

This article re-examines the charge of irrelevance often levelled against the Foundational Studies in a teacher education program. It argues that the relevance expected of these studies is categorically different from that expected of the methodology courses and the practical teaching aspects. It concludes that the relevance of the foundations lies more in the enhanced sensitivity and self-awareness that they infuse in the teacher than in any specific pedagogical skills that they may impart.

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## The Foundational Studies in Teacher Education: Relevance Reconsidered.

How best to train teachers has been a perennial question among educators since the days of the Jesuits, who were reputed to be the first to regard the special training of teachers as the first prerequisite for the effective education of children. By the early decades of the 20th century, the idea of “training,” with all its sinister connotations,<sup>1</sup> had broadened or mellowed into the idea of “educating” teachers. Of late, people talk of the “education *and* training” of teachers,<sup>2</sup> ostensibly to press home the point that the target of the preparation of teachers should consist of two parts which must be given due emphasis — the personal *and* the professional.

By the middle of the 20th century, there already existed a consensus that the content of teacher education is tripartite in nature, consisting of (1) grounding the novitiate in one or more academic disciplines, usually called the “teaching subjects,” (2) undertaking some theoretical study of education as an academic discipline, and (3) engaging in experimental teaching in real classroom situations, known as the *practicum*. However, just as this stratification in content of teacher education was taking place, a new consensus — this time of discontent and protest — began to emerge, and it is to the effect that the pre-induction preparation given to teachers is found irrelevant, for the most part, and where it is relevant, it is inadequate. This criticism comes, not only from school inspectors and educational researchers who are at two or three removes from the existential experience of the way teaching is, but, more importantly, from the classroom teachers who have been or are being exposed to this programme, and have become disenchanted with parts or even the whole of it.

Our concern in this article is with the criticism of irrelevance that has been levied against a part — the Foundational Studies aspect of the teacher education programme. The American educationist, James B. Conant, was perhaps the first to throw the most fundamental challenge to the position and relevance of the foundational studies in the preparation of teachers.<sup>3</sup> That was in the early '60s and I think

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<sup>1</sup>“Education” and “training” have often been derogatorily compared and contrasted, to the disadvantage of the latter. M.V.C. Jeffrey in his *Revolution in Teacher-Training*, shows that the contrast is a relic of the 19th century social class differentiation in Britain in which “education” was for the teachers of the children of Lords, but “training” or “the tricks of the trade” for children of the working classes. Other sinister implications include comparison with horse- or dog-training, and apprenticeship.

<sup>2</sup>See especially *Teacher Education and Training* (A Report by a Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, under the chairmanship of Lord James of Rushmore), D.E.S., London, H.M.S.O., 1972.

<sup>3</sup>James B. Conant, *The Education of American Teachers* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963).

it is literally true to say that, since then, the battle has continued to rage over those issues which he raised. On the premises that, (1) the foundational studies were what the American students would call "mickey-mouse" courses (i.e., highly superficial introductory courses that lack depth in content and rigour in approach; (2) they were poorly taught by uninspired professors; and (3) they were largely irrelevant to the teachers as they were currently being taught, Conant recommended that the foundational studies be broken up into their academic components and the parts be summarily dispersed to their parent-disciplines — that is, history of education to go to the Department of History to be taught by a professional historian, and so also philosophy, sociology, and psychology of education to their respective parent disciplines.<sup>4</sup>

Although this cynical recommendation has not been implemented, and although the search for a more acceptable solution has been rigorous and relentless, the problem of making the foundational studies "relevant" in the preparation of teachers continues to be in the forefront of education debates on both sides of the Atlantic and the Pacific. For example, the Teachers College journal, *The Record*, considered it important enough to devote a whole issue to answering the question: "What are the Foundational Questions?"<sup>5</sup> The Canadian *Journal of Educational Thought* and the American *Educational Forum* have featured series of articles on it, while *The School Review* of May, 1971, carried a series of seven articles on the issue of "Relevance in Education."<sup>6</sup> On the African scene, the role of the foundational studies has been a regular preoccupation of the Afro-Anglo-American (A.A.A.) annual conference since its inception, and of its successor, the Association of Teacher Education in Africa (A.T.E.A.), and their concern became so deep that it was made the sole theme of the 1971 conference held at the University of Makerere, Kampala, Uganda.<sup>7</sup>

In a situation such as this, where the issue has been belaboured without an acceptable solution, it may be a wise step to stop and ask if we have been seeking a wrong answer to a right question. It would seem so obviously pertinent and psychologically soothing to be assured of the "relevance" of any activity that one is engaged upon, but perhaps a more pertinent, but certainly more difficult, question is to determine in what that "relevance" consists. If the relevance of the foundational studies has been called into question, can it be that the type of relevance being asked for is inappropriate? Can it be that the relevance to be expected from such studies is materially different from that to be expected from the other parts of a teacher education program? If so, in what, specifically, does the relevance of the foundational studies consist?

## TYPES OF RELEVANCE IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The foundational studies occupy the middle ground between the purely academic disciplines and the practical teaching exercise in a teacher education program. This is not just in the temporal or spatial sense, but more in the functional sense. Some have even described it as the link or the bridge between both grounds, with the inference

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 78, 122, 126-7, 131 *et passim*.

<sup>5</sup>See Teachers College, *The Record*, 1969, Vol. 71, No. 2, in response to an essay-review entitled "Social Foundations of Education: The Problem of Relevance" by James J. Shields (Jr.) in *The Record*, 1968, Vol. 70, No. 1, pp. 77-87.

<sup>6</sup>*The School Review*, 79 (1971), 405-465.

<sup>7</sup>See A.T.E.A. 1971 Conference Report — *Reform in the Professional Education of Teachers in Africa*, edited by Senteza Kajubi, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda — at which Prof. Freeman-Butts delivered the key-note address.

that it must share some functions with them<sup>8</sup>; and quite often in the faculties and colleges of education, they are regarded as those aspects of teacher education that make education qualify to be called a "discipline" and deemed worthy of a place in the hierarchy of university disciplines.

Even though they stand between the purely academic and the purely practical or vocational, their relevance has been called into question in a way that the importance and relevance of the other two has not. One does not need any elaborate argument to prove that the teaching subjects are directly relevant in a teacher education programme. The existence of some content to be imparted is just as logically necessary to the concept of teaching as the recipient of what is being imparted.<sup>9</sup> The teaching techniques supposed to be acquired in the subject methodologies and the practical teaching aspect of teacher education also have their own type of relevance that cannot be called into question. It is a pedagogical truth, uncovered as far back as the days of Aristotle, that learning to do something or to behave in a particular way is best done through actually engaging in the activity concerned, and that repetition of it makes the action a habit or, as people say, "a second nature." The *practicum* is relevant because it is the intended activity performed, albeit, on a microscopic and experimental scale. While the relevance of these two aspects has not been called into question, that of the foundational studies has been. I suggest that the reasons for this are that, (1) the relevance of the foundational studies is of a categorically different order from the relevance of the other two partners; and (2) the relevance of the foundations is more difficult to determine as compared with the other two aspects mentioned above.

### DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF RELEVANCE

Before we try to suggest the concept of relevance that is applicable to the foundational studies, we must first clarify what we mean by the concept "relevance." Unfortunately, the word has become a slogan with a lot of emotive meanings. It belongs to the family of words called the "*pro-words*" — which are words that conjure up favourable responses, pro-attitudes, and emotions of approval, especially when their adjectival forms are used.<sup>10</sup> As it is not our objective here to attempt an exhaustive explication of the concept "relevance," we shall be content with taking brief notes of some of the ways people use the term and the implications of such usages. We shall deal with the adjectival form "relevant" because it is easier and the thought transfer from the adjective to the noun is not too difficult. Here then are some typical ways in which the concept is used:

1. Often, the concept "relevant" is used to describe what is familiar to, or within reach and comprehension of, the person making the judgment, or what he has tried and found to be acceptable to him. If the object is outside his pale of experience, is foreign to him, or is one that he cannot make immediate sense of, he labels it "irrelevant" — a label which he uses to dismiss the object, with some suggestion of "sour grapism." This is clearly a truncated and inadequate concept of relevance, especially when applied to education, whose fundamental objective is to open new experiences and widen horizons.

<sup>8</sup>See John A. Laska, "Current Progress in the Foundations of Education," T.C., *The Record*, 71 (1969), 179-186.

<sup>9</sup>See a detailed exploration of this theme from various perspectives in Bertrand Bandman and Robert S. Guttchen (eds), *Philosophical Essays on Teaching*. (New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1969). See especially essays by B. Othaniel Smith on "A Concept of Teaching," and Thomas F. Green on "A Topology of the Teaching Concept."

<sup>10</sup>See P.H. Nowell-Smith, *Ethics* (Pelican, 1954) pp. 105-121.

2. The term "relevant" may be used to refer to objects or activities that are of interest to, or that fall within, what are called the "felt-needs" of the person concerned. A certain activity may be intrinsically valuable, but insofar as Mr. X does not personally judge it to be so, he labels it as "irrelevant." However, the subjective interest and the "felt-needs" of an individual, as perceived by him, cannot be an adequate and necessary criterion of what is relevant to him *for* a particular task that he is to perform. Besides the personal interests and needs of the person concerned, there is the logical relatedness of the activity judged relevant as a means to the end-objective or to the task to be performed. We shall say more on this later on.
3. Most popularly, the term "relevant" is applied to an activity that is immediately and visibly useful and applicable to a situation in hand, or that solves an immediate problem. Such an activity may be described, in the words of James Shields, as having "contemporary relevance."<sup>11</sup> Immediate applicability is considered the sole, necessary, and adequate criterion of relevance. Advocates of this type of relevance would contend that the contemporary culture and the contemporary society should form the content of a "relevant" curriculum. Yet, we may ask: Is it the current society, with all its imperfections, or is it some ideals abstracted from the current society? Again, what about the ambivalence we run into when we call for knowledge that is applicable to the immediate present and, in the same breath, acknowledge the whirlwind of societal change which makes the present knowledge instantly obsolete? It should be obviously clear that contemporary applicability is not adequate, even if necessary, for psychological reasons; there is an area of what *ought to be* or what *could be*, which does not exist in the present, but which ought to fall within the purview of what is described as relevant.
4. At times, the term "relevant" is applied to something that is "practical", practical not in the sense of "possible," but in the sense of "physically doing something." If we closely cross-examine the present students in our faculties and colleges of education, we may discover most of them describing a course as irrelevant simply because of its highly theoretical nature, which makes a lot of demands on their mental application. In this sense, the farther removed from theory and abstractions, the more relevant!

Our survey so far has revealed that the general conception of the term "relevance" has been on the *psychological* plane only. None of the four popular definitions sketched above has touched on the *logical* dimension, in which a particular activity may be uninteresting to an individual or a group of individuals, or may not be felt to be needed by them, but nevertheless is logically necessary for the achievement of their immediate or long-term objectives. Thus, apart from an activity being irrelevant because it does not mentally satisfy the person to whom it should be relevant, it may also be irrelevant if it is not logically related to the end-objective for which it is supposed to be a means. *Means* and *ends* are logically related in the sense that the attainment of some end presupposes the employment of logically appropriate means. Where there is a "disjunctivitis"<sup>12</sup> (to borrow a term coined by Professor Freeman-Butts on another occasion) between the means and the ends, i.e., if logically appropriate means are not

<sup>11</sup>James J. Shields, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>12</sup>R. Freeman-Butts, "Teacher Education and Modernization" in *Essays on World Education: The Crisis of Supply and Demand*, ed. George Z.F. Bereday, (O.U.P., 1969), pp. 111-132.

adopted, the use of the adjective "irrelevant" may be applicable. Such a situation may arise:

1. where the ends are not known at all and hence the means cannot be scientifically or economically applied. Except where the means are themselves intrinsically valuable, the term "relevant" is not even applicable here, because there is nothing to which to relate them. This does not apply to teacher education where, instead, we have a proliferation to aims and objectives, and the problem is how to design the means to achieve them;
2. where the ends are vague or ambiguous, the means adopted to attain them may be described as irrelevant, because the means have been engaged in a case of hit or miss. The means should not be condemned as irrelevant if they are made to do a task for which they are not proper or appropriate. This applies, in part, to teacher education where, as a result of confusion of aims, the foundational studies are criticised as irrelevant;
3. where the objectives or ends are specified, but they are the wrong ones to expect as end-products from the means adopted. Here the means get condemned for not attaining ends that are not legitimate to them. The criticism of the foundational studies, as we shall see, is a classical example of this; and
4. where the objectives are wrong-headed and the means both inadequate and inappropriate.

These, as it were, constitute the content of what I will call the logical dimension of the use of the term relevant. Thus, to determine the relevance of the foundational studies, it is not enough to ask whether these studies are interesting, popular, satisfying, entertaining, of immediate and momentary applicability, practical, and so on. They must be all of these in different degrees possible, at least for incentive or motivational purposes; but, equally importantly, it will be necessary to ask if we have clearly stated the aims and objectives and if the foundational studies are both adequate and appropriate as means, with the clear understanding that the stated objectives have a determining influence on the type of means that should be employed. With this framework of the concept of relevance, let us now look at some of the objectives or functions attributed to the foundational studies as they are presently run, how legitimate and appropriate these expectations are, and in what sense we can say that the foundational studies are relevant or irrelevant to the stated aims and objectives.

## **EXPECTATIONS FROM THE FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES**

### **1. Foundational Studies for Classroom Prescriptions**

The most popular expectation from exposure to a course in the foundations is that its transfer effects should be directly seen in evidence in the teacher's classroom, strictly pedagogical, performance. The logical inference is that the foundational studies should offer a sort of "cook-book" classroom recipe, a direct prescription by which the person exposed to it will become what W. O. Stanley calls "a good technician, a skillful and competent classroom operator."<sup>13</sup>

The psychological dimension of this concept of relevance is not in doubt: the more nearly a cook-book pattern it takes, the more psychologically motivating and satisfying to the student-teacher who may be pre-occupied only with how to get through his practical teaching examination; but the logical relevance of it is not so easy to

<sup>13</sup>W.O. Stanley, "The Social Foundations Subjects in the Professional Education of Teachers," *Educational Theory*, 18, No. 3 (1968), 23.

modified by rival theories and models, and the educator is thereby thrown into a quandary as to which model to adopt.<sup>15</sup> In such a situation, it will be more appropriate to consider the relevance and influence of psychology in a general or global sense than in specific models and theories that are automatically applicable in the classroom. As Ben Morris summarises it, “the major contribution of psychological studies to education lies in their potential power to deepen and augment our perception of what we are doing in education.”<sup>16</sup> In short, psychology mainly helps to sensitise the teacher to the human dimensions of his task, and make him more aware of the factors that could make his teaching more effective.

Philosophy, sociology, and history of education, comparative and international education, and all other theoretical, humanistic, behavioural, and management studies — all follow a similar line of argument and yield their varying transfer values that are not on all fours with those expected by the advocates of immediate cash value returns from the foundations. Again, Tibble succinctly summarised it when he wrote: “the relationship (i.e., between theory and practice) . . . is not a simple matter of learning to use appropriate prescriptions for action, it implies a subtle, complex and long-term process of thought, feeling and attitude, informed by study, supported by evidence and reason but capable of spontaneous translation into action in classroom and school situation.”<sup>17</sup>

The discussion so far must have revealed that the relevance attainable in any foundational studies is of a *categorically*<sup>18</sup> different order from that of, say, the Practical Teaching and the Subject Method courses — an obvious point, you may say, but a point that is always forgotten in the heat of arguments. To improve the strictly pedagogical skills of the teacher for the appropriate modification of children’s behaviour is a legitimate aim of any teacher education programme, but obviously the foundational studies, as at present composed and conducted, are hardly the most appropriate means to accomplish that aim. This logical dissonance between the ends and the means is responsible for the verdict of irrelevance often pronounced on the foundational studies; it is an example of the irrelevance that crops up where the ends are clearly stated, but are not such as can be expected from the means employed.

## 2. Foundational Studies for Education Statesmanship

Let us now take another function often ascribed to the foundational studies, namely that they are for the production of broad-minded and enlightened educators or educational statesmen. The focus of this type is the teacher, not just in his role as a subject specialist but, more importantly, as an active member of the education industry in the widest sense. The expectation is that exposure to the studies will produce a teacher who is an engineer rather than a technician, an educational statesman rather than a classroom operator, and an innovator rather than a mere cog in the educational wheel. We may treat this expectation in two perspectives: (a) that of personal, intellec-

<sup>15</sup>R.J. Light and P.V. Smith noted this dilemma and suggested a solution to it in their article, “Accumulating Evidence: Procedures for Resolving Contradictions among Different Research Studies,” *Harvard Educational Review*, 1971, 41 (1971), 429-471.

<sup>16</sup>Ben Morris, p. 171.

<sup>17</sup>J.W. Tibble, pp. 221-222.

<sup>18</sup>I use the term “categorically” in the sense in which Gilbert Ryle uses “categorical mistake” to describe mistakes that are made through “allocating concepts to logical types to which they do not belong.” The implication here is that the foundational studies, and the teaching practice cum special methods belong to different logical orders, and to impose the logic of the latter on the former, or *vice-versa*, is to commit a “categorical mistake.” For detailed explication of the borrowed concept, see G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949), pp. 16-23.

determine. In the concept of relevance in question, the ends to be attained are clearly stated; immediate classroom transfer. Can the subjects that presently make up what we now know and describe as foundational studies attain these ends?

If we examine the various components of the foundational studies, which range from the traditional diet like the philosophy, sociology, and psychology of education to *avant garde* studies like school administration and ecology, there is the temptation to say that these are only one or two of the several items that can qualify for the practical effects demanded. Indeed, the claim is often heard from some colleagues that it is only psychology, and more narrowly the psychology of child-development and of learning, that can provide those classroom recipes, prescriptions, rules and laws which only have to be "known" to be applied. The temptation arises, not just because psychology is an empirical or behavioural science (which sociology and anthropology also are), but rather because both psychology and education have the learner and his learning experiences as the sole focus in the way that no other discipline does.

As Ben Morris puts it, both psychology and education have a lot in common; they share major similar presuppositions about the nature of man, and psychological thoughts are intrinsically related to educational thoughts, *and vice versa*.<sup>14</sup> However, he quickly disabuses us of the idea that psychology of education could be reduced to a sort of cook-book or a catalogue book of "the tricks of the trade." Not only, he argues, do the expected fixed laws, conclusions and prescriptions not exist, but it is even false to imagine that there are certain laws, previously non-existent, but suddenly discovered by psychology, for application to education or teaching. The education laws and principles have existed as far back as when man first thought of bringing up his children, and have been so used, and they continue to be so used by parents, guardians, master-technicians and most teachers without any inkling of what psychology and psychological discoveries are. Indeed, so closely related and interdependent are the two disciplines that it is difficult or nearly impossible now to differentiate, for example, Piaget, the psychologist, from Piaget, the educator.

In its short span as an autonomous discipline, psychology has thrown considerable light on some vital educational processes and has thereby improved effective teaching and learning. It has focussed on the nature of the child — his cognitive and affective development; the role of interests and needs in motivating him to learn; his aptitudes and abilities; and the importance of readiness for efficient learning, to mention a few. Psychology has also highlighted the degrees of efficiency and effectiveness of learning strategies, through the evolution of learning theories like the S — R connectionist theories, the Gestalt models, the Skinnerian reinforcement theories, Cybernetics and so on.

In all these instances, and many more that could be mentioned, the major contribution of psychology, as I perceive it, has been to articulate and make more precise the principles and assumptions that have undergirded the process of education from time immemorial. Though they have often been put in the form of theories and models, the "discoveries" of psychology are essentially tentative and therefore are not supposed to be regarded as fixed laws and rules. Indeed, great caution is called for in applying them directly in education for two main reasons. The first is that some of them have been obtained from experiments on animal subjects or in non-classroom environments, and hence need modifications to apply to human learning situations. The second is that hardly is there any theory or model on which we have unanimous agreement among psychologists; any theory or model is immediately challenged or

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<sup>14</sup>See Ben Morris' chapter entitled "The Contributions of Psychology to Education," in J.W. Tibble ed. *The Study of Education* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), pp. 136-171.

tual stimulation, the sort of intellectual awareness and love of knowledge that one expects from those charged with stimulating the intellect of our children. Here, the foundational studies may be studied by prospective teachers because they are found interesting from a purely academic or intellectual point of view. (b) This aim of satisfying the individual's taste will, of course, cut no ice in this day and age when materialism or the cash value return of any activity is *the* acceptable justification for ever undertaking it or for investing public monies in it. Happily, this conception of the foundational studies is not without its acceptable "economic" returns. While improving himself personally, a teacher is at the same time improving his professional outlook. The end-product is what W. O. Stanley called the "educational statesman,"<sup>19</sup> i.e., the man who has imbibed what Freeman-Butts called "policy-oriented knowledge"<sup>20</sup> and is therefore in a position to influence the direction of the nation's educational philosophy.

If we want the "educational statesman" as the end-product of the foundational studies, it is a laudable, legitimate and desirable objective to which the present curricular offerings, given competent personnel, adequate time allocation and suitable and appropriate text books, can contribute. The crucial question is how and in what milieu we can determine their transfer value and hence their relevance. The process of evaluation in this case is complex and notoriously difficult, because the expected end-product is embedded in attitudes that are formed, not in specific technical skills that are displayed in a classroom situation.

The classroom activity, whether in the narrow pedagogical or, more broadly, in the managerial sense, is not the only, and perhaps not the best, environment in which to assess whether the teacher has imbibed "policy-oriented knowledge" from his exposure to the foundational studies. The out-of-school educational activities are very important as indicators of the possession of the expected educational statesmanship. If the products of the foundational studies are internally-motivated to attend in-service and education seminar courses, if they turn activists in educational organisations like the subject associations and teachers' professional organisations, if they are found articulate and knowledgeable on current educational issues and problems on the national and international levels, they can be regarded as having assimilated the sensitivity to educational issues which the foundations, among other studies, are trying to foster. These behavioural manifestations of an ingrained attitude may not necessarily be revealed when the student-teacher does his routine practical teaching, or when we observe his teaching in a classroom situation; but they will be measurable in his efforts or success in influencing the direction of his nation's educational policy.

### 3. Foundational Studies as Citizens' Liberal Education

The last set of aims we are selecting for treatment is rather nebulous, but they certainly have a high emotional appeal, in that they purport to address themselves to the socio-cultural problems that are afflicting both the old and the new nations of the world. We select as a spokesman of this idea a colourful, dedicated and much-respected educational statesman, Professor Freeman-Butts of Teachers College, Columbia University. He puts the core of the idea thusly: "Whatever terms may be used or whatever approach is adopted, the foundational study is the attempt to understand the role of education in society: to enable the individual educator to understand the functioning, the problems, and the direction in which his society is moving, so that he can contribute as an educator to the welfare of his community, his nation, and

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<sup>19</sup>W.O. Stanley, p. 219.

<sup>20</sup>R. Freeman-Butts, "Reconstruction in Foundations Studies," *Educational Theory*, 23 (1973), 27-41.

the international order.”<sup>21</sup> As is clear from this quotation, and much more still from his other writings on the issue, the relevance of the foundational studies should be assessed beyond the four walls of the classroom and beyond the hedges of the school, far beyond the role of the teacher as a manager of the educational system to that of an active citizen in any rapidly modernising or self-renewing society. His primary focus is the teacher as an agent of modernisation and only secondarily (if at all) as a classroom pedagogical expert.

The assessment of this teacher-as-citizen target of the foundations is indeed much more complex and difficult than the former two already considered, simply because the area of demonstration of transfer is co-terminous, not just with the educational network, but rather with the nation to which the teacher belongs and in which he is supposed to play a role as a modernising or self-renewal agent. The argument which we have put forward in respect of the foundations for the educational statesman holds also for this, *mutatis mutandis*.

Perhaps the only other serious observation that one would like to make is a somewhat cynical note that there is nothing peculiar to the teaching profession in this conception of the function of the foundational studies. As conceived, this is an education that any good citizen should receive, whatever his profession. It is, in fact, what is usually described as General Studies Program, in which the three major domains of human knowledge — the physical sciences, the sciences of man or the social sciences, and the humanities — are included.

I have sketched the above three expressed ends of the foundational studies separately with a view to bringing out in what sense one can talk of assessment, transfer value or relevance in each of them; but it is not to be supposed that any combination of them cannot be made the ends to be realised. In fact, it is often the case that we want them to accomplish many ends at the same time, but, then, we need to specify our priorities in terms of which judgment can validly be pronounced on their relevance.

## **EPILOGUE: CONTRIBUTORY VALUES OF THE FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES**

From the discussion so far, it must be tolerably clear what conception of the foundational studies we hold. Stated briefly, it is that the foundational studies have only a *facilitative or contributory* value in the pedagogical preparation of the teacher — using “contributory” in the sense that C. I. Lewis employs it to differentiate the ultimate from the instrumental values.<sup>22</sup> The ultimate values are good *tout court*, in and by themselves, while the instrumental values are good only for other values that they cause to exist. The contributory values share of both: while they are worth something in and by themselves, they are also instrumental in producing a greater good. The foundational studies, as having contributory value, are thus worth studying in and for themselves, but at the same time contributing towards the improvement of a teacher’s professional skills.

Perhaps an analogy may be called in to help us illuminate the general idea. The word “foundation” occurs in both the foundational studies and the foundation of a house — which means that both usages must be occupying the same continuum of

<sup>21</sup>R. Freeman-Butts, “Reconstruction in Foundations Studies: Touchstone for Curriculum Reform in Teacher Education,” in Senteza Kajubi ed. *Reform in the Professional Education of Teachers in Africa*. Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, 1971, p. 10. See my rejoinder to his article in *Educational Theory*, 24 (1974), 406-409.

<sup>22</sup>C.I. Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (Illinois: Open Court, 1962). See especially his chapter XVI on “The Moral Sense and Contributory Values,” pp. 479-510.

meaning. It does seem that, originally and popularly, the word "foundation" is used in connection with house-building, and in that sense it is the substratum on which a more visible and more imposing super-structure is erected. In appreciating the grandeur and beauty of the house, we do not usually go down on our knees to dig up the foundation; we look only at the superstructure, but yet that foundation must in itself be solid and good before it can contribute to the stability and the beauty of the house. Even though it is not mentioned in appreciation, nobody dares say it is merely decorative or that it is dispensable.

My analogy is not necessarily that the foundational studies should be the substratum as the foundation of a house is; but rather it is in respect of the facilitative and contributory values that both have. The foundational studies are not adornments or incidentals, but yet they are not something to look for in a special method of teaching Latin or Greek or whatever have you; they are not for prestige, but yet their utility cannot be crudely demonstrated. They have both intrinsic and extrinsic relevance, with the former predominating over the latter.

Harry S. Broudy has well expressed this conception when he wrote: "Foundation courses suffer from a tacit promise and expectation that they will help the teacher directly in the daily tasks of the classroom — keeping unruly children quiet or placating a neurotic principal. Unfortunately, foundational knowledge cannot be *applied* directly to problems of practice any more than physics can be applied to fix an ailing motor car. Foundation knowledge, and indeed all general education is used interpretatively as precise but large-scale cognitive maps on which problems are plotted but not solved. For the solving of problems, i.e. for the applicative use of knowledge, theory has to be supplemented by technology, and only the specialist (who has both) uses knowledge applicatively."<sup>23</sup> The foundations should definitely result in "qualities of thought, feelings and attitudes"<sup>24</sup> if well taught, and they should enhance the style, the sensitivity, and the sophistication of the teacher. The observation of Israel Scheffler, another philosopher, is also worth quoting. He says: "If a justification is needed for the teacher's scholarly and theoretical sophistication regarding his work, it is not that, lacking it he cannot manage to teach, but that having it, the quality of his effort and role is likely to be enhanced."<sup>25</sup> This is a humble statement of the capability and relevance of the foundational studies: its relevance is not just a matter of minimal or basic necessity, but rather a matter of added quality and desirability in a teacher's education. If the desired end-product of a teacher education programme is defined as more than a mere technician or classroom operator, then we can say that the foundational studies have a logical relevance to any teacher education programme. It is a relevance that is *sui generis*, and therefore not to be confused, or be unfavourably compared, with the relevance that is peculiar to special methodology courses or practical teaching.

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<sup>23</sup>Harry S. Broudy, "Criteria for the Professional Preparation of Teachers," in *Journal of Teacher Education*, 1965, vol. 16, no. 4, p. 441.

<sup>24</sup>J. W. Tibble (Ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 221-2.

<sup>25</sup>Israel Scheffler, "University Scholarship and the Education of Teachers" in *Teachers College. The Record*, 1965, vol. 70, no. 1, p. 4.