

BOOK REVIEWS

Philip Altbach (1982). *Higher Education in the Third World: Themes and Variations*. Published by Maruzen Asia for Regional Institute of Higher Education and Development (RIHED), Singapore. 228 pp. \$11.00 (US) paperback.

Philip G. Altbach is one of those few American scholars who in the course of their professional career have looked beyond the borders of their own country. Going by the book in hand he gives evidence of having first-hand knowledge about India, Singapore, Malaysia, Kuwait, Japan and quite a few other countries both developed and developing. It is important to call attention to this aspect of Altbach's work while reviewing this book.

When one comes to think of it, it is astonishing that so far so little attention has been given to higher education in the Third World. The Third World is not one unified concept. It includes countries in three continents - Asia, Africa and Latin America. In terms of numbers, their number would come to about one hundred. Whatever be the other variations, as noted by the author, they share the following three characteristics:

1. The Third World academic systems serve a small proportion of the relevant age group. Whereas in countries like the United States more than one-third have access to higher education, in these countries the percentage of the relevant age group which goes to college is hardly one per cent to two per cent.
2. Largely because of historical reasons, each one of these countries is linked with one of the major academic systems in the developed world. The three countries which exercise the largest measure of influence in this regard are Britain, the United States and France. Consequently, the advanced countries being the intellectual "centre" and the other hundred countries being on the "periphery" is a concept which is very much applicable to their respective situations.
3. In most of these Third World countries, except perhaps Latin America, the key medium in higher education is by and large a European language which was popular in that particular country before the period of decolonisation.

These three characteristics are so marked that they set these hundred odd countries apart from all others. There are countries in Europe for instance which are not substantial in size and yet at the same time they cannot be described as peripheral to the "centre". Belgium is one example. Another example can be Czechoslovakia.

The key concept in this entire discussion is the concept of the Centre and the Periphery. A separate chapter is devoted to this theme wherein it is brought out clearly that knowledge is produced mostly in these advanced countries and then exported to the Third World through books and journals. Quite logically, one of the sub-themes of the book is the Distribution of Knowledge; therein the whole gamut of issues dealing with scholarly publishing in the Third World as well as the channels of communication are considered in depth. This is the strongest part of the book and deserves to be read with care.

What is stated is not all that new or earth-shaking but the very fact that it is stated in some detail and forms the core of the argument by a scholar who is located in one of the American universities is significant by itself. Most scholars in the developed world are so self-centred that as far as they are concerned the rest of the world exists mainly for their sake. In their world view the centre of the stage is occupied by their country or by a few other developed countries. Altbach's book provides a refreshing contrast to this approach and is to be welcomed from that point of view also.

An important question to ask here is why no one in the Third World has yet taken the initiative to even convene a seminar to discuss these problems. The answer, sad to say, is the very issue about which the book is written. In each of the Third World countries, the university is one of the peripheral activities and seldom at the centre of things. Altbach has dwelt on it with great insight and eloquence but there is one dimension missing from his analysis.

How is it that despite more than a century in countries like India the university still continues to be on the periphery? One important reason for it is the fact that in developed countries literacy has been a universal phenomenon for almost a century. In most of these countries everyone goes to school till the age of 15–16. It is only after that that one reaches the stage of higher education. Not only that, in addition to the school system which covers the entire population, there is the whole infrastructure of bookshops, public libraries, magazines, journals, the daily press and now of late the ever present media. Each one of them is an educative force and each one of them moulds the thinking of children as they get shaped into citizens. For some years now the media has been blamed for playing not exactly a constructive role. That controversy apart, the fact remains that there is hardly any gap between the town and the country and whatever be the differences of class the educational system covers each and every child. It might have been helpful if the author had also probed this aspect of the problem in some depth.

The fact however remains that Altbach has uncovered a new set of problems which require intensive and detailed discussion. He also has a separate section dealing with Teachers and Students and the crucial role of the professoriate. In particular, he dwells upon the attitude of servitude which most professors in the Third World display. In their professional outlook as well as conduct they underline the point that they belong to a university system which is on the "periphery" and not at the "centre" of things. This is what calls for some soul-searching on the part of those who not only are the victims of the system but also choose to perpetuate the psychology of being victims.

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Ellner, Carolyn L. and Barnes, Carol P. (1983). *Studies of College Teaching*. Lexington, MA: Lexington.

With the accelerating demise of campus faculty development programs across the country (Gustafson and Bratton, 1983), faculty will have to learn about teaching in the traditional way, namely, through the written word. This book will aid them some, but it is not a "how to" book (as is, say, McKeachie's *Teaching Tips*). Rather, the chapter

authors have presented illustrations of how some forms of research on college teaching can be conducted. The principal audience, then, are researchers in the field of college teaching. The authors conclude their introduction by asserting that “the following chapters are designed to provide the reader with experimental results, theoretical interpretations, and new perspectives for looking at college teaching (p. 9)”.

The first chapter presents a synoptic history of teaching over time. (Its brevity leads to oversimplifications and to over generalizations.) The next two introductory chapters review the literature and define the three methodologies the next five chapters illustrate. They are labeled descriptive, process-outcome, and qualitative. The concluding chapter collects the summary findings of the five reported inquiries and presents an extensive agenda for future research.

The five reported studies (two descriptive, two process-outcome studies, and one qualitative) are an odd collection. Only one (Foster's) appears to have been published in a journal yet each is written and presented basically in that mode. Two or more, and maybe all, were dissertations at Claremont in the middle '70s and presumably from data collected earlier in that decade (again except for Foster). What has been going on to reduce their research agenda over the past half-dozen years is not known. Why most of the studies have not followed the normal route of first a peer review and a scholarly journal remains a mystery. For the most part, the studies seem to have been well designed, the data properly analyzed, etc.

While the methodological techniques the authors used are to be credited, questions can be raised about the samples. Fischer and Grant (chapter 4) and Barnes (chapter 5) have the same data base, tapes of 155 sessions of 40 classes at 2 public and 2 private undergraduate institutions (some of which were “large” and some “small”) for a variety of subject areas and at different levels (introductory vs. advanced). These are the descriptive studies. How the colleges were chosen is not known, nor whether there are any grounds for arguing for their representativeness. Why institutional size should be expected to affect teaching behavior is not clear when class size data are in hand.

The two process-outcome studies (meaning in part that there is a pre-post data collection) have similar deficiencies with regard to the studied populations. Smith (chapter 6) has data on 12 faculty in one liberal arts college. Foster (chapter 7) has 16 small clinical groups of third year medical students in one university. Grant (chapter 8) typifies the qualitative approach. Her sample is 5 hours of visitation to one class in one community college.

Even if randomly selected (which does not seem to be the case for most study sites look as if they were in the neighborhood), generalizations are not defensible. But they are made, or at least implied. The authors find an outcome contrary to what they would like to be the case as “discouraging” or “bleak” as if it were proved to be generally true.

In all, then, scoring the book on its own aims, it comes up a bit short. The experimental results are too limited, the theory is too thin, and the perspectives for looking at college teaching not that new. Despite these and related limitations, the authors have clearly demonstrated the need for research in the classroom. They note that the methodologies that have been used in studying teaching in K-12 (e.g., by Flanders) have yet to be utilized at the post-secondary level. If they are to become more extensive, one hopes that the findings will have a more significant impact in colleges and universities than they have had in our elementary and secondary schools.

References

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Rolf Holtkamp, Ulrich Teichler (eds.) (1983). *Berufstätigkeit von Hochschulabsolventen: Forschungsergebnisse und Folgerungen für das Studium*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag. 446 pp. DM 68.00 (paper).

This book tackles an important subject: the extent to which the professional activities of graduates should influence university curricula. This subject has frequently created more heat than light and research on it is patchy. The book uses a meta-research approach by analyzing some 200 research papers in terms of a well-structured investigative scheme. The specialisms covered are chemistry, engineering, social work, psychology, politics and sociology, linguistics and literature, economics, dentistry. Not surprisingly, the conclusions are strongly dependent on the specialism investigated. Thus chemists do not seem to think that there is any problem, although those outside the chemistry fraternity consider that this very attitude is storing up problems for the future. Engineers would like courses to include more on non-technical subjects and less on higher mathematics. Psychologists would prefer professional training to be only post-graduate. Economists want there to be professional training, but not too specialized. Everyone wants more training for flexibility. All this sounds very familiar to English ears, but it is rare for it to be so well documented, analyzed and argued. The result is a significant increase in light and a corresponding decrease in heat. The book is therefore important both for what it presents and for the methodology which made this possible.

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Robert E. Marshak (1982). *Academic Renewal in the 1970s: Memoirs of a City College President*. Washington D.C.: University Press of America. 280 pp.

Why should Marshak ever have taken on so daunting an assignment as was the leadership of the City College of New York at the start of the seventies, a downtown, impoverished, down-at-heel institution, suffering the aftermath of its partial occupation in 1969 by black and Puerto Rican students? His colleagues were astonished at his migration from his science chair at the prestigious University of Rochester to the Presidency of City College. But the challenge called loudly to him: the mission of the College to serve the working class, its distinguished history, its proven ability to survive through thick and thin, were all factors. Whether he would still have accepted the job had he known in advance how testing its rigours would prove to be and how handicapping the virtual bankruptcy of New York City's own finances were to become, who knows?

This account of his nine years as President (1970–79) is defensive in tone: it deals *seriatim*, but illuminatingly, with the major issues as he saw them and one can forgive its occasional, understandable, egotism.

One of Marshak's major efforts was to find ways of integrating teaching, research and public service in the environment in which the College was situated, surrounded by urban decay and racial tensions. In this his willingness to be academically venturesome, his outward looking sensitivity to community concerns, his realisation of the significance of intellectual standards were all important. And if he did not succeed to the extent of his initial hopes that was not entirely unprophesiable.

Chapter III of this memoir has the title "Open Access, Open Admissions and Open Warfare". Open access did not mean no selectivity – but ability to offer admission to numbers of men and women of high motivation and potentiality who came from families near the poverty level. This meant a sharp rise in the proportion of black and Puerto Rican students many of whom required remedial courses. Not surprisingly City College soon gained a public image – undeserved though it was – of a kind which discouraged applications from able white students for entry.

One gets the impression that the speed which Marshak hoped for in the development of City as an Open Admissions College was innocently fast. But he had many convinced and dedicated supporters on the faculty. Their fertility in ideas and their success in maintaining something like the old standards for graduation were both remarkable. There were however financial consequences; for a policy of open admissions led to dire budgetary battles (not unmixed with a political content) with the authorities of New York State, the imposition of admission charges and a decline in student enrolment.

In curriculum Marshak's intent was to enlarge the scope of the liberal arts by exploring their potential for interconnection with pre-professional courses so as to make the programme more relevant to contemporary life and problems. A major triumph was the creation – helped by a munificent gift of \$2.5 million – of a Center of Performing Arts. Much effort was devoted to planning career programmes concerned with public policy issues that could be closely integrated with the humanities – e.g., programmes in "Communications, Mass Media and Public Policy"; "Energy, Ecology and Environment"; "Health, Medicine and Society"; "Justice, Law and Society". In seeking to foster Ethnic Studies Marshak was keen that there should be a department of "Ethnic Programmes" but in the event separate departments of Asian, Black, Jewish and Puerto Rican Studies were forced upon him.

The inauguration of a two year biomedical programme – with an emphasis on primary care medicine – took a lot of perseverance, not the least of the problems being the reluctance of some orthodox medical schools to offer entry to some of the products of this new City course into the third year of undergraduate study – but the most intractable difficulty was the virtual impossibility of selecting students for the new programme in a way which would not meet the accusation of racial prejudice. The charge led eventually to a "biomedical trial" of the College in a State Federal Court.

Some of the troubles with which Marshak had to cope during his term of office stemmed from differing views of the pace with which changes of attitude as well as of performance could be accomplished. How rapidly can new policies be made effective regarding the outreach of any college into the community surrounding it? (The tradition

in British Universities by which an Extra Mural Department is regarded as “on the fringe” dies hard.)

Many universities might learn something from the ingenuity of the continued search for outside funding conducted by CUNY as an answer to the deprivation it suffered in the middle and later seventies from not being well enough financed from public and tax-levied sources. What they would find a help in the process would be leadership as humane, undaunted and unshockable as Dr. Marshak’s.

Roy Niblett
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Clive H. Church (ed.) (1983). *Practice and Perspective in Validation*. Guildford: SRHE. Paper 191 pp. £9.75 (£6.50 to SRHE Members).

This collection of ten papers produced under the aegis of the Society for Research into Higher Education provides a particularly helpful framework of reference for both the validators and the validated to evaluate their respective roles by reflecting on the systems and processes of validation which currently operate within the British system of higher education.

Drawing on contributions both descriptive and philosophical this book goes much of the way towards dispelling the myth and mystique which surround validation. It provides, *inter alia* an informed and informative appraisal of the contrasting styles adopted by CNA and the universities in the validation of degree courses and addresses itself to the criticisms which have been levelled at the two systems; attention is also given to the validating activities of the professional institutions and to mechanisms of internal validation.

The book does not claim to be a *vade mecum* for those involved in validation, and some areas such as administration and fiscal mechanisms have, of necessity, been treated only in passing. As the editor pointed out there is a need for more investigative work to be undertaken; the timely appearance of this collection of papers surely provides the necessary impetus.

J. H. E. W.

Eric Hewton (1982). *Re-Thinking Educational Change: A Case for Diplomacy*. S.R.H.E. Monograph 46, the University Guildford, Surrey: The Society for Research into Higher Education. 113 pp. (paper).

This is an entertaining, well written book which explores the problems of educational advisers, curriculum development specialists and staff development officers in stimulating changes and improvements in the teaching and learning situation. What distinguishes the book is its clear sighted, and intelligent appreciation of the difficulties and its lucid analysis of the forces which can inhibit the role of what Hewton calls the “outsiders” in the teaching process. Hewton is well read and has a gift for digesting and clarifying other people’s work which has a bearing on his own ideas. The book’s most

valuable insight, however, is its recognition of the difference in disciplinary outlook across an institution and of the need for the “outsider” to tailor his approach to the subject orientation of those he is advising. On the whole the book is stronger on analysis than on prescription and the reader might welcome a fuller description of the case studies of projects initiated at Sussex and a more critical examination of their progress. Hewton subtitles his book *A Case for Diplomacy* and his account of the “outsider” diplomatically assisting groups towards agreeing improvements in teaching and learning situations illustrates graphically the problem of staff development and educational technology units established as a kind of insurance policy by relatively unthinking institutions and left to operate almost in a vacuum without secure support from a Vice-Chancellor or the Senate. By implication the book underestimates the importance of financial incentives, leadership from the top and a little “real politic”. After all diplomats represent governments, are directed by foreign secretaries and are sometimes reinforced by visits by their heads of states. One suspects that this happens all too rarely in Hewton’s world. This is a very enjoyable book, however, (how often can we say that?) and it must be hoped that Mr. Hewton will go on to write more extensively about educational change from a broader perspective than the interests of the “outsiders” he categorises.

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Francis C. Pray (ed.) (1981). *Handbook for Educational Fund Raising*. San Francisco, Washington, London: Jossey-Bass Publishers. xxxii + 442 pp. £22.25.

This is not a good book but it is a useful one. It has been compiled on behalf of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (C.A.S.E.) to describe the successful principles and practices of fund raising for universities and colleges and it contains 70 or so short contributions marshalled under 11 general headings from development officers and vice-presidents for development at a spectrum of universities and colleges. These contributions often duplicate one another or are unnecessarily prolix and some do not add very much to the main text but nevertheless the message they put across is of great practical importance to U.S. higher education which is infinitely more experienced and professional in these matters than is the case in Britain.

One of its virtues is the fact that it distils a great deal of experience which British universities would do well to draw upon. Our customary image of U.S. universities and colleges is of massive alumni giving, and while the evidence presented here does not contradict this, it is nevertheless worth knowing that only 15% of alumni solicited actually make contributions, that those who fail to graduate give on average more than graduates, and that non-alumni give more than alumni. In major fund raising campaigns you must aim to get one third of your target from no more than 10 or so donors, and the next third from the next hundred. The top 1% of the list will make or break the campaign. The authors cite as evidence a Harvard campaign which raised \$83m. in the 1950s of which the top 15 donors provided 36%, the top 130 69%, and 87% of the gifts contributed only 4.6% of the total.

The editor makes the point, which is repeated by some of his contributors, that

successful campaigns have to be based on sound institutions, with effective management, good academic programmes and an attractive case. One of the contributors adds that the case ought to be bigger than the institution: in other words, you are seeking support so that your institution can make an educational contribution to some wider societal need. This is obviously not only good sense but also reinforces the point that effective fund raising should be not solely for institutional aggrandisement but for the wider public good.

Occasionally the contributors show another and less attractive side of the business. One, for example, urges institutions to raise their tuition fees as this will ensure a better heeled group of students. Another chastises universities for not producing better fund raising objectives which he says is "the consequence of the extraordinary complexity of the decision making process in academic institutions, which so disproportionately favours participation over authority and therefore so conspicuously features discussion over decisiveness". But while this shows that institutions should themselves be watchful over how they choose to be represented in these exercises, it does not negate the central theme of the book that there remains, at least in the U.S., a considerable public idealism for the aims of higher education which when properly tapped can be channelled into providing support for institutions which can enable them to make larger contributions to society's needs.

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Jacob de Smit (1982). *Planning Rituals: The Development of a Planning Process for the Dutch University System: An Inquiry into Interorganisational Meta-Planning Practices*. Delft: Delft University Press. xii + 127 pp. f 24,95 (paper).

This book describes the efforts of the Dutch Ministry of Education and Sciences and the Dutch universities to set up an effective planning system during the 1970s. The author was given a part-time appointment as adviser in the Ministry between 1976 and 1979 and therefore saw the latter part of the process at first hand. The story he has to tell is dismal in the extreme, the only happy note being (though I am not sure that he sees it in this light) that the planning process has had almost no practical effect on the universities at all.

Briefly described, the Ministry urged by the newly founded O.E.C.D. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (C.E.R.I.) commissioned the management consultants, McKinsey, to prepare recommendations for a new planning system for Dutch post-secondary education and thereafter a new organisational structure for the Ministry itself. Almost simultaneously Parliament agreed new legislation which widely extended "academic democracy" in Dutch universities the implementation of which in terms of electing new bodies to run the universities extended over seven years from 1972 to 1979. One of the results of the new governance provisions is that it takes about two years for any important issue to be decided in a Dutch university.

In 1973 while the McKinsey proposals were in the process of implementation the Government fell, and the new Government, which took eight months to form, were less

than enthusiastic about the McKinsey approach and when the universities refused to provide the necessary information for the planning process to take place, abandoned it and cobbled together a new one, which, however, gradually fell apart. The bureaucratic jockeying of a group of joint Ministry/ university committees with the unlikely acronyms of A.G.P., P.O.O., A.T.O.O.M. and C.O.M. reduced the timetable of formal university consultation to days and weeks with the consequence that the new university democratic structures were denied the function that they had been set up for and professional university planners effectively took all the basic decisions that needed to be taken. The result was that the university system found itself agreeing to an increase of 30% in student based work load for the same recurrent grant, and even believed that the planners may have achieved a good deal.

“Planning Rituals” is a dispiriting book to read because one is conscious of the amount of time wasted by able people pursuing the chimera of an all embracing national planning process for universities. Dr. de Smit, while deeply and effectively critical about what has happened would clearly like to see a comprehensive planning system in place and part of the book is devoted to his theories about meta-planning, the planning of planning, to British eyes would seem to be unlikely to contribute to solving the problems to be found in Holland. One of the difficulties of reading the book is to disentangle Dr. de Smit’s concern with theory from the undoubtedly interesting, if Kafkaesque, story he has to tell. A second difficulty is that his publishers have let him down by not providing some editorial assistance so that the style at times obscures the meaning. Nevertheless this is a useful book which must at least remind British readers that there are some benefits in having what Professor Ferns calls “a useless quango” (Ferns, 1982), namely the U.G.C., coordinating university affairs rather than intelligent and well intentioned civil servants.

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