate feature – academic scientific activity of teachers – we are talking about their maximum effective use of their creative potential in the development of certain scientific areas; a high level of recognition of their scientific authority, measured on a scale of fame and prestige. Scientists are often asked to show maximum creativity and innovation. According to F. Schleiermacher (1768 – 1834), a Professor must demonstrate the "act of creating" new knowledge to students (History, 2004, p. 21). Elitology in itself is already an innovative doctrine and a technology aimed at clarifying the criteria by which the quality of the elite is reproduced (Ashyn, 1998). The study of elites and elitism is now reaching a new level of their reality understanding. The time has come to systematically study the elite phenomenon as a system of form and content (elite and elitism), while its formal (status) characteristics are increasingly receding into the background. If earlier political elites were more dependent on PR-technologies, in the future (and this is already seen in our time) they are increasingly in need of strengthening the quality of their IQ-characteristics. The latter directly leads us to the problem of elite education of meritocratic type.

6. Findings

Meritocratic prospects for the future.

Plato's Academy existed for 914 years. The oldest European University (Bologna) only recently bypassed the Academy of Athens in the time of its continuous existence — 930 years (1088 - 2018). It is these structures that gradually prepared humanity for the arrival of meritocracy. Today it becomes obvious that the XXI century will require elites to strengthen their professional quality, i.e. it will focus on their meritocratic characteristics. Apparently, the elites of the post-industrial world will no longer be able to fully use their oligarchic technologies and will be forced to switch to meritocratic values in their activities. The twenty-first century will need the elite with a high scale of education. In the past, the elite was formed by the struggle for power, in the future it will be created by competition in the sphere of advanced knowledge and their effective professional practical application.

Elite education is a struggle for the quality of elites. In post-industrial conditions, the quality of education becomes the most important criterion of the person's elite belonging. However, judging by the quality of the modern, including the western political elite (and the establishment as a whole) the system of

university training of elite personnel of the United States has already faced a systemic failure, which is recorded by the American analytics themselves (Roberts, 2014; Crippled America, 2015). It is the lack of professionalism quality that causes the abnormal practices of the ruling elites and the often failures of their officially advertised projects (Ulfkotte, 2014). Leaders of various elite groups constantly accuse each other of incompetence and of the fact that people with below average abilities ("political dullness") have captured all leading managerial positions. Total incompetence has become a diagnosis of this entire era. The elites of the industrial age have reached their highest power nowadays. But here, unexpectedly for them, the limiting force became the knowledge over which they have no power. Now to manage systems you need not oligarchic superiority, but meritocratic advantage.

The noted crisis of late industrialism only confirms the thesis about the necessity of meritocratic transformations. At the same time, the elitology itself acts as its main advertising agency. However, as the analysis of currently existing theories of elites shows, at the moment there is no single concept of meritocracy in elitology. There are only fragmentary, sometimes contradictory "sketches". So elitology should thoroughly understand this question before beginning to actively introduce this topic into life. And developing these schemes should be started with the elitology of education.

It is the elite of education that faces the acute issue of developing criteria for the formation of specialists of the elite level who meet all the requirements of the meritocracy. The problems associated with the use of high technologies and adaptation to the changes in the psychology of professional behavior in this regard are becoming urgent. It is also obvious that instead of the formal requirement of creativity, the real need of the individual for insight, oeuvre should come (Berdyayev, 1994). Therefore, there is the same difference between such concepts as "creativity" and "insight/oeuvre" as between advertising and reality.

Today the University is becoming a leading center for training elite personnel for all professional areas of activity. If we fully implement all the means and opportunities inherent in the system of University education, we will get potentially ideal elite. The Universum of higher education is focused on the creation of an elite caste of specialists. The University has not and can not have another justification for its existence. With this approach, all training institutions should strive to be elite. And this desire of theirs is expressed every time when it comes to improving the educational process and material - technical base. The thing is that some universities implement this intention, while others only declare their intention or fail in the process of implementing this elite idea declared.

7. Conclusion

On the basis of the above-described material we will try to make some preliminary conclusions. First of all, we should pay attention to the social responsibility of the oligarchy, to the fact that the origin of the elite universities is a large capital. It is this kind of altruism that the Russian oligarchy lacks (conclusion: it is necessary to force [stimulate] oligarchs to be socially responsible). The second important finding is the intensive work with the student proto – elite aiming at introducing the feelings of leadership, of the personal honor cult and of the ability to realize their personal virtues and merits. Finally, the main promising conclusion: University is a means of forming meritocracy, so the currently dominant oligarchic trends will sooner or later have to come to nothing, giving way to new post-industrial principles and technologies. The future of the University and the whole mankind is in meritocracy and oligarchy (if it

wants to survive historically) should actively contribute to its formation and coming to power. The question of the acute phase of confrontation between oligarchy and meritocracy at the early stage of post-industrial society remains open. If the masks are dropped, the war of the elites for the right to form the agenda for the twenty-first century could escalate to the limit. And this war will take place through the ruins of oligarchic and meritocratic values in assessing the quality of a particular elite community and a particular subject of elites.

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