

## IDEAL AND PRACTICE IN TEACHER TRAINING

I think that all of us who are engaged in teacher training will experience a discrepancy between what is the usual practice and what an ideal training would look like. I asked a number of members to present their opinion on ideal and practice in teacher training. The response was not overwhelming since some members did not answer at all. Anyhow, I received two valuable contributions which I am publishing in this issue. Every member may compare their statements to his or her own experiences. We must be grateful to Prof. Capek and Mr. Hogendoorn for giving us this opportunity.

1. Vratislav Capek, Charles University, Prague, CCSR. "An Ideal Training Program for History Teachers." -- In Czechoslovakia, history teachers for primary and secondary schools are trained at universities and pedagogical faculties. Controlled by a unified programme, this type of training is open to secondary school leavers with matriculation (18 years of age). History can be studied either in combination with Czech or Slovak Language and Literature, or with Russian Language and Literature. The teacher training programme permits a 30 % variation from the stipulated standard depending on the possibilities of the university. This in many respects is an unsatisfactory situation. The different standards and models of the universities and the pedagogical faculties inspire efforts to remodel the hitherto implemented training programme for history teachers for primary and secondary schools. The need for such repatterning is also recognized at the grassroot practical level of the teaching profession. It is clear that the unified professional programme for students of different age groups is far from adequate. The choice of one of the two possible orientations of teacher training, viz. the 'teacher' stream, and the 'research worker' stream, should be made available to the student after the two-year introductory course (lower grade of university study). By the same token, the range of possible options should be made broader, more varied, and more liberal, so as to meet the students' natural interest and genuine preferences.

The five-year course of study provides the groundwork of knowledge for historical and professional education. The professional component comprises philosophical-political disciplines (Marxism-Leninism), pedagogical-psychological disciplines, didactic disciplines, accounting for one third of the instruction time within the total span of the syllabus (i.e. ca. 10 hours weekly). The new conception calls for an enhancement of the professional aspects of the training and education of future history teachers, for a type of strategy that would respect the special requirements of the history teacher in the professional disciplines. The entire

course of study must acquire a further degree of cohesion matched by the integration of individual disciplines. At present, each of them represents an autonomous field of study in the programme. The course still is fragmented into a number of mutually isolated disciplines. What such isolated disciplines need is in the first place a more consistent focus on professional requirements and on practice, for practice - let us admit it - is ultimately always integrated. Branch-specific or state-wide guidelines have been elaborated to bring us closer to a productive solution. One of the possibilities that might be explored to this end is to differentiate the course of study professionally in the second phase of the course.

Professional training comprises several forms of practical training - introductory observation practice (2 weeks), the 'warden/instructor's' practice (1 week), (the teacher's qualification is also valid for the exercise of the 'warden/instructor' profession), concurrent professional-historical practice (1 month for both fields of study), and systematic practice (2 months for both fields of study). Professional-historical practice comprises the student's 20 tentative classroom 'on-the-job' performances. The results are analyzed and evaluated by the professional teacher and the university teacher (including professional historians). The written report evaluating the trainee-teacher's practical competence is part of the general evaluation of his progress in study. This practice gives rise to a mounting wave of criticism as it is unconscionably overburdens the process of professional training and, in the final analysis, cannot by itself produce an experienced competent teacher.

One of the possible solutions here would be to postpone the pedagogical part of the state examination to the period following the first year of in-field, school-based professional practice. Criticism is also directed against the postulated need for induction training and warden/instructor training. This criticism inspired the proposal to divide the teaching qualifications into 'teacher' and 'warden/instructor'. The different experiments currently in progress in the training of history teachers restrict school-based practice, make broader use of recording-assisted classroom instruction, video programmes, etc. in professional seminars. The critical comments largely concern the excessive scope and scale of pedagogical-psychological training, in particular the excessive number of lectures contrasting with the inadequate number of seminars. The counterproductivity of pedagogical-psychological subjects (this does not apply to the didactics of history) is the object of the students' severe criticism.

In the professional part of the syllabus covering lectures and seminars theory tends to prevail over practice. In history didactics we witness the integration of theory and practice, of the pedagogical-psychological, and of the historical

components of instruction. This particular discipline displays an integrative character and receives, within the span of four terms, a total of eight hours, out of which seven hours are seminars. In the newly accepted experiments, the function of didactics of history meets with recognition and is free of any time-constraints. But this discipline can hardly accomplish the stipulated roles (professionalization, dual integration). Scientific programmes are propounded to define the relationship between didactics of history and education and training in history. Opinion is likewise divided on whether the student should acquire the basic capacity for scientific research in the sphere of history didactics (and, in my view, he should) or merely stress its practical character and retain only scientific training in history to which the syllabus assigns priority status.

As regards didactics of history, the partial exam is stipulated within a four-term interval (5th - 8th) and presupposes the submission of an end-of-term seminar-based thesis dealing with a didactic problem. The results of pedagogical practice are considered in the final evaluation. The state examinations test the student's proficiency in the subjects of specialization and in their didactics, in pedagogical psychology, and in Marxism-Leninism. Each exam may be repeated twice, the final state examination including. Another salient specificity is the fact that didactics of history is invariably an integral subject of instruction covered by the programmes of the Departments of History; symptomatically, the lecturer covering the field of history didactics usually also lectures on problems relevant to his own field of specialization in history. Didactics of history is regarded as the social reflection of historical cognition."

2. G.P.P. Hogendoorn, Evangelical Academy, Amersfoort, NL (translation from the Dutch original by PF). "Specific training in history didactics in our courses begins in the third year of study. During the first semester theory is emphasized, during the second one practical training. In the first and second year of study subjects from general didactics, paedagogy, and psychology of learning and child development are mooted. What we strive after is to bring the total number of hours devoted to the theory and practice of teaching to one quarter of all the lessons in history during the whole course. However, this ideal has not been realized up to now.

Historical subjects are taught separately from the lessons in history didactics. The lessons in didactics, however, use to refer to historical subjects. It is tried to integrate the theory of didactics into the lessons by pointing to historical contexts or examples. It seems to me that integration of history didactics with the historical courses is not well possible.

To the disciplines that are related to teaching ca. 40 hours are devoted. History didactics gets another 40 hours. Seminars and practice period are each of them demanding 40 hours. Preparation and evaluation, of course, make much greater demands on the student's time. It is desirable to enlarge the number of hours in the training institute, in order to connect the practice assignments with the theory given there and to make supervision easier.

The practice period contains the following components : a. attending and reporting on at least ten lessons in school, if possible of several teachers; b. attending and reporting on an whole schoolday of one particular class (with special attention for the interaction between teacher and pupils); giving 15 to 20 lessons in history, 3 to 5 of which must form a connected series; d. holding a test and analyzing and evaluating this; e. some research assignments (for instance, the special problems of the lowest grade, the identity of the historical discipline, etc.).

The students visit the schools in pairs and attend one another's lessons. We try to collaborate each year with the same school for reasons of the best possible supervision. The teacher of history didactics attends the student's lessons at least twice. Of course, there is a common evaluation afterwards. It would be highly desirable when several lessons by one student could be taped, shown in the institute, and discussed by the group. At the end of the practice period there is a final discussion in which the results of the seminar also play their role.

Next to the lectures there are also seminars. During the lectures assignments are given, for instance, to select the objectives from a given chapter out of a history textbook, the designing of multiple-choice questions, the telling of a short historical story, etc. In the seminars larger assignments are given. Here too there is a relation with the subject matter of the lectures. Assignments are, for instance, to make a plan for a lesson based on maps, to design a series of lessons or a slide series, to use the overhead projector, etc. Our institute does not dispose of sufficient hardware yet. Therefore, it is not yet possible to give our students a good training in the use of audiovisual media.

The theoretical part of the course is mainly devoted to the treatment of the Dutch didactical manual 'History in school', as far as possible always explained with the help of examples from practice. There is a written examination on the subject matter of the manual. There is also an oral examination on the basis of reading material (ca. 1000 pages). The average of the two examinations must be satisfactory. The theoretical examination may be done twice; the teaching part of the practice period may be prolonged (obligatory)."