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Randall, Peter Ralph

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The Role of the History of Education in Teacher Education in South Africa, with particular reference to developments in Britain and the USA

Peter Ralph Randall

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is to review critically the changing nature, role and status of the history of education as a field of study in teacher education courses in South Africa, Britain and the USA. While the British and American situations have had direct influence on the theory and practice of the history of education in English language universities in South Africa, this influence has been shaped and modified by local circumstances, significantly so since the education crisis of 1976. The study seeks to clarify several fundamental questions about the history of education, including its relationship with other fields of educational study and its place in the intellectual preparation of teachers. Such questions are examined in the general contexts of the British, American and South African historiographies of education as well as in the context of the teacher education curriculum as it is shaped by the socio-political context.

In the three countries being studied, teacher education has become a matter of urgent concern. One result has been a rethinking of the place of educational theory, which inevitably involves a reconsideration of the place of history of education.

The dominant mood favours the 'practical' or 'professional' components in teacher education at the expense of the 'academic' and 'theoretical'. A retrospective analysis, tracing the 'barren dispute' between theory and practice to the beginnings of formal teacher education in the USA and Britain, clarifies the arguments involved. The study thus tracks the debate through the historical phases of history of education, from the 'traditional' schools - Acts and Facts, the Great Educators - through such innovations as the Social Foundations of Education, the Principles of Education, and the separate 'canonical' disciplines of the 1960s to the present position. In effect this involves a two-fold enquiry - into the respective historiographies of education on the one hand, and into course content and methodology on the other. An attempt is made to understand the current decline in the history of education in particular and of theoretical studies in general in British and American teacher education and to compare this with the present position in South African university departments of education.

A major contention underlying the study is that teachers can only benefit professionally and in other ways from a proper academic preparation including an informed historical perspective on the educational system(s) within which they operate. History of education thus should continue to have a

significant role to play in teacher education, although the nature of that role may have changed dramatically over the century since education became an accepted field of university study in the English-speaking world. Its role is of particular significance in the present South African educational crisis, where a re-examination of the educational past has begun since 1976 but where a great deal of further work and research remains to be done.

The study concludes with guidelines and proposals for the nature and role of educational history in the teacher education curriculum in contemporary South Africa.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

P.R. Randall.

1st day of November, 1988

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The major purpose of this study is to review critically the changing nature, role and status of the history of education in teacher education courses, in university departments of education in South Africa. In order to do this meaningfully, at least in relation to the English language universities, it is necessary to take into account developments in Britain and the USA. This is done in Chapters 2 and 3, while Chapters 4, 5 and 6 focus on South Africa. As one of the foremost early British historians of education, John Adamson, said in the preface to his Short History of Education (Cambridge University Press, 1922), "the history of education is best narrated under national forms, an arrangement which is also convenient for study and indispensable for research". The intention is thus to bring both an historical and an international perspective to bear on the present place of history of education in the South African teacher education curriculum. In the process a number of fundamental issues will have to be addressed. The most important of these is: what is the nature of the intellectual preparation - as contrasted to professional competence - that should be attempted in teacher education, particularly in initial courses, and what role does and should the history of education play in this? Related to this is the question: how have views changed over time with regard to the relationship between 'theory' and 'practice' in teacher education, and how have such changes affected the position and the status of the history of education, which has generally been regarded as one of the 'theoretical' components of the teacher education curriculum? The point should be made immediately that the setting up of a simple dichotomy between theory and practice in this

matter is not very helpful: practice that is not underpinned by theory cannot be good practice, and all good practice must inevitably be theoretically grounded. The way in which history of education can play a role in this will be a regular theme in the following chapters.

A number of subsidiary questions will also be raised in this study. What, for example, is the nature of the history of education; is it a separate discipline in its own right, as South African historico-pedagogicians claim, or is it really an aspect of social history, which is the dominant view in the English-speaking world? What is its relationship with other fields of educational study, especially philosophy, sociology and comparative eduction, and how has its place in the teacher education curriculum changed in relation to these? What factors in the broader socio-political context have influenced its study and its place in the curriculum?

In the three countries investigated, the quality of teacher education has become a matter of urgent public and government concern. In Britain, the James Committee was impressed 'by the volume of comment stressing at once the importance and the inadequacy of teaching practice' and found that 'many courses place too much emphasis on educational theory'.(1) In the USA, a federal commission laid much of the blame for what it perceived to be the poor state of American education at the door of teacher education,(2) while in South Africa the De Lange Commission, although primarily concerned with quantitive improvements in teacher education, also found that 'in certain respects professional and academic standards are under suspicion'.(3)

One result of these concerns has been a rethinking of the nature and function of teacher education in general, and of the place of educational theory in teacher education courses in particular. This has inevitably involved a reconsideration of the place of history of education, along with philosophy, psychology and sociology. From the 1960s these four have generally been accepted as the basic or

foundation disciplines involved in educational theory - the 'canonical' four disciplines.(4) But since education became established as a legitimate field of university study in the 1880s there has been an enduring debate over the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education, and over the extent and nature of the intellectual content that teacher education courses should provide, with first one view and then another dominating, and with the different disciplines enjoying fluctuating fortunes.

One means of establishing the main lines of this debate and of charting the fluctuations is to examine the place of the history of education over time, to ask 'what has happened to the theoretical study of education in teacher education courses of which history of education forms a part?'(5) Such an examination illuminates the broader relationships, between what have variously been called the theoretical and the practical, or alternatively the academic and the professional components of teacher education. It will also illustrate the manner in which teacher education is shaped by the wider socio-political context. Such questions are of fundamental importance not only to teacher education itself: as Cremin has said, 'as a society makes up its mind about the education of its teachers, it is really undertaking to define its own future'.(6)

The starting point for this study is suggested in the words of Bailyn: 'Retrospective analysis of the work done in the field is not only enlightening but of strategic importance for further progress. The history of educational history is, consequently, a significant topic in itself'.(7) The present critical state of education in South Africa, and the need to assist both prospective and practising teachers to meet the challenges of the present and the future, suggest that a reconsideration of these matters is urgently required. 'Retrospective analysis' may well in our case too be of strategic importance for further progress.

The analyses that follow in this chapter are intended merely to be rough guide-maps, identifying the major landmarks and milestones

that will be dealt with in greater detail in the subsequent chapters which will examine the place of history of education in three national contexts. It will be noted that the chapter on the USA is particularly long: this is a reflection of the great vigour with which the debate on the role of history of education has been conducted in that country, leading to the substantial body of literature illustrated by the Select Bibliography at the end of this study.

Theory and practice in teacher education

There have been major changes in the teacher education curriculum over the past century, since candidates for the teaching profession were required merely to read fluently and 'without unpleasant tones, write a fair hand, spell correctly, be well acquainted with the first four rules of arithmetic and have some general acquaintance with history and geography'.(8) The late nineteenth century deve opment, under German influence, of pedagogy or education as a distinct and specialised field of university study radically affected patterns of teacher training.(9) The move to regard education as a legitimate social science was to have further implications for teacher education.(10) Tension between theory and practice in the preparation of teachers, however, long predates such developments. Dent traces the 'barren dispute' back to the Reverend Dr Andrew Bell's monitorial training scheme of the early 1800s, quoting Bell's famous dictum that 'It is by attending the school... that teachers are to be formed, and not by lectures and formal instruction'.(11)

The 'barren dispute' has been a regular theme: in 1915 the Leeds professor of education expressed a common sentiment that 'It is through his errors that the earnest schoolmaster is led to reflect on his work that he may improve it', and that the great teachers have embodied theory in their work 'in the only real way - by living it'.(12) This view was echoed by Hirst nearly seventy years

later: 'In education, as in any other area of activity, we come to understand the activity... from engagement in the activity itself'.(13)

The relevance, even the very existence, of a body of educational theory have been questioned. Entwistle wonders whether such theory is not 'too utopian', and concludes that 'good theory can really only be derived from practice'.(14) Hartnett and Naish express 'moderate scepticism' about the place of theory in eductional practice.(15)

What constitutes effective teacher education has thus been a recurring matter for debate:

> From the earliest decades of the nineteenth century, when colleges, academies, grammar schools, and normal schools struggled valiantly to staff a burgeoning popular school system, Americans have disagreed among themselves about the qualities of good teachers and the best modes of nurturing those qualities.(16)

Much the same can be said about Britain and, to a lesser extent, about South Africa, where British developments tended to be copied faithfully at least until the 1970s.

As Chapters 2, 3 and 4 will indicate, teacher education in the three countries before the involvement of the universities in the late nineteenth century was almost unrelievedly practical, largely through the pupil-teacher system and the influence of the normal school tradition. The development of education as a field of university study and the involvement of universities in the training of teachers affected teacher education radically. At one - optimistic - level it made possible the 'formulation of an educational science and the advancement of teacher education from practical taining to professional preparation'.(17) At another level it introduced what Russell of Teachers College saw as the

'constant conflict' between academic and professional elements in teacher education.(18) This conflict may have been most sharply expressed in America, where university departments of education could be regarded 'as devoid of scholarship and generally worthless - a bag of tricks'(19), but it has not been absent in Britain and South Africa. Indeed, the long-standing tensions about the intellectual status of teacher education and the ambivalent attitudes of universities towards it provide an important theme in both the British and the American literature.(20) One outcome of these tensions has been a tendency for university departments of education to experience repeated shifts of focus, and repeated changes from one set of programmes to another.

Bok attributes this to the fact that education has lacked a firm core of professional knowledge on which to build a stable curriculum, unlike schools of law, medicine and business.(21) Another factor is that 'education faculties, unlike business schools, serve a profession that has long been weak'.(22) While a systematic investigation of these issues is beyond the scope of the present study, they form an important part of the context for a discussion of the place of the history of education in the teacher education curriculum. As one of the educational disciplines, history of education has itself undergone major vicissitudes in the curriculum.

History of education in the teacher education curriculum,

In general, the 'theoretical' disciplines that were employed in the new education departments in British, American and South African universities were confined to child psychology and the history of education. These were seen as providing the major theoretical underpinnings for the practice of teaching. History of education thus enjoyed considerable status in the early days of university involvement in techer education. Chapters 2 and 3 describe the work of such pioneers as Woodward, Watson and Adamson in Britain and Davidson, Dexter and Monroe in America. These chapters also

describe the orthodoxy that developed from their work and that was to dominate the study of the history of education for several decades. This orthodoxy was characterised by a narrow concentration on the agencies of formal education, particularly the school, and an unproblematic view of the development of formal schooling in the west as evidence of the inevitablility of human progress. The content of history of education courses became rigidified into a chronological survey of the landmarks of that development from the ancient Greeks and Romans, through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Reformation, to the establishment of national school systems in the late nineteenth century. Allied to this was a description of the contributions made by the Great Educators of the western world.

This agenda was later to be criticised as constituting a monument to the status quo, providing post-facto justification for contemporary educational policies and practices, and as viewing the past merely as the present writ small. It certainly did little to encourage in students a critical awareness of contemporary educational issues and a realisation of the need for change and renewal.

The early twentieth century educational historians often defended the study of their subject on what may be described as Whiggish grounds. Beatty, for example, believed that human nature is unchanging and that the rudiments of all educational practice can be traced to the past.(23) Boyd saw the history of western education as 'essentially a record of evolution'.(24) On both sides of the Atlantic the early historians - with some notable exceptions like Alexander Darroch(25) - also played a propagandising role which, in Roy Lowe's words,

> glorified the process of teaching... and, by concentrating upon the continuity of educational tradition, effectively established a Whig school which took more than fifty years to supplant.(26)

This same Whiggish approach can be discerned in the work of the early historians of South African education like Malherbe, MacKerron

and Pells.

Despite the later harsh criticisms of their work there can be no doubting the importance of educational historians like Cubberley and Monroe, Woodward and Adamson during the first decades of this century in shaping not only the agenda for the study of the subject but also in influencing the curriculum of teacher education as a whole. This is illustrated by the almost obligatory and usually adulatory references made by their successors: Brian Simon describes how the history of English education 'became bedded down into something approaching a reverent commentary on the findings of predecessors'.(27)

When the position in South African university departments of education is examined in subsequent chapters, it will be seen that they faithfully replicated the dominant orthodoxy described above until as late as the 1970s in the case of the English language institutions, and that the Afrikaans universities are still caught fast in it to a considerable extent despite a fundamentally different ideological orientation. Certainly the missionary zeal and the lofty moral tone of writers like Monroe still find strong echoes in the works of present day Afrikaner historico-pedagogicians.

Such criticisms as were directed against Monroe et al by their contemporaries were not so much on account of the features described above as on the grounds that history of education lacked 'relevance' and 'utility' for intending teachers. As Chapter 3 will show, the arguments between the protagonists of a liberal and a professional education have been most vigorous in the USA. The idea that subjects studied in teacher education programmes should be of direct practical benefit for prospective teachers was dismissed as anathema by the advocates of a liberal arts tradition.

The argument has been waged intermittently in both Britain and the USA (and to a lesser extent in South Africa) since universities

became involved in teacher education. From the very beginning attempts were made to defend the study of the history of education on utilitarian grounds. In 1882, for example, Oscar Browning claimed two practical benefits for the subject:

> it may show what is the historical ground for retaining existing practices in Education, or for substituting others; and it may, by telling us what great teachers have attempted, and what great thinkers have conceived as possible in this department, stimulate us to complete their work.(28)

This may be taken as a representative formulation of the somewhat rough and ready theory that underlay the study of history of education for several generations.

Some forty years after Browning, Cubberley also tried to justify the place of history of education in teacher education programmes on the grounds of its supposed practical benefits. Reacting to widespread criticism that the subject bore little relation to present day problems and that it failed to 'function' in orienting prospective teachers, Cubberley proposed a history of education that would help them to see the educational problems of the twentieth century in the light of their historical evolution and the possible lines of their future development.(29) By the 1960s the pendulum had swung so far that historians of education like Brian Simon could be dismissive of claims that the subject could have any direct applicability to the practice of teaching. In the 1980s, however, there has been a renewed shift to functionalism and a renewed questioning of the relevance of educational theory in general. These shifts are explored in some detail in subsequent chapters.

The theory enunciated by Cubberley and others and the resulting orthodoxy in terms of the content and methodology of history of education dominated the study of the subject for nearly half a century. In general terms it is true to say that history of

education was regarded as having an important place in teacher education programmes until after the Second World War. But that place was by no means completely secure. The literature, as reflected in Chapters 2 and 3, is full of recurring complaints about its lack of academic rigour on the one hand, and its lack of relevance for prospective teachers on the other. Monroe may have been convinced that 'a subject that could give the neophyte an everlasting faith in his profession' clearly deserved a central place in the curriculum(30), and he and his disciples may have been able to persuade many teacher educators of this. But no subject enjoys an invincible place in the curriculum: the disappearance of the classical languages after centuries of dominance is only one example of this, while the fluctuating fortunes of the history of education itself is another.

An important factor is the way in which the teacher education curriculum is inevitably influenced by developments in the broader socio-political context. Several major turning points may be explained in this way. One important example is the emergence in American teacher education in the 1930s of the concept of the social foundations of education. This embodied the social reconstructionist position that the teacher of teachers had a strategic role in the achievement of a new social order, one that would sweep away the evils of capitalism and the failures of democracy. The teacher education curriculum was consequently modified, exemplified by Teachers College, to an integrated course in which history, philosophy, sociology, economics and comparative education were all included. There were warnings that the history of education would lose its valued independent place by absorption into the anonymity of such courses.(31)

This curriculum change clearly reflected growing disillusionment with American society in the light of the social and economic crisis of the Great Depression. In Chapter 5 a comparison is drawn between this curriculum development in 1930s America and the radical restructuring of the teacher education curriculum in South African

English language universities in the late 1970s. In this case, too, the move was towards integrated courses, in particular the political economy of South African education, in which the previously autonomous history of education was threatened with absorption and anonymity. And here, too, the major factor in the change of curriculum lay in the broader society, in the educational crisis that engulfed black education from 1976.

Further examples of the connections between socio-political developments and the study of the history of education are given in this study. They include the divergence between the English and Afrikaans universities in South Africa that set in after the Second World War and the establishment of historico-pedagogics in the latter, at least partly as a result of the growth of an aggressive and assertive Afrikaner nationalism; the radical revisionist movement in America that was at least partly the result of the events of the 1960s and 1970s, including the Vietnam War and the civil rights struggle; and the 'canonisation' of the four educational disciplines in Britain from the late 1960s, which was at least partly the result of the boom time expansion of education in that period. This expansion ushered in a flowering of the study of education, with theory riding high, often at the expense of pedagogy itself, as Simon has pointed out.

In more recent times, the economic stringencies confronting British, American and South African universities have had a marked effect on teacher education programmes. There has been a contraction of theoretical studies in favour of more 'useful' matters, and the history of education has been a prime loser in the process. The present parlous state of the subject, particularly in initial teacher education programmmes, in all three countries, is discussed in detail in the respective chapters.

The changes of fortune of the different components in the teacher education curriculum, - with history and comparative education, for example, now being generally eclipsed by sociology - should be seen

in terms of a periodic regrouping of forces and shifts in the balance of power between the different elements which at present have adverse effects on the pursuit of educational history, as it has been conventionally understood.(32) This does not imply, of course, that there will in due course be another inevitable swing of the pendulum and that history of education needs simply to bide its time in order to resume its former position of importance. As will be argued later in this study, that position will have to be fought for and justified in the face of strong comp ing claims for inclusion in initial teacher education courses.

The field of study of history of education

The question of what properly constitutes the field of the educational historian is a complex one, which has received different answers in different periods and in different contexts. In the same way that socio-political developments in the broader society have influenced the place of the history of education in the teacher education curriculum generally, so too they have often had a direct bearing on conceptions of the history of education as a field of study.

In broad terms, one may agree with Webster's view that 'for the historian education as a concept formerly embraced too little; now it is rapidly coming to include too much'.(33) The early agenda set by men like Cubberley and Monroe in the USA and Adamson and Woodward in Britain was, as has already been mentioned, to dominate the subject for decades, in South Africa as much as in the other countries. Such local adaptation as there was, was still firmly within the paradigm they had set.

Cohen's description of the early agenda seems apt:

> If history's general methodology was conservative, so was its content, which featured institutions rather than persons, the remote past rather than recent history, continuity rather than change. Historians emphasised national unity, national homogeneity, and the 'American mission'.(34)

Roy Lowe's strictures on the early British historians of education have already been quoted. Thus history of education was narrowly conceived of as dealing with the school and with 'facts and acts' illustrating the notion of progress and evolution in the national life, a kind of social Darwinism in fact. In the process it neglected such issues as the education of minority and disadvantaged groups and the role of other, more informal educational agencies ranging from the family and the church to the press and youth groups.

The early writers developed a literature in order to assist the subject to take the central position which they believed it deserved and which it duly received in training colleges, normal schools and university departments of education. In Bailyn's words, they drew up 'the patristic literature of a powerful academic ecclesia'(35), while Katz writes of their 'elaborate glorification of the contemporary school system'.(36)

The context for the emergence of this early orthodoxy was provided by the development of national systems of school education, first at primary or elementary level and later at secondary level, the self-conscious professionalisation of teachers, and the scientific and material progress of the western world. The resulting curriculum was largely static, premised on notions of progress, and narrowly focused on the school.

Despite the apparent confidence of the early practitioners, it is clear from the literature that, in America at le , history of education constantly faced problems of survival, as has already been

indicated. As early as 1908 there were warnings that the subject needed more 'professional' content, that is content relevant to teaching. The dangers of a narrow utilitarianism were increased by the rise of the 'scientific' movement in education, with its emphasis on psychology, testing and measurement. In many universities, history of education was becoming an increasingly unpopular course and where it was offered as an option it was often passed over in favour of other options. One of the reasons was the nature of the literature, which was often pedestrian and dreary as well as lacking genuine scholarship. Brian Simon has drawn attention to the stagnation in British research between the Wars, and the outpouring of texts in America did little to improve the position in that country. One result of the paucity of research and the often shallow interpretations of educational historians was the scorn that was directed at them by academic colleagues. This theme is discussed in later chapters.

During the 1930s the demand that history of education should become more functional and less 'academic' in the teacher education programme gained renewed impetus from the advocates of social reconstruction and from the progressive school of general history. While the history of education in Britain and South Africa by and large continued to plod along its untroubled way, in America the urge to create a relevant and 'usable' history that would help to solve current problems brought about significant changes. In the social foundations courses, the field encompassed by history was significantly widened to include issues of contemporary concern, and such concepts as social control were introduced. A brief case study of the changing curriculum at Teachers College at the end of Chapter 3 illustrates the changes that history of education experienced during this and subsequent periods.

In Britain, major changes in the teacher education curriculum were to come only in the 1960s. Prior to that 'theoretical' studies generally fell within courses on the Principles of Education, an amalgam of psychology, history and method. While still regarded as

one of the major 'theoretical' disciplines underpinning the one year postgraduate training course, history of education had begun to lose ground, sometimes being offered merely as an option with subjects like music and handwork. The reasons for this were two-fold; lecturing in the subject, gernerally by non-specialist former teachers, who inevitably drew on the examples of their own training courses, was often dull and uninspiring; and the traditional curriculum - a brief chronological survey of the development of formal education in the West and the lives and thoughts of the Great Educators - led to the usual questions about its value and relevance. The orthodoxy that reigned in English language universities in South Africa was closely modelled on the one in Britain; it too followed a heavily factual linear and chronological approach and it too concentrated on western schooling. Where it considered South African schooling at all, it dealt almost exclusively with the development of a public school system for whites. The omission of blacks was, of course, a reflection of the neglect of black education in the society as a whole. The position is described in some detail in a brief case study of the University of Cape Town at the end of Chapter 5.

The 1960s were a period of decisive change in the teacher education curriculum in general and the history of education in particular, in both Britain and the USA. The British context of the period is sketched in Chapter 2 - economic development and relative prosperity, a great expansion in educational provision, anxiety about the socially divisive effects of the school system, moves to make teaching a fully graduate profession. There was a general rethinking of the nature of educational studies and a recognition of the need for a more rigorous theoretical basis for graduate teacher education. The major outcome was a wholesale abandoning of the 'undifferentiated mush' of courses on the Principles of Education. R S Peters argued that it was necessary to look at education as a dynamic process and to clarify the major disciplines on which its study was based. It was the relatively new educational disciplines of philosophy and sociology that took a dominant role in the study

of education in Britain in the 1960s. They joined the older disciplines of history and psychology and these four rapidly became institutionalised in most teacher education programmes. Educational theory flourished as it had not done before. One reason for this was that the establishment of the four sub-disciplines helped to give the study of education a degree of academic respectability that it had not previously enjoyed. Turning specifically to the history of education, it is signifant that 1960 saw the publication of Brian Simon's Studies in the History of Education. This employed marxist analytical concepts to develop the thesis that state intervention had brought about a divided educational system that helped to entrench class divisions.

A new agenda for historians of education was being established and the field of study was immeasurably widened and deepened. Among the items to be placed on the agenda were working class education, informal education, the role and perpetuation of elites, and formal education as a mechanism for social control. The latter provides an example of the close relationship that developed between history and sociology of education. The dangers of attempts to 'sociologise' history are discussed at various places in subsequent chapters.

Much exciting and important research was undertaken in the history of education. Sutherland could write, in 1969, that the subject seemed at last to be coming into its own, and by the mid-1970s Webster could confidently talk of a new vitality, spontaneity and creativity.(37) Reeder, whose own work on urban education broke radical new ground, sees the 1970s as a watershed, with a broadening of the field of educational history to include, inter alia, childhood and popular culture, literacy and studies in social recruitment.(38)

On the face of it it would appear that the old orthodoxy had been swept away and a new and vigorous approach introduced. Unfortunately, however, most of the new research and the new directions do not seem to have penetrated into teacher education

courses. It is ironical, in fact, that history of education in teacher education courses should have been forced on to the defensive precisely at a time when it was enjoying unprecedented growth and unprecedented status in the university community. The probable explanation is that the dominance of educational theory in the 1960s and the early 1970s led inevitably to a reaction in favour of 'practice'. The result was a steady decline in the fortunes of history of education in colleges and universities to the low point reached in the mid-1980s, as described in the final section of Chapter 2.

Lagging some distance behind British developments, South African teacher education belatedly adopted the model of the four 'canonical' disciplines. As the University of Cape Town case study indicates, however, this was largely confined to a mere re-arrangement of the old orthodoxy in the history of education. Fundamental changes were introduced only after the traumas of the post-1976 period forced a reconsideration. The curriculum changes then introduced at the University of Cape Town, while recognising the need to place black education at the top of the agenda and adopting many of the insights of radical educationists in Britain and America, had the effect of relegating history of education to a relatively unimportant place in a new composite course on the political economy of South African education. What is missing in the South African experience is a flourishing period of historical research and debate such as occurred in both those countries in the 1960s and the 1970s.

With regard to the Afrikaans universities, most of the developments sketched above seem largely to have passed them by. With historico-pedagogics increasingly embedded in a rigid orthodoxy of its own, which drew on 'scientific' pedagogics and Christian National education for its inspiration, such debate as there was occurred in something of a vacuum and was mostly confined to wordy claims and counter-claims about nomenclature. Until the emergence of the 'metagogicians' in the 1980s, little thought had been given

to a fundamental reconsideration of the field of study of history of education. As discussed in Chapter 6, this development, however, has moved away from the history of education itself into a strange amalgam of futurology, cybernetics, general systems theory and management theory. In effect, it has helped to further weaken the position of history of education, already threatened in the Afrikaans universities for much the same reasons as in the English language universities - alleged lack of relevance and practical benefit for intending teachers.

The question of what constitutes their proper field of study has been the subject of recurring dispute among American historians of education. As has already been indicated the early conception was a narrow one, focused on the evolution of the American public school system as part of the western tradition. There followed, in the 1930s, the establishment of the courses in the Social Foundations of Education, with history as one component. While at first glance this development may appear similar to the discipline-based approach described above, which dominated the British teacher education curriculum from the 1960s, there are in fact fundamental differences between the two. These are explored at the appropriate place in Chapter 3.

In the 1950s there was vigorous debate in the USA about the ways in which history of education might contribute to teacher education. 'Traditionalists' lamented the decline of the subject which, when it was offered at all, it was 'with a delicate forbearance, and commonly as an elective'. In its place, there were lists of courses

> in administration and supervision, in guidance and personnel, in methods of teaching this and that, and so on to Catering I, Church Work II and Body Building VI.(39)

Bok has more recently drawn attention to the lack of coherence in teacher education programmes in American schools of education,

referring in a memorable phrase to "a smorgasbord of courses that students could freely sample".(40)

Concern about the state of comparative desuetude into which history of education had fallen in the 1950s led to attempts to provide it with an organisational base through the setting up of a History of Education Section (HES), with its own journal, within the National Society for College Teachers of Education. The HES reported on the state of the subject and it was clear that there was a deep division between what might be called the conservatives and the progressives, or - although the lines of demarcation did not correspond exactly - between those who believed in inter-disciplinary co-operation and those who defended the separate integrity of their subject. The issue is discussed further in Chapter 3. Cohen believes that this period was the nadir of history of education as a field of study in the United States.(41) Part of the reason was, in Meyer's terms, the sense of 'national pragmatism', with its stress on utility and its decrying of theory in the preparation of teachers.

But American history of education was to make an apparently remarkable recovery from the low point it had reached by the mid-1950s. One reason was the emergence of a group of younger historians who vigorously pursued the 'New History', which was less concerned with describing the past than interpreting it, and whose influence extended strongly into the history of education. Bernard Bailyn was the most notable figure in this regard. The 'revisionists', as they came to be known, rejected the traditional orthodoxy exemplified by Cubberley and Monroe, and moved beyond a narrowly functional conception of history of education in the training of teachers.

The dominant characteristics of the early revisionists - Bailyn, Cremin, Wilson Smith, Oscar Handlin amongst others - were a more open-ended approach to research, the use of new methodolgies, a wider definition of 'education', and examination of the relationships between education and the broader society, and a

commitment to humanistic values. By what may be more than mere coincidence, the first major American revisionist text in the history of education - Bailyn's Education in the Forming of American Society - came in 1960, the same year in which Simon's seminal work appeared in Britain. In place of the narrow preoccupations of the older educational historians, Bailyn pointed to a much wider field of study, involving the whole 'configuration of educational processes'.(42) This 'configuration' encompassed such previously neglected areas as the history of the family, the history of literacy, the role of publishers and printers, and apprenticeship. Cremin later provided his own, expanded list: libraries, churches, museums, benevolent societies, youth groups, radio networks, the press, military organisations, research institutions.(43)
The agenda for the study of the history of education was thus being enormously widened, to a point in fact that it could become so latitudinarian and diffuse that it offered virtually no canons for selection. A similar process was, as noted earlier, under way in Britain, but it did not go as far as in America. In South Africa, the work of the early revisionists appears to have had almost no impact and the traditional orthodoxy with its narrow concentration on the school - the public school for whites in particular - remained comfortably in place until the 1970s. This comment applies not only to the English language universities: as will be illustrated in Chapter 5, historico-pedagogics, as taught in the Afrikaans universities, adhered by and large to the traditional orthodoxy, at least in terms of its content.

In the USA, the early revisionists succeeded in revolutionising the concept of history of education: at the same time they did not necessarily sweep all before them. The social foundations of education lingered on and textbooks continued to appear that were little more than potboilers along the old lines, like Cordasco's 'review manual'.(44) In general, the history of education, while achieving heightened academic status, still languished in teacher education courses, rather as it did in Britain. Chapter 3 traces the contradictory currents that affected the subject in America, in

the context of the crisis in teacher education as part of a general re-examination of the nation's education system that reached a peak in 1963 with the publication of James Conant's The Education of American Teachers. In terms similar to those employed in Britain by R S Peters in his attack on the Principles of Education, Conant criticised courses in the foundations of education, which he regarded as eclectic programmes of dubious intellectual worth.

The emergence of a new and more radical revisionist movement in America in the 1970s should be seen in the light of issues in contemporary American society. These included the Vietnam War, the difficulties of eradicating deeply embedded patterns of racial and social inequality, and the realisation that liberal reform programmes appeared to offer little meaningful hope, the spread of urban blight, and continuing anxiety about standards in American education sparked in part by the scientific and technological advances of the Eastern bloc. These factors affected the study of history in general, and many historians began to look for radical explanations for current problems and radical proposals for their solution. Historians of education like Katz, Tyack, Karier, Violas, Greer and Spring were no exception. They dominated the field in the USA in the 1970s, although of course there were still attempts to pursue the 'old' history of education. While it would obviously be erroneous to regard these radicals as a homogeneous group holding identical views, they did share a common disillusionment with institutionalised education in a capitalist society:

> American society is not structured to enhance the dignity of man but, unfortunately, is structured to foster a dehumanising quest for status, power and wealth. We live, I believe, in a fundamentally racist, materialistic society.(45)

Much the same was to be said about their own society - probably

with much more justification - by South African radical writers on education, especially after 1976. The influence of the American radical revisionists on the teacher education curriculum in English language universities in South Africa is discussed in Chapter 3. Two important themes added to the agenda of educational history in America - and taken up in South Africa - were the relationship between the formal education system and the needs of the capitalist economy and the plight of minorities.

The radical revisionists inevitably attracted criticism, sometimes vitriolic criticism. Cohen compared them to the earlier social reconstructionists in that they, too, were committed to history of education as a form of social action. But unlike the reconstructionists or even the liberal revisionists like Cremin, the radicals were antagonistic towards American schools, American society, and the liberal, humanist tradition. Cohen attacked the way in which they allowed their a priori assumptions to dominate their work:

> The new reconstructionists ask such loaded questions of the evidence that they can be pretty sure at the beginning what answers they will emerge with at the end. There is a finality and a rationality about their work that terribly over-simplifies the ambiguity, the incompleteness, the complexity of historical events.(46)

But there can be no doubting the importance of the new insights and the value of the research with which Katz, Tyack and the other radicals enriched the study of America's educational past. Their contribution should not be obscured by the sheer savagery of the attacks launched against them by writers like Bowers and Ravitch, representative of what might be termed a neo-conservative movement in the 1980s. Ravitch places much of the blame for the lowering of academic standards in America at the door of 'contemporary New Left historians of education' who view public schooling as 'a capitalist tool of indoctrination... slyly (or brutally) imposed on unwilling

masses by arrogant reformers'.(47) In place of assertion and ideological posturing, she calls for return to the basics of proper documentation and painstaking investigation into the processes by which people have been educated.

Button and Provenzo, in attempting a synthesis of the different approaches to the history of education, point to the irony that the new social history of the school advanced by the revisionists has the same air of inevitability as Cubberley's history did: 'Some new historians of education seem as certain of the evilness of schools as Cubberley was of their goodness'.(48)

The early revisionists like Bailyn changed the field of American educational history by extending its boundaries, and the later ones like Katz changed it by introducing political and social philosophy into the field. Button and Provenzo point to other changes, 'somewhat quieter, but perhaps even more important', that are occurring in the methodology. In a sense, revisionism in American educational history went through a normal process of academic review. Over a period of some fifteen years - roughly corresponding to the period in Britain when educational theory was riding high - the revisionist position was advanced, in its varied manifestations, criticised and fought out. As an issue in its own right revisionism now seems to have been largely laid to rest. Best's recent work provides an excellent survey of recent developments in American educational history.(49) The topics provide a clear indication of the agenda in the 1980s: inter alia, institutional history, oral history, history of the curriculum, cross cultural study, women's history, and the history of childhood and the family. This is reminiscent of the current agenda in Britain, and some echoes of it are to be found in South African English language universities, although here the influence of the radical revisionists is still strong and the liberal-radical debate has been an important theme in the recent historiography.

Despite the ushering in of a new era in the 1960s in both Britain

and the USA, and the great advances made in research since then, it is clear that the history of education in the teacher education curriculum in both countries has largely lost its former place of importance. Pre-service or initial courses have become strongly oriented towards teaching experience, while in some universities and schools of education it still has a significant place only at the level of advanced study.

In the context of concern about the quality of teacher education reflected at the beginning of this chapter, with training institutions facing severe financial cutbacks, and with new demands for accountability and relevance, the history of education, like some other components of the traditional teacher education curriculum, faces challenges to its existence. It is unlikely that it will again come to occupy the eminent place it once did in teacher education in Britain, America or South Africa.

The final chapter of this study will consider what role it might rightfully play in contemporary South African teacher education, in the light of the retrospective analysis presented in Chapters 2 through 5 and the investigation of its present position in South African university departments of education given in Chapter 6.

The Question of Theory

While much has been written about educational theory itself (50), relatively little has been written about a theory of history of education. While their theoretical assumptions may often not be explicitly stated, these assumptions are, of course, always implicit in the works of historians of education while most of them also seem to feel obliged to offer a sort of credo or manifesto of their beliefs, usually in their introductory chapters.(51)

Wardle has complained about the lack of 'any comprehensive explanatory system of theory in the history of education'(52), without himself succeeding in remedying this lack. It is possible,

of course, that many historians would be sceptical about or even repelled by the notion of an over-arching theoretical structure of explanation. Certainly those that have been attempted leave a somewhat bizarre impression. Campagnac's conception of a cosmos of ordered thought which can be reached through a study of educational history is described in Chapter 2, the effort by Butts to organise educational history around a concept of modernisation in Chapter 3, and F J Potgieter's imaginative re-arrangement of the educational past into epochs and triads in Chapter 5.

At the same time, however, no historian is free from a set of values which suffuses his work. A 'neutral' history is not possible. While objectivity is a desirable goal, historians should be aware of their own fallibilities and biases and the fact that they are themselves working within a particular historical context that must colour their approach. The interpretation of the past can never be static and the need for re-interpretation and revision must arise in each generation. While Venter is undoubtedly correct in saying that the 'historical-educational researcher' should constantly strive 'to eliminate personal feelings, preferences and dislikes, emotions and preconceptions' and resist the temptation 'to collect only those data which fit his hypothesis or frame of reference'(53), it would be naive to believe that this striving can ever be wholly successful. At the very least, intellectual integrity demands of the historian of education, as it does of any scholar, that he makes clear the premises and values on which his work is based. It is the unexamined assumptions in the work of the historico-educationists that causes one to approach them with caution. Those assumptions arise particularly from the ideology of Christian National Education, with its own particularistic set of values, of 'feelings, preferences and dislikes, emotions and preconceptions'.

On the other hand, historians of education in other contexts have applied theoretical insights to the enrichment of their work. As has been indicated, the 'liberal' revisionists drew on a humanistic worldview, while the 'radical' revisionists drew on the insights

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afforded by marxism. These included not only the Americans like Katz and Tyack but also British scholars like Brian Simon and David Reeder.

While a free-wheeling eclecticism is problematic, a strict adherence to any theoretical framework or ideological paradigm in the history of education leads to the danger of developing a rigid orthodoxy. Subsequent chapters contain examples of successive orthodoxies from the Great Educators and Acts and Facts school of history of education, through the Social Reconstructionists to the modern revisionists and the historico-pedagogics pursued in Afrikaans universities. A rigid orthodoxy is probably a sure means of ensuring that the subject becomes lifeless and sterile, lacking the possibility of serendipity. The point is made in Chapter 3 that part of the discipline of studying the past is an openness to being taken by surprise and the employment of what may be termed a literary imagination, which benefits historical enquiry as much as does scientific exactness. The literary imagination should have no preconceived boundaries imposed on it although it must, of course, be subject to the normal canons of scholarship, intellectual rigour and integrity. As Button and Provenzo say, the past has not been simple, and much of it cannot be known to us: 'a black and white representation would be too far from reality. Grays, tints, and colours, and light and shade, come nearer to reality'.(54)

In attempting an imaginative reconstruction of the past, at times it is necessary, as Katz says, to undertake 'a sensitive and even brash attempt to see connections.'(55) All this seems to suggest that the educational historian should approach his or her work with a proper sense of humility, with a recognition that the results may well have to be tentative, and open to the need for revision. This, of course, is a far cry from the brash certainties of those who see the history of education in stark terms, either as scientifically exact - as the early American educational historians did, following the German model, and as modern South African historico-pedagogicians and metagogicians do - or in terms of cosmic affirmation of some

cherished theory or principle.

There are alsc practical issues involved in this matter. As Borrowman points out, consensus in university departments of education is difficult to achieve and compromise has usually been necessary, since:

> the educational process is simply too involved, too susceptible to the kind of control that scientific experimentation demands, and aimed at too many different outcomes to permit its being evaluated in terms of any single theoretical principle.(56)

The implications for this in the teacher education curriculum are discussed in Chapter 3, where Borrowman's conclusion is given: it is desirable, given the divergent biases amongst those who teach in teacher education programmes, that theory should be tempered by both a sense of reality and a recognition that 'no monolithic system of thought can determine the activities of the kinds of faculty members and students involved in teacher education programmes'.(57) Borrowman's illuminating insights may help to explain the complaint of theorists like Wardle about the lack of comprehensive explanatory systems - and may also help to explain why education is so often regarded as academically suspect in universities!

The question of a theoretical justification for the study of the history of education inevitably gets caught up in issues of relevance and utility. Reference has already been made to Oscar Browning's claims for the subject - that it provided historical grounds for assessing current practices and that the Great Educators inspired the present generation - and to Cubberley's notion that it helps prospective teachers to see present problems in the light of their historical evolution and the

probable lines of their future development. As will be seen in Chapter 5, this is much the same point of departure adopted by the 'metagogicians' in certain South African universities in the 1980s. A further similarity between the metagogicians - who tend to view themselves as daringly innovative - and the British and American 'traditionalists' is provided by the formers' search for 'invariants' or laws in the historical past and the latters' anxiety to discern 'certain general principles' (F H Matthews, 1908) or 'some single ruling principle' (ET Compagnac, 1915).

Several criticisms can be levelled against such attempts to impute a functional benefit of this nature to the study of the history of education. It is, for example, possible that no timeless themes, concepts, invariants or general principles run through history and the very search for them may distort the historian's work. At the very least, account must be taken of the vast differences in contexts and meanings, which are often overlooked in the attempt to identify such themes or principles. Furthermore, the attempt to locate present educational practices and issues in the distant past probably gives rise to gross over-simplification and exaggerated emphases.

Certain obvious justifications can be advanced for the inclusion of a study of the history of education in teacher education courses. Chief amongst these is the way in which the educational past can illuminate contemporary issues: 'The teacher's efficiency depends upon his understanding of the class, the school, the education system.... It is history of education which can most readily give him an understanding of how and why it has come to be as it is'.(59) This has the potential benefit also of helping student teachers to view education as a process, not as static, and the education system as dynamic and subject to historical change, not as something given and inevitable. This has particular importance in the South African context.

A third justification arises from the notion of teaching as a

professional activity. If teachers are not mere technicians or craftsmen, their claim to be professionals must rest on their engagement in a complex activity involving decision-making both inside and outside the classroom and which requires co-operation and the resolution of conflicting interests. In this regard, the words of Kenneth Charlton are particularly apposite:

> More efficient co-operation and a resolution of conflict will be achieved only by a conscious and explicit effort to understand the attitudes, assumptions and beliefs of the other interested parties to the enterprise. The making explicit of these attitudes, assumptions and beliefs very soon reveals that none of us lives only in the present, that each of us carries with him some part of the past, which for good or ill shapes, and on occasion determines present decision-making and action. The dangers of carrying an ill-informed or misinformed knowledge of the past are great.... Remaining ignorant or misinformed about the past we allow our actions to be determined not only by our ignorance but also by those who claim either authority for the past or who claim that the past has no authority.(60)

This is not only an eloquent exposition of the theoretical justification for the inclusion of history of education in the education of teachers; it is also a telling defence of its ultimate relevance.

NOTES

(1) Department of Education and Science, Teacher Education and Training (Report of the James Committee), HMSO, London, 1972, p 20.

(2) National Commission on Education, Nation at Risk, Washington DC, 1983.

(3) Human Sciences Research Council, Provision of Education in the RSA, Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation into Education, Pretoria, 1981, p 68.

(4) R F Dearden, Theory and Practice in Education, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1984, p 3.

(5) Peter Gosden, 'Recent Developments in the Study of the History of Education in Teacher Education Courses' in History of Education Society, Trends in the Study and Teaching of the History of Education, HES Occasional Publication 7, 1983, p 14.

(6) Lawrence A Cremin, The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: an essay on the historiography of American education, Teachers College Press, New York, 1965, p vii.

(7) Bernard Bailyn, 'Education as a Discipline: some historical notes', in John Watson and James L Kuethe (eds), The Discipline of Education, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963, p 54.

(8) Ministry of Education, Education 1900 - 1950, Cmd 8244, HMSO, London, June 1951, p 79.

(9) Brian Simon, in 'The Study of Education as a University Subject in Britain' Studies in Higher Education, vol 8 no 1, 1983

(10) Merle L Borrowman, Teacher Education in America, Teachers College Press, New York, 1965, p 11.

(11) H C Dent, The Training of Teachers in England and Wales 1800 - 1975, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977, p 5.

(12) J Welton, What do we mean by education? Macmillan, London, 1915, p 238.

(13) Paul H Hirst, 'Educational Theory', in P H Hirst (ed), Educational Theory and the Foundation Disciplines, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1983, p 12.

(14) Harold Entwistle, 'The Relationship between Theory and Practice', in J W Tibble (ed), An Introduction to the Study of Education, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1971, p 97.

(15) Anthony Hartnett and Michael Naish (eds), Theory and the Practice of Education, Heinemann, London, 1978, vol 1, p ix.

(16) Lawrence Cremin, Foreword to Merle L Borrowman, Teacher Education in America, p vii.

(17) Newton Edwards and Herman G Richey, The School in the American Social Order, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1963, p 600.

(18) See Chapter 3, n. 28.

(19) See Chapter 3, n. 15.

(20) See, for example, the Simon article already referred to (n. 9 above); Helen Patrick, 'From Cross to CATE: the universities and teacher education over the past century', Oxford Review of Education, 12/3, 1986, pp 243-261. Derek Bok, 'The Challenge to Schools of Education', Harvard Magazine, May-June 1987, pp 47-80

(21) Bok, 'The Challenge to Schools of Education', p 49.

(22) Ibid. Dr David Reeder and Dr Harold Silver made a similar point, in respect of Britain, to the writer.

(23) H M Beatty, A Brief History of Education, Watts, London, 1922, p 2.

(24) William Boyd, The History of Western Education, A & C Black, London, Preface to the first edition, 1921.

(25) See Chapter 2, n. 47.

(26) Roy Lowe, 'History as Propaganda: the strange uses of the history of education', History of Education Society, Trends in the Study and Teaching of the History of Education, HES Occasional Publication 7, 1983, p 51.

(27) Brian Simon, 'The History of Education in the 1980s', British Journal of Educational Studies, XXX, 1 Feb 1982, p 86.

(28) Oscar Browning, An Introduction to the History of Educational Theories, Kegan Paul Trench & Co, London, 1882, Preface.

(29) Ellwood P Cubberley, Public Education in the United States, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1919, p viii.

(30) Quoted in Bailyn, Education in the forming of American Society, p 8.

(31) See Chapter 3, n. 121.

(32) I am indebted to Dr David Reeder for this point. Personal letter 30 September 1986.

(33) Charles Webster, 'Changing Perspectives in the History of Education', Oxford Review of Education, vol 2 no 3, 1976, p 203.

(34) Sol Cohen, 'The History of the History of Education, 1900-1976: the uses of the past', Harvard Educational Review, vol 46 no 3, August 1976, p 304.

(35) Bernard Bailyn, Education in the forming of American Society, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1960, p 8.

(36) Michael B Katz, 'Education and Social Development in the Nineteenth Century: New Directions for Enquiry', in Paul Nash (ed), History and Education: the Educational uses of the Past, Random House, New York, 1970, p 86.

(37) Gillian Sutherland, 'The Study of the History of Education', Education, vol liv no 180, Feb 1969, p 49; Webster, 'Changing Perspectives...', p 202.

(38) See Chapter 2, n. 118.

(39) Adolphe E Meyer, An Educational History of the American People, McGraw Hill, New York, 1957, p ix.

(40) Bo[illegible], 'The Challenge to Schools of Education', p 322.

(41) Cohen, 'The History of the History of Education', p 322.

(42) Bailyn, Education in the forming of American Society, p 21.

(43) Lawrence Cremin, American Eduction: the Colonial Experience, Harper and Row, New York, 1970, p 11.

(44) Francesco Cordasco, A Brief History of Education, Littlefield Adams & Co, Totowa, NJ, 1963 (revised ed 1976). The persistence of eclectic programmes in educational foundations is illustrated by the recent re-issue of Allen Ornstein and Daniel Levine's

Introduction to the Foundations of Education, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1988, with its cursory surveys of such topics as 'Origins of our Educational Heritage' and 'Pioneers in Education'.

(45) Clarence Karier, Shaping the American Educational State, Free Press, New York, 1975, p xvii.

(46) Cohen, 'The History of the History of Education', p 328.

(47) Diane Ravitch, The Schools we Deserve, Basic Books, New York, 1985, p 183.

(48) H Warren Button and Eugene F Provenzo, History of Education and Culture in America, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1983, p 344.

(49) John Hardin Best (ed), Historical Inquiry in Education, American Educational Research Association, Washington DC, 1983.

(50) See, for example, P H Hirst, 'Educational Theory' in J W Tibble (ed), The Study of Education, Routledge Kegan Paul, London, 1966, pp 29-58, and 'Educational Theory' in P H Hirst (ed), Educational Theory and the Foundation Disciplines, RKP, London, 1984; Harold Entwistle, 'The Relationship between Theory and Practice', in J W Tibble (ed), An Introduction to the Study of Education, RKP, London, 1971; D J O'Connor, 'The Nature of Educational Theory', Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society, vol 6 no 1, January 1972.

(51) Thus, taking three examples of broadly differing approaches: 'Educational history, I believe with the experts, is social history. It is not merely the history of the commoner. It is also, and significantly, the history of the great man, the odd man, the dreamer - even, indeed, the seer...' (Adolphe E Meyer, preface to An Educational History of the American People, p ix); 'We do not study the history of education merely for its possible value in avoiding mistakes....We study history to become aware of our presuppositions and commitments' (Lawrence Cremin, American Education: the Colonial Experience, p 16);
'At this point in history any reform worthy of the name must begin with a redistribution of power and resources...' (Michael B Katz, Education in American History, Praeger, New York, 1973, p 348). The present writer will no doubt provide a further example at the end of this chapter.

(52) David Wardle, English Popular Education 1780-1975, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p viii.

(53) I S J Venter, 'History of Education: demarcation of field of research', in Elsa G Kruger et al, Education Past, Present and Future, Euro Publications, Pretoria, 1986, p 9.

(54) Button and Provenzo, History of Education and Culture in America p 341.

(55) Katz, 'Education and Social Development...', p 112.

(56) Borrowman, Teacher Education..., p 40-41.

(57) Ibid, p 52

(58) Venter's account of the history of education seems to be an inflated way of saying mush the same thing: '... by way of historical-pedagogic investigation and reflection that which is timeless and unchanging in educational thought should be derived from... the past...with a view to the enrichment, explanation and critical review of the existing education situation'. (Venter, 'History of Education: demarcation of field of research', p 4).

(59) Gosden, 'Recent Developments...', p 17.

(60) Kenneth Charlton, 'The Benefit of the Rear-View Mirror: History of Education in the Professional Education of Teachers', in History of Education Society, Trends in the Study and Teaching of the History of Education, HES Occasional Publication 7, 1983, p 10.

CHAPTER 2

Teacher Education and the History of Education: Britain

Beginnings of formal teacher training in Britain

The systematic training of teachers in Britain began early in the nineteenth century with the establishment, in 1805, of Joseph Lancaster's 'training college', based on his monitorial system of training, in Southwark, south London.(1) In 1808 the Rev Dr Andrew Bell began training teachers according to his 'Madras' method, but Bell's view was that:

> It is by attending the school, seeing what is going on there, and taking a share in the office of tuition, that teachers are to be formed, and not by lectures and formal instruction.(2)

As Dent remarks, the 'barren dispute' about the relative value of theory and practice in the training of teachers thus goes back to the very beginnings of formal teacher training.

In 1814 the British and Foreign School Society (which supported Lancaster, as against the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, which supported Bell) adopted a curriculum that was to provide the basis of training college work for generations:

> ...firstly, a knowledge of English grammar sufficient to qualify them to speak and write their own language with correctness and propriety; secondly, the improvement of their handwriting and knowledge of arithmetic; third, geography and history, and, in addition, when time and other circumstances will permit...other useful branches of knowledge.(3)

Students enrolled in the approximately twenty training colleges that had been established by 1847 had themselves rarely received more than an elementary education, and were required merely 'to read

fluently and without unpleasant tones, write a fair hand, spell correctly, be well acquainted with the first four rules of arithmetic and have some general acquaintance with history and geography'.(4) Over a period of some thirty years there had thus been no meaningful broadening or deepening of the intellectual demands placed on trainee teachers. Inevitably, 'academic study was reduced to information, memorisation and regurgitation'.(5) The general tone of the early training colleges, most of which, throughout the century, remained linked to the churches, particularly the Church of England and the Methodist Church, is conveyed in the section on 'Domestic Routine' of the rules of one such college:

> The students shall rise at six o'clock, assemble in their day-rooms at half-past six, and in the dining room for breakfast and Family Worship, at eight. They shall dine at one o'clock, have tea at five, supper at a quarter to nine and meet for Evening Worship at nine. All shall retire to their dormitories at or before ten, and all lights shall be put out at twenty minutes past ten.(6)

State intervention in teacher training dates from 1835, when Parliament voted £10 000 to voluntary societies (i.e. the churches) for the erection of 'normal' or 'model' schools.(7) In the 1850s there were moves towards standardisation of the length of courses (which ranged from six months to three years) and of the curriculum. After the passing of the Elementary Education Act of 1870 with the resultant great increase in demand for trained teachers, many new colleges were established and the move towards standardisation was hastened. Many uncertificated teachers were, however, employed. One of the main problems which exercised the colleges was how to adjust the competing claims of the personal education and the professional preparation of their students. Two contrasting approaches were adopted: i) short, intensive training, perhaps only three months in duration, on the monitorial system; and ii) two- or three-year courses, very similar in content to what was offered in the 'other schools of the upper and middle classes'(8) (presumably heavily devoted to a study of the classics). In both forms of training, pedagogical study was an important focus - in the short

courses the central focus - and this was taught by the all-important Master of Method.

Pupil teacher training

Pupil teachership was to continue into the twentieth century as an important means of training. But after 1870 pupil teachers were required 'to attend central classes for instruction in place of or in addition to receiving instruction from teachers'.(9) This continued throughout the rest of the century, despite the 1880 Royal Commission on Education concluding that 'there is no other available, or, as we prefer to say, equally trustworthy source as that of pupil teachers from which an adequate supply of teachers is likely to be forthcoming'.(10) The commissioners held the view that teaching, like other trades, was best learned on the job. The training of a pupil teacher usually occupied three years after completion of the elementary school course at about 14. Before 1870 pupil teachers might or might not attend a centre established by a School Board, or the central classes run by school teachers.(11) The Education Act of 1902 established that initial training should be a function of higher education, with local education authorities being enabled to make secondary schools available for pupil teacher training.(12) This Act laid down a minimum age of 16 for pupil teachers and stipulated that they had to be released from their teaching duties for at least half the time in order to attend central classes.(13) The curriculum followed in these classes was laid down in the regulations of the Board of Education. In 1903 the curriculum had to include 'reading and recitation, drawing, natural science, music, physical exercises, voice production, and, in the case of girls, needle work'.(14) The emphasis was clearly still on practical classroom skills with little attention, if any, to further intellectual preparation. In 1905 the curriculum was widened somewhat to include English language, literature and composition, history and geography, with encouragement for a second language to be offered 'where possible'.(15) The syllabus laid down for history was merely an outline of English history from the Roman invasion to

1603, with a more detailed study of the period from 1487 to 1558.(16) By 1908 there was stronger pressure for a second language: the curriculum was to include, 'unless special dispensation has been obtained from the Board, at least one language other than English'.(17) In that year also there was some broadening of the history syllabus: 'outlines of British History from earliest times to 1865, including the main landmarks of European History', the latter, however, 'only as they directly affect British History'.(18)

It is clear that, despite such minor modifications, the curriculum offered to pupil teachers was always an extremely circumscribed one, and even a subject like history with its potential for increasing the prospective teacher's understanding of the wider world was seen in very parochial terms. (This was, of course, really a reflection of what went on in the ordinary classroom at the time). There was nothing in the pupil teacher's curriculum that might remotely be regarded as 'theory of education', and no attention to history of education as such.

By this time, however, pupil teachership was in decline and certainly could no longer be regarded, as it had been by the 1880 Royal Commission, as the major source of trained teachers. Training colleges and universities had become more important sources of supply, and both kinds of institutions inevitably made rather greater intellectual demands on their students.

Training Colleges

Students in training colleges, at least some of whom would go on to undertake degree studies, faced much loftier aims than those stipulated for pupil teachers. For example, the Board of Education in its 1904 Regulations for the Training of Teachers in Training Colleges, declared, under the heading 'Theoretical Instruction in Teaching', that 'It is important in the first place that the student should be brought to understand what Education in the fullest sense

implies'.(19) This understanding was to be achieved by means of observational visits to schools, lessons in psychology, and a study of

> the lives of the great educators with the view of discovering the educational ideals by which they were inspired, of weighing the value of those principles and methods on which they have relied for success as teachers, and of tracing the connections between their principles and their methods.(20)

This is clear enunciation of the major theory underlying a study of the history of education at that time. The 'great educators' selected for study varied according to the particular courses that students were following, but might include Locke, Matthew Arnold, Froebel and Pestalozzi (the writer recalls studying these and others in his own training college curriculum in South Africa in the 1950s). It is important, for the sake of perspective, to bear in mind that the 'theoretical' studies occupied a relatively minor place in relation to the elementary school subjects themselves and the methods of teaching these. The Master of Method was undoubtedly seen as more important than any lecturers in the 'theoretical' subjects, who were themselves likely to have been recruited from the teaching ranks and unlikely to have been specialists in the subjects they offered at the training colleges.(21)

By 1913 the ordinary course of study for the bulk of training college students - those undergoing a two-year training - had been divided into two clear fields, the 'General' and the 'Professional'. Under the former came the study of English, history, geography, mathematics and elementary science. Under 'Professional' were found the Principles and Practice of Teaching, hygiene and physical training, theory of music and singing, reading and recitation, drawing and, for women, needlework.(22) With such an extensive range of subjects, their treatment must have necessarily been shallow. If place could be found in this concentrated two-year course for the history of education under the Principles and Practice of Education, 'it could only be a boiled-down version which was usually imparted by non-historians'.(23) C lledge gives the subjects mentioned in the timetable at Battersea Training College

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around the turn of the century as: Scripture, liturgy, reading, penmanship, school management, English, geography, history, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, political economy, music, drawing, Latin, French, electricity, chemistry and physiography.(24)

The competing claims of various subjects for inclusion in teacher training courses has been one of the major problems of curriculum planning, and has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. (To anticipate a later section of this study, the problem is most acute in initial brief courses - the PGCE in Britain or the HDipEd (postgraduate) in South Africa. Something has to give way, and in general it is the 'theoretical' components that do so in the face of pressure for 'practical' and 'useful' subjects. This issue will be considered in some detail later).

Day training colleges, particularly those attached to universities, became important as an avenue to degree studies. These 'poor men's universities' offered a three-year course which combined preparation for the university examinations with the normal training college curriculum based on the elementary school subjects. By 1913 this curriculum also included Principles of Teaching, with much emphasis on school management and classroom organisation; some psychology ('the successive stages of physical and mental growth'); and an outline of the history of elementary education in England and Wales from 1800.(25) With the notable exception of the Day Training Department at University College, London, which became the London Institute of Education, the day colleges established in universities were to develop into the present day university departments of education.(26)

Serious doubts arose about the value of this three-year course of combined degree study and professional training. Many of those who attempted it failed the university examinations even though the professional work came 'a bad second to the academic study'.(27) The solution was the introduction of a four-year course, provision for which was made in the Regulations for the Training of Teachers

in 1918. Three years would be spent in ordinary undergraduate study, with the fourth year being devoted to professional training. This was a major development, establishing the subsequent pattern for secondary teacher training, the post-graduate diploma year.(28)

The training college curriculum was of course to change in correspondence with changes 'in the attitude of the community and schools to educational practice'.(29) By 1950, for example, the ideal was expressed as follows:

> The emphasis is therefore on the teacher as an educated person with interests, ideals and ideas, who has had the chance of reaching at least in one field of study the highest standard of which he is capable, and of acquiring in others some experience of the ways in which children learn and grow.(30)

This is clearly a very long way from the earlier view that teacher training, whether through the system of pupil teachership or in the training colleges, was aimed primarily at the production of a skilled classroom practitioner.

The Universities

University involvement in teacher education proper dates from the 1890s in England (and from 1876 in Scotland), although certain universities, beginning with Manchester in 1852, had been providing evening classes for working elementary teachers.(31) The last three decades of the nineteenth century were formative for British education in the most fundamental sense. In 1870 the Liberal government had committed itself and its successors to the provision of a national system of elementary schools. Implementation of this commitment was necessarily a long and complex process, and it was only from the mid-1890s that the provision of secondary education and the attendant problems came to the fore in public debate. It was in this context that the universities became involved in the training of teachers. One consequence of this development was the introduction of education as a specific field of university study.(32) It was thus, as Brian Simon says, 'a product of the rise of mass systems of education'(33), and the initial involvement in

Author Randall P R
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