

Anarchism and education

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Education has always played a greater role in society than just teaching children to count and read correctly. After the introduction of the general education system in the industrial age, it became a very effective tool of state propaganda. Students are taught not only to add correctly, but also patriotism and how to be an obedient cog in the system. The main goal of the state system is to cultivate obedient citizens. As for vocational education, it is, in particular in Ukraine, fully standardized and does not take into account the individual aptitudes of the student. Moreover, in fact, quality specialized education is not available to many people because it is too expensive.

Many thinkers of anarchism have tried to develop an optimal model of learning.

In the 19th century, Joseph Proudhon proposed transferring the management of education to the communities of workers and peasants, who would be able to hire teachers based on their needs. All subsequent theorists of anarchism developed this idea. In the twentieth century, Ivan Ilyich proposed replacing the school with free informal associations. Communities in which people could meet to share knowledge, skills centers, training partners. He put forward the idea that it is practice-oriented should be the basis of modern education. Not an abstract curriculum, but the student's environment and personal actions determine what knowledge he will receive.

Mikhail Bakunin proposes an integrated model of education, built on the ancient system: a person must be equally developed physical and intellectual skills. He considered the main study of nature and sociology. Practical education should prepare young people for the "choice of profession" to which they feel inclined. To further choose an individual program of study in the chosen field under the guidance of mentors.

Francisco Ferrer, a Spanish educator-anarchist, opened in 1901 in Barcelona, the "Modern School" — a secular school, which embodied the principle of "rationalist education", ie one that develops the child according to its individual characteristics. Boys and girls, regardless of social status, studied together at this school. Training took place in the form of conversations with teachers, work in workshops and walks (trips to nature, excursions to factories and museums, and so on). Emphasis was placed on natural science subjects and discussions with children on current issues. Gradually, other schools for workers' children began to appear in Spain, following the example of the Ferrer School. His ideas were extremely popular abroad and inspired the creation of new types of teachers in the United States, Germany, Brazil and other countries. The tragic death of Ferrer, who was executed on unfounded charges of organizing the uprising, only increased the popularity of his concept.

In terms of educational content, a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical activities is important. Education detached from practice and real-life problems is bound to turn into fiction. The American writer and psychotherapist Paul Goodman wrote a book in 1964 entitled “Compulsory Poor Education,” in which he notes that American teenagers often drop out of school because they fail. Schools force children to “absurdly grow up” – in four walls, in isolation from life experience, in unnatural age groups. The school only pretends to provide education, in fact it only takes time. And suppresses creativity and the inherent human desire to learn about the world around.

Education is not limited by the walls of any institutions. And the modern world confirms this, now there are MOOC platforms, numerous tutoring services, popular training videos on YouTube. The monopoly on knowledge is disappearing. People want to share skills and easily learn from each other: if you have a blown light bulb in the car headlight, you can go to the service, and you can watch a video with detailed instructions on how to change it. And this video was shot not by a certified repairman, but by the same person as you, who dealt with the problem a little earlier.

Let’s move on to practice, free public education in schools is a very good tool for advocacy, but in no way helps the child to form the necessary knowledge base about the world around him. Therefore, the state must withdraw its hands from education. Anarchists aim to make quality education accessible to all, and to snatch it from the hands of state or religious propaganda.

In an anarchist society, the task of financing education will be transferred to the competence of the apparatus of democratic planning. Although current education is called free, we pay for it through taxes. And we have no leverage to influence this process. A socially oriented economy will make this process transparent, and will allow people to plan the construction of educational institutions and all the costs of their maintenance. The task of secondary (school) education will be the development of critical thinking and initiative in the student. The system, divided into classes by age and general educational programs, will be a thing of the past. And they will be replaced by the opportunity to individually choose items to attend in the interests of the student.

Vocational education will be conducted directly at enterprises. Thanks to constant practice, the student will be able to more effectively master the industries he has chosen. And by reducing the working day and creating conditions with free access to any information, everyone will have the opportunity to constantly develop their knowledge and skills.

Current education is detached from reality, so students often find themselves completely unfit for life in the real world after graduation. And they can’t find a job because they don’t have the necessary skills. The bigger problem is that quality education is not available to most. And that we can not manage the budgets allocated to the organization of education. Therefore, we have a situation where schools are overcrowded and parents are beaten by officials with requests to finally build a school in their city. That is why the state must take its hands off education, society will be able to cope with the issue of its education much better.

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