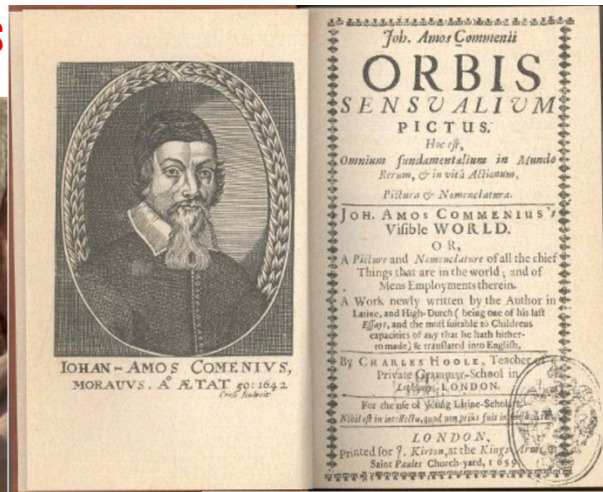


# HISTORY OF EDUCATION

## THE BRIDGEHEAD FOR EDUCATION LECTURES



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## History of Education: why bother with it?

So much of the time our thinking about and practice of educating is locked into the present and tied to ways in we ourselves have been formed and educated. The *status quo* seems common sense, normal and unquestionable. There seems to be no realistic alternative. And when we struggle to formulate what alternatives, we have as Christians our proposals often sound thin, marginal and unconvincing - even to ourselves.

It is precisely in this context that the history of education (and likewise comparative education) can serve two vital functions. First it can awaken our sense of alternative views of education with their different assumptions about God, people, society and knowledge. Second, it can alert us to the pedigrees of the educational ideas and practices that often seem so obvious to us. So much of our educational common sense is actually - as we will see - the precipitate of Greek pagan and modern humanist philosophical visions of reality.

Through the study of the history of education we can begin to gain some critical distance from the present practices that are so close to us - indeed part of us - that we cannot focus on them. Or to use another image - it is like looking at the tinted spectacles through which we have habitually viewed the world.

This can be very disturbing. "If God had intended Christians to think he'd have given them the brains!" we splutter in self-defence. But we are called to repent of the vain educational traditions of men (Mark 7:8,9) and to seek out what is good, pleasing and acceptable to the Lord (Romans 12: 1, 2) . We are warned against vain educational philosophies that are rooted in idolatry. We are mandated to develop ways of thinking which acknowledge Jesus as the Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of Creation (Colossians -1: 16-20; 2: 8).

Seldom is obedience to the Lord a matter of opting for old ways against new ways - the old ways were new once and were reactions against even older ways. And even if the old ways were obedient at the time, they can become disobedient and irrelevant under new circumstances or in different societies. We will find no golden age of Christian education to which we can or should return. But we can draw inspiration

from some past phases of Christian involvement in education and be warned by some of the errors and blindness of Christian communities of the past. But having said that our hope is directed to the future, building an educational highway for our God into our culture now and into the future.

There are many risks and many unknowns. There is no blueprint - but we can have directing dreams and visions also for this important area of life. We desperately need prophets and pioneers in education from primary to university levels. And just as our church life has seen renewal in the last couple of decades - new joy and a clearer sense of direction - so we need a new joy and direction in learning, knowledge and wisdom in our educational enterprises.

It may not be easy for most British Christians who would rather die than think. Words like "theoretical" intellectual", "academic" or "philosophical" are used to damn things as Godless. The sad truth is that such Christians do not want to go beyond the ABC of the Gospel and simply want tranquil, pleasant and affluent lives. They will make sacrifices for the latter but have little stomach for the intellectual and spiritual warfare that the servants and soldiers of Jesus Christ are called to in every area of human life. In the words of Abraham Kuyper: "There is not a square inch of creation of which Christ does not say 'It is mine!'" Our task as ambassadors of the Kingdom in the field of education is to reclaim every area of educational thought, learning and practice for the One who alone is the way, the truth and the life, the One through whom and for whom all things exist. (Col.1:16, Heb.1:2).

This is a vital and strategic part of the Great Commission, both for the next generation of the Christian community and in the battle of conflicting worldviews for the heart and mind of our non-Christian contemporaries. There is little point in deploring the hollow secularism and the new age occultism to which it has given rise if we, the Christian community are unable to provide a substantial alternative vision and Biblical framework for the concerns of our contemporaries. It is said that the early church "out thought and out. died 11 the opposition of their pagan contemporaries. Those called the "apologists" were skilled at giving the reason for the hope that was in them concerning the ways in which the Gospel of the Kingdom brings healing to the whole of creation and to every phase of human life and culture.

Likewise, they were able to explain to their contemporaries why their pagan Roman

culture, rooted in idolatry, was disintegrating and destined to pass away.

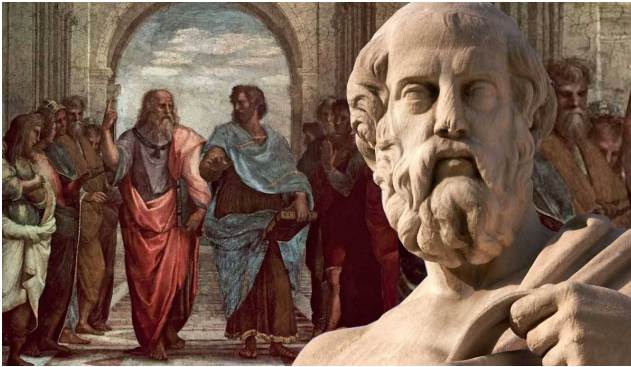
The tragedy is that for the most part the modern churches of the west are providing little by way of *interpretation* and *hope* to our contemporaries who are ransacking world cultures past and present in search of some illumination of their lives. A sentence from one of Arthur Koestler's last book - before he and his wife committed suicide - was: "God has left the phone off the hook and time is running out".

Rather than blaming God for the silence we must rather look to ourselves and our failure to provide prophetic interpretation of modern culture, searching insights into the media, technology, politics and law, science, the arts, the industry and agriculture, and not least the education of our times. Is Jesus for whom and through whom all things exist delighted or appalled or what by what He sees of the life of Britain in the 1990s.

As ambassadors of the Kingdom of Christ we should know and communicate these things. Mostly we don't know and what we do communicate to our contemporaries is that Jesus has a very small agenda or moral and ethical issues about which He is upset and about which we are to *protest* - a few letters to MPs and a few marches does the trick. The public concludes - not unexpectedly - that we and our God (if he exists) are negative and narrow and irrelevant to most of what goes on under the sun.

# 1. Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

## Plato (428-348 BC)



Whitehead described the history of western thought as footnotes to Plato. Plato has done massive damage to Western civilization, including allegedly Christian periods of Western history. Most of the people who have been influenced by him have never heard of him, but his influence has poisoned Christian thinking on a wide range of subjects.

### Greek Worldview

(a) The old nature religion which arose first (the religious vision of earlier tribal Greek society) was based on observation of the continual process of change, of birth, life, decay, death, in the world. It saw all of reality as a divine stream of life, a great process of coming into being and dying, of everything, including the gods (who merely lasted a bit longer), spirits, men, animals, plants, things, issuing from 'nature' and returning to it - everything was tied to nature and its patterns and processes. Characteristic of this is the god Dionysius (god of wine and ecstasy) and the philosopher Heraclitus ('all is flux', 'You can never step into the same river twice').

(b) The culture religion of the polis (the Greek city-state) arose as societal life grew more stable and structured. The landscape of Greece was very variegated and broken up, full of mountain ridges and small bays. In this context a lot of small city states (rather like fortified cities with land around them) developed, each in relative isolation and independence from the others, and with them a new worldview. Its new thought was that the gods (personified human virtues) were outside this system of flux (up on mount Olympus), above change and decay. These gods were, then, final reality - a new idea of what reality is about; all is not flux and relativity. The new religion was one of form, measure, harmony, order. The universe is given its shape and order by an unchanging cosmic law. Worship shifted from Dionysius to Apollo (the legislator, god of the arts and of law and order) and then moved between the two - both aspects

of life were real, and you had to cope with both, and these two elements came to have a very fixed place in the Greek consciousness. The idea was formed that the empirical world of flux and motion (including personal feelings and anxieties) is ultimately illusory, reality lying beyond it, invisible but perceivable to the mind. The philosophers Pythagoras, Zeno and Parmenides developed this - reality is perceivable to the mind, not the senses, and change and motion are illusions. Thus, there was a kind of split consciousness. Plato, grappling with the tension between these two ideas, gave priority to the new culture religion of form and the mind as representing reality, but also acknowledged a lower level of flux and change and matter and the senses. The higher level was that of the mind and of public life; the lower was that of matters of private emotion. We pass away, but the state goes on for ever; therefore, public life is a higher order, the realm of real significance, private life a lower one. The old nature religion must be suppressed, marginalized, controlled. The empirical world is but a pale image of the real world.

### GREEK WORLDVIEW

F	(b) culture religion of polis; form,	- <b>PYTHAGORAS</b>	<b>PLATO</b> world of forms (eternal)  <b>HIGHER</b>
O	measure harmony (law and	<b>ZENO</b>	
R	order) Apollo (law, arts) - (the	<b>PARMENIDES</b>	
M	Anglicans!)	(all is static,	
S		unchanging)	
M	(a) old nature religion reality = a	- <b>HERACLITUS</b>	<b>LOWER</b> empirical world of change and decay, a pale reflection of the forms
A	divine stream of life, issuing	(all is flux)	
T	from nature and returning to it		
T	Dionysius (wine, ecstasy) -		
E	(the charismatics!)		
R			

## **Athens**

In Plato's day, there were over 80,000 slaves out of a population of 200,000, and about 20,000 who were traders - a bit better than slaves but not free men of the city. Some were private slaves, many worked in silver mines (>short life span). Slaves don't always want to stay slaves, and there was a sense of man having to keep a lid on the situation with half of the population in slavery - stability and luxury with a sense of insecurity (c.f. South Africa). The free had a lot of time for leisure and higher matters (philosophy) and a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

There was little education. The rich upper classes were given education by 'the SOPHISTS ('*Sophiste*' = wise man, hence sophistry). This education was mostly in rhetoric, the skills of persuasive speech for use in the law courts and assemblies - crucial for getting personal power and wealth in Athens. It was a private, elitist and very individualistic system of education and its aim was to enable students to get to the top, to gain personal power and riches. (c.f. education today!)

## **Plato's *Republic***

Plato's writings constitute a whole vision of reality, worked out in systematic detail. His *Republic* was the first systematic treatise on government and education in the western tradition and has been profoundly influential. Many of the early church fathers were brought up on Plato before and after their conversion, including great people like Augustine; the Platonic academy kept going for 700 years, until the 4th century; medieval thinkers like Thomas Aquinas, Renaissance scholars, the Reformers, the Cambridge Platonists in 17th century Puritan England, the public school system - all studied Plato. The study of Plato in our society only began to die out when Greek and Latin began to disappear from schools. The study of Plato has continued for all of the last 2,400 years, and this profoundly influential pagan heritage has affected Christian (including evangelical and charismatic) theology.

### **(a) Salvation (soteriology). How, brother Plato, shall I be saved?**

(i) Personal salvation. Plato says that we were' once rational souls, living in a higher realm of light and perfection, but something awful happened: we became incarnated into bodies. This incarnation is an imprisonment, a terrible state for a rational soul (c.f. Gen. 1, God looking at Adam and Eve - Plato says 'bad', God says 'good'). We must get back out of the body and into the higher world of forms. Salvation means

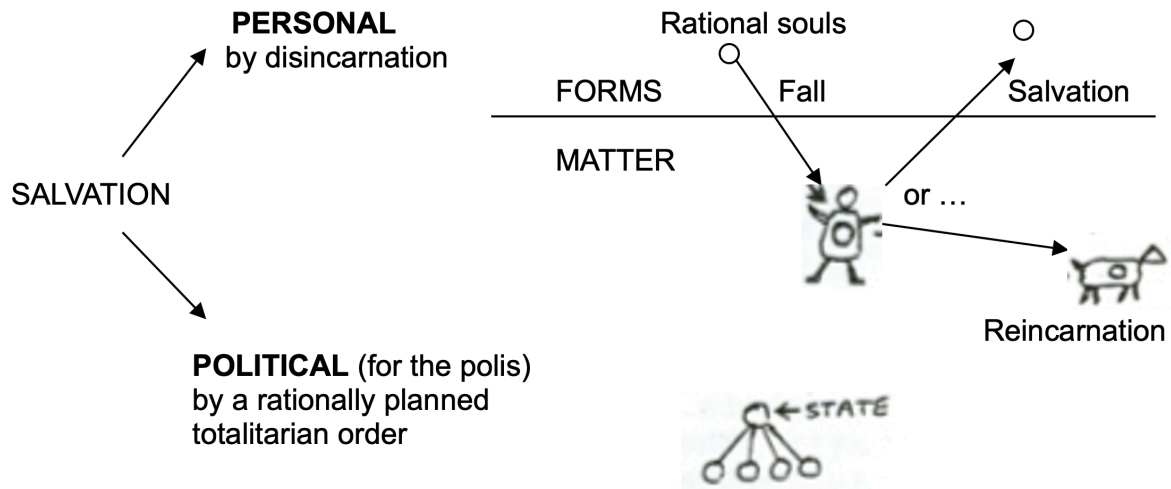


disassociating the soul from the body as much as possible. It's bad to be a manual worker, such can't be saved (e.g., a carpenter?). It is good to get into the life of the mind, to think mathematical, rational, conceptual, abstract, non-sensible thoughts (nothing about flesh and blood, colour sound or the world around) and transcend the physical world of the senses. There is a profound other-worldliness; salvation means getting out of the world, which is a bad place full of suffering (c.f. Eastern religion - the trade routes in Alexander's empire which followed provided strong links with the East) and the way of salvation is to study philosophy. The soul is a little chip of the divine world which is going to re-join divinity). If you disregard this way and enjoy the life of the senses in this world, you may be reincarnated as an animal. These ideas were very influential on much medieval theology, which adopted the idea that creation is intrinsically evil, and the soul must escape it and get up to heaven (and evangelise other souls to join it). The final destination is seen as 'above' (c. f. the number of 'love/above' rhymes in *Hymns Ancient & Modern*); this world will not be renewed - it has no future. These ideas made possible Marx's accusation that Christianity is 'pie in the sky when you die'. They are not biblical. Also, Plato saw the soul as a little bit of divinity to be reabsorbed into the divine world - c.f. New Age teaching - Jesus woke up to his divinity and we must do the same.

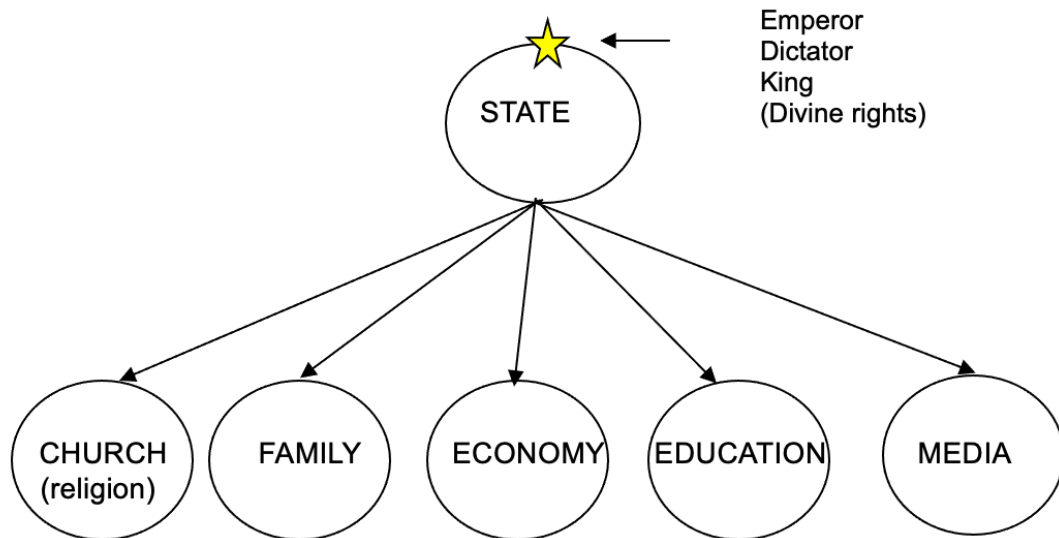
There is a theme of world despair - men have ambitions and plans, as individuals and societies, get so far and achieve so much, then gain time to reflect on what it is all for - age and death always take over (c.f. Ecclesiastes). So, they seek escape into a timeless world. The conquest of death and decay and the renewal of creation are good news!

(ii) More important for Plato is the means of *political/public salvation* (c.f. 'National Salvation Front' in Eastern Europe). There were strong signs of disintegration in the Greek city-states at the time. The Sophists were very relativistic; they were interested in the skills needed to get to the top, not in truth, which can get in the way. Plato saw the polis as a crucial institution for human life. A 'barbarian' was one unformed because not formed and cultured by the polis, one barely human, more like an animal. He saw the polis as we see the body of Christ for the Christian - you have to be part of it to grow and develop properly and to be whole - and he had the same intense convictions about it. There was no salvation outside of the polis, and to be part of it is the only way to find your humanity. In the face of disintegration Plato feared chaos and looked to a strong order. The choice is presented as chaos or order

- the only alternative to chaos is state-imposed order (c.f. South Africa) So Plato says that the whole of human life has to be controlled and ordered by the state.



**Totalitarianism (Statism)**



**(b) Order in the ' Republic'**

Plato's proposal for the city states was more or less total isolation in order to obtain almost total control.

*Religion:* The tool of the state; Plato saw religion as a problem. The gods and

goddesses of the old Homeric stories were plotters, adulterers, murderers, rapists etc., and so were not fit examples *for* the populace and *for* children. Therefore, the old Homeric myths would have to be suppressed/expurgated and a new responsible state religion introduced (c.f. "get Christianity, out of the schools or it will cause social disharmony, look at Northern Ireland, religion must be sorted out by the state") which will preserve order. Plato wants to purge religion and add the 'noble lie' (see below).

*Family:* a dangerous alternative' loyalty and source of allegiance, which must be minimised - like in the U.S.S.R.: get the children into state nurseries as soon as possible to minimise its influence. In the upper classes the family would be abolished and replaced by a community of men and women in fluid cohabiting relationships, with overseers to check that these don't become too permanent, so that there is a single loyalty to the state. Plato says that we are rational with dogs and horses - we breed selectively for strength, speed etc., but with citizens people just fall in love and produce children with whomever they want. This is irrational - we are much more careful with animals. We must not be led by such feelings «old nature religion). Therefore, there should be selective breeding through a lottery - you get your ticket and sleep with X for so many weeks until she's pregnant (and you must be sober and rational when you conceive children, not drunk!). The lottery is rigged by the state on the basis of what kind of citizen is needed in greater numbers. Infanticide is practised with physically weak-looking specimens. Comprehensive education makes further selection and weaker specimens are thrown out into the lower orders of society. A static city with a set number of citizens is required, so there will be penalties *for* producing unwanted citizens or *for* not producing wanted ones. (c.f. U.S.S.R., China).

*Economics:* Totally state controlled, kept at a steady, static level. Unchanging stasis is a fixed idea - contrast the Biblical one of historical unfolding and developing of creation from the garden to a city and then the whole panorama of Revelation, unfolding and developing gloriously forever.

*Media:* state-controlled.

### **(c) Education**

Plato introduced the 'noble lie – a myth/religious teaching, not true, but useful and

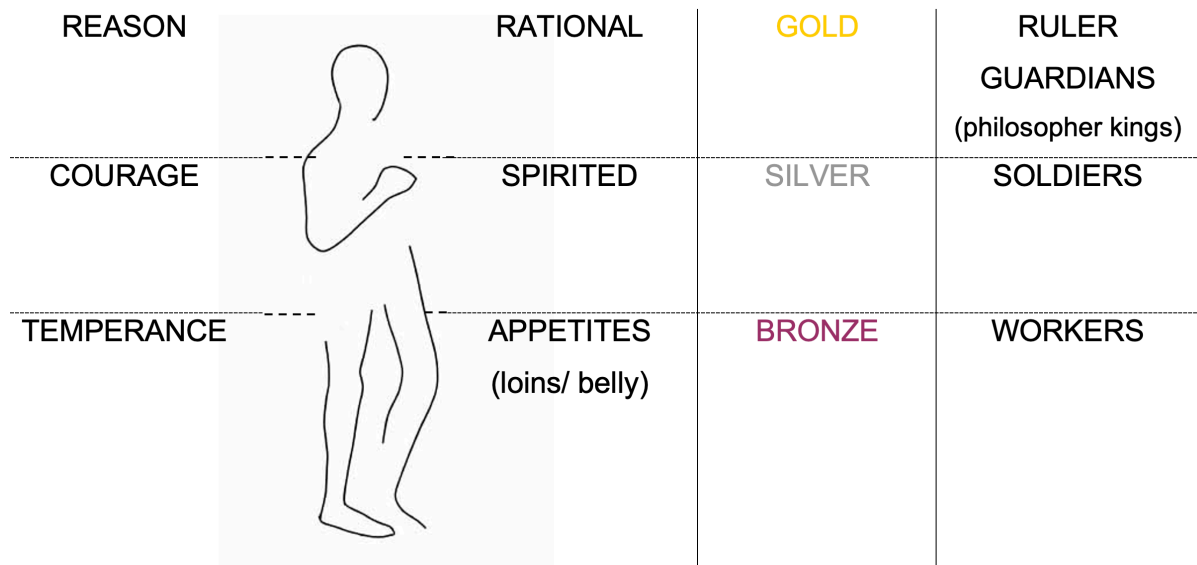
good for state order for people to believe and so passed off as part of ancient tradition (c.f. modern ideas of propaganda). This was that the gods made three sorts of people (because the state requires three sorts!):

‘And now we will have to devise one of those useful lies of which we spoke, and if possible, get the rulers themselves to believe it, and in any case have it accepted by the rest of the citizens.’ What kind of story would that be?’ asked Glaucon. ‘Oh, nothing very new,’ I said: ‘just a Phoenician story told by the poets and located in many places. It has not happened in our time, and I am not sure that it could. It will certainly take a considerable amount of persuasion to put it over,’ said Glaucon. ‘Can you not just go ahead with it?’ ‘Very well, then,’ I said. ‘Here goes!’

I will inform the rulers and their assistants, and then the rest of the citizens, that the training and instruction they had seemed to get had all been a dream: that in reality they had been fashioned in the depths of the earth, and on being completed had been sent up to the light of day by their Earth Mother. For that reason, they must protect the land which had been nurse and mother to them from its enemies and regard the other citizens as earth brothers. "All of you who dwell in the city," we will tell them, "are brothers, but the god who made you mixed gold in the composition of those among you who are fit to rule. Silver entered into the composition of their assistants, and brass and iron went to the making of the farmers and other craftsmen. Your children will usually be like yourselves, but since you are all akin it is possible that a silver child may sometimes be born to a gold parent, and the other way about. Similarly with the rest of you. The first and most imperative charge laid by God on the city's rulers is that they keep close watch on the children born among you and discern the metals that have gone to their making. If one of their own progeny has iron or brass in its composition, they must have no scruple about putting the child among the farmers and workers whose nature it shares. If on the other hand, a child born in the lower class proves to have gold or silver in him, he must be made a warden or an assistant, as the case may be."

'Can you suggest any way of getting this story accepted?' I asked. 'No,' said Glaucon. 'I do not think there is any chance of the citizens to whom it is first told believing it, but possibly their children and the generations that follow may come to do so.' ”

PLATO, *The Republic*, III, 414-15.



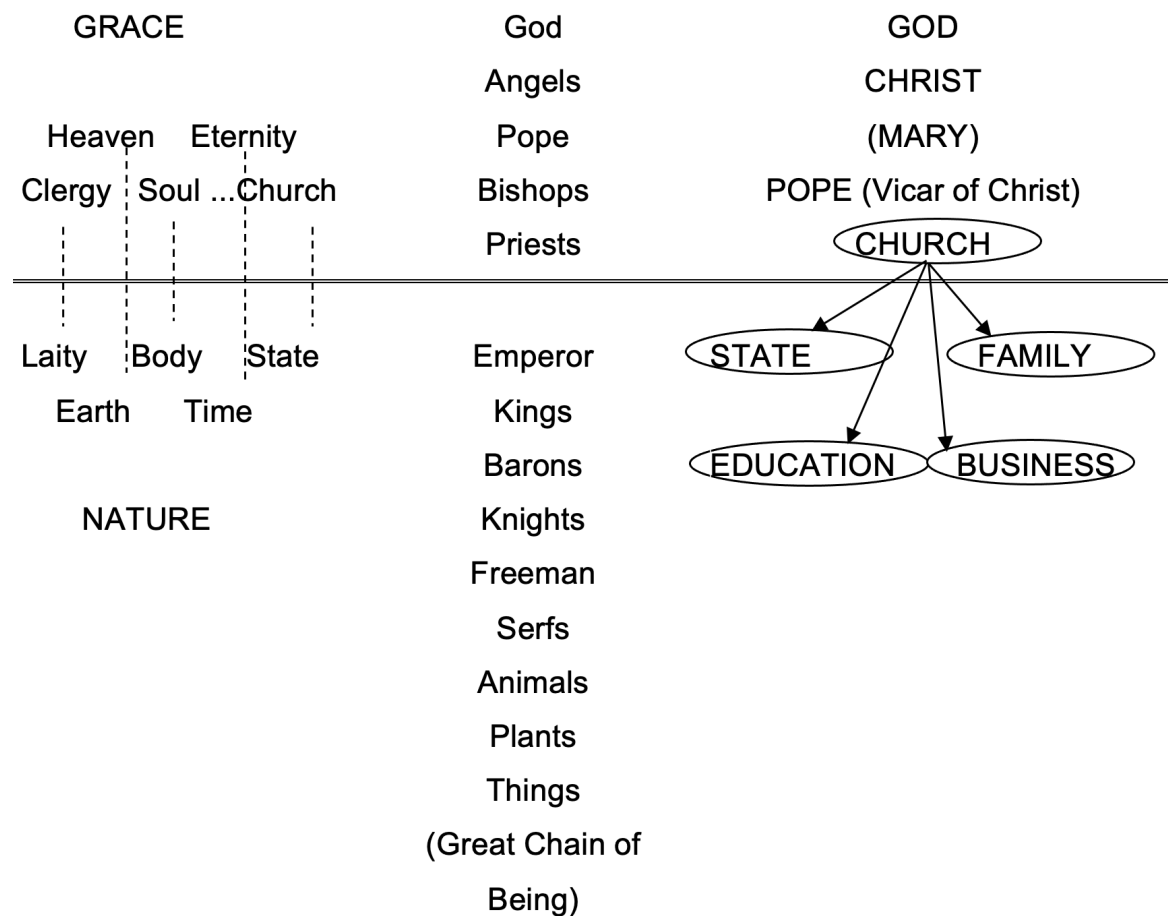
There is a virtue and a dominant characteristic for each class. Education is the production and selection of citizens to meet the needs of the state (incl. infanticide and selective breeding). The city would incur divine judgement (nemesis) if the wrong kind of person got into the wrong job - if a soldier ruled, for example. The pattern was a period of education, then a test; a predetermined number are selected out and become workers; another period, then a test; soldiers selected out; then gymnastics, music, literature and 10 years of maths (abstract and therefore related to the real world) before becoming a philosopher/ruler in one's 40s. (Compare our education system - O-level/A-level/University, + 1944 education. act: Grammar school/secondary technical/secondary modern) Women were to be included. The curriculum was Gymnastics, Music, Literature, Maths, Dialectics (philosophy). Dionysian ('pop') music was out, martial music was in; the whole curriculum was geared towards producing obedient citizens for the state. Although Plato's model of a republic was never implemented, the idea of exclusive state control of education has been around ever since.

Later, Alexander's Greek world empire reflected this strong doctrine of salvation and messianic view of Greek culture, leading to conflicts in Paul's day - where was salvation to be found - in Greek culture or in the people of God?

## 2. The History of Educational Theory and Practice Turning Points

### Medieval Education

Medieval Worldview (a synthesis of Christian and Graeco-Roman pagan worldviews > Dualism):



On this scheme all things are viewed hierarchically - the top is near God, the further down you go, the further away you are from God.

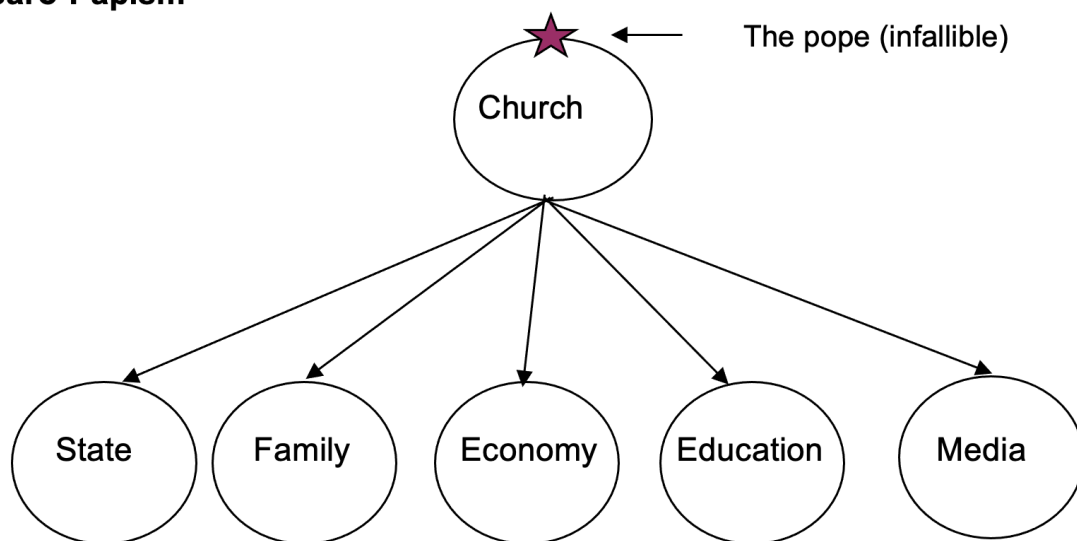
In the Middle Ages a synthesis of the Greek form/matter themes and the Biblical

themes of Creation, Fall and Redemption (CFR) prevailed, with dominance given to CFR. The same tensions opened up in the Middle Ages between form (soul) and matter (body), leading to a number of polarities. The world was split into two, one side was given to paganism, the other half to the Gospel - a great division between the whole of reality. Which is more important (the question comes with the split)? - of course the top (grace) realm. Of the other realm some said it was of the devil and just a distraction, others that it was there but of a lower order, and it was better to escape to the higher. The laity were in the lower, the clergy permanently in the higher. These two approaches are exemplified in:

(a) Augustine, who saw it as a question of either/or - are you with the world or with God ('world' meaning creation, flux, a source of terrible temptations and distractions, especially women - he left the woman he had children by to follow God); this view leads to monasticism; and

(b) Aquinas, who saw it as a matter of higher/lower - the world is not totally evil, but your priori ties should lie with the higher. The lower is passing away and insignificant. This kind of thinking led to today's secular curriculum/R.E. split.

### Caesaro-Papism



Caesar was thought of as a divine being. The phrases "worthy art thou" and "my Lord and my God" were commonly used of Caesar, thus when Christians started using them of Jesus, they were making a political declaration about who rules that even Caesar is ruled over by Jesus. (This is why the Christians were often called atheists).

**The State:** Medieval Christian Europe took on the same model as that of Plato's statism/totalitarianism, but replacing the emperor with the Pope, and the state with

the church. In this model the state is subject to the church and is its instrument, with the Pope conferring authority on the emperor in the act of coronation (cf. now, the state appoints bishops in this country). Napoleon, however, at his coronation, seized the crown and put it on his head himself, thus declaring his own authority, and his mere tolerance of the church. In England the Archbishop of Canterbury could excommunicate the king, as happened with John and many medieval monarchs, and at the threat of being excommunicated many kings got back in line, since to be excommunicated was to be cast outside the body of Christ into outer darkness, to virtually cease to exist. Excommunication of the king absolved all his subjects from their responsibilities, and from their oaths of allegiance to him, as he was a heretic. The threat of excommunication thus brought even the most stubborn English kings back into line, for if you were excommunicated, then when you died you went straight to hell. Excommunicated heretics were likely to be bumped off at any time, and not by the church, but by the secular army.

**The Family:** The family was contained very much within the structures of the church, and the sacraments (baptism, confirmation, marriage and the last rights) covered the whole of life.

**The Economy:** The various areas of trade were controlled by the guilds, which were quasi-church institutions, very closely connected with the life of the church. There were also church rules against usury and interest which had a significant effect on economic life.

**The Media:** Preaching was the main public media, plus the copying of manuscripts which was again rigorously controlled by the church.

**Education:** There was very little education that was not church controlled. In the middle ages most education was what you might call vocational: boys and girls received education for their roles in life. The vast majority would be sent off at quite an early age to serve in other people's households, to be apprenticed to a master in some trade or profession. Only a very small percentage went to school and even fewer went on to university (for which knowledge of Latin was crucial) - those who did were trained as clergy, lawyers, administrators and schoolmasters. The grammar schools, cathedral schools and universities were all church-controlled institutions, and no others existed. If you were a nobleman who had a private tutor for his children, then



he would most likely be a clergyman, or if not, a layman who had been trained by clergymen, say at Oxford or Cambridge.

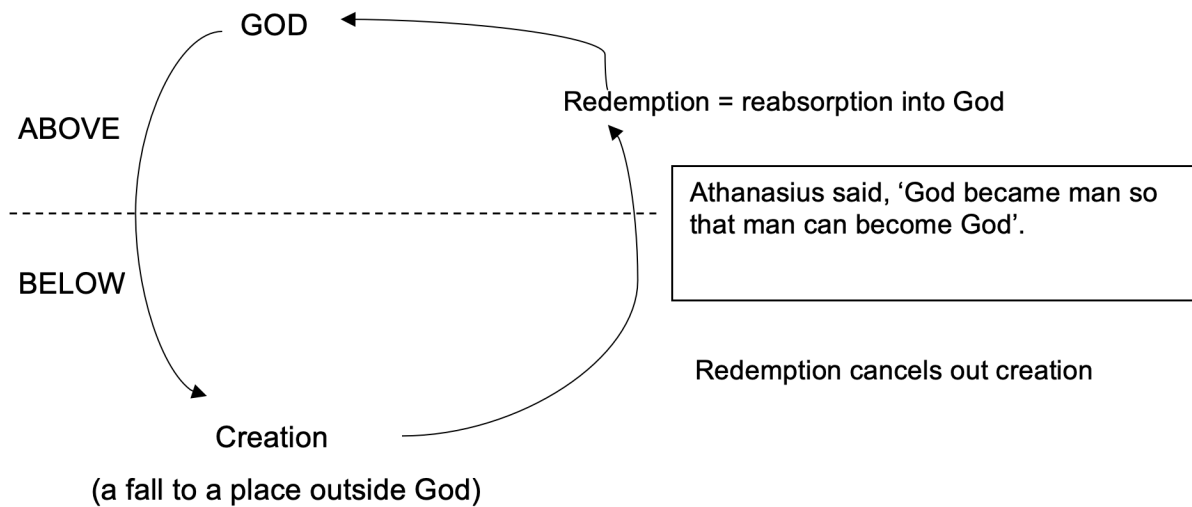
**To sum up:** there was a pervasive influence and dominance of the church in every area of life. Many of our contemporaries today secretly fear that fundamentalist Christians want to reintroduce some form of Caesaro-Papism, with a political version of Billy Graham or some American-style moral majority at the top instead of the Pope. We may seem meek and innocent now, but, they say, wait till we get some power" and we'll become ruthless and totalitarian. We need to be clear on the issue: are we in fact trying to introduce a new medievalism? We need a very clear analysis of what we think is right or wrong about that medieval order.

**University curriculum:** Basically, the universities were agencies of the church for training the personnel which the church needed to do its work. The church, however, was a much larger institution than it is today, covering all there was of the welfare state - medicine and hospitals were a wing of the church - and being deeply involved in the administration of the state prominent churchmen became diplomatists and civil servants (e.g., Thomas a Beckett, Cardinal Wolsey etc.). Churchmen were used to wielding power, therefore they also made good politicians. Main areas of the university curriculum were theology as the top faculty, plus the faculties of liberal arts, medicine and law. If you were a 'man of gold', then your elementary education began with the creed, the paternoster and the Psalter in Latin - lots of heavy rote learning. Then when you went up to the university, which you often did at the age of fourteen, you were still doing a lot of fairly elementary education. In theory you got into grammar, rhetoric and logic (the trivium), then you moved on to arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy (the quadrivium). This curriculum had a great deal in common with Plato's educational programme; in fact, the seven liberal arts was really the staple of Greek and Roman education. The trivium and quadrivium would be largely based on Aristotelian philosophy, which was seen as the prerequisite for rightly understanding the Scriptures and theology - indeed as the essential tool for rightly understanding anything. These were the secular subjects which would earn you your BA, but then the top few would go on to the faculty of theology to study for a Bachelor of Divinity or Doctor of Divinity - the sacred discipline. Those who studied theology, then, had already had their minds set to an enormous degree according to Aristotelian philosophy, so that when they came to Scripture, they viewed it through pagan spectacles. Thomas Aquinas, the top RC theologian and philosopher, whose

works were on the high altar of the Council of Trent at the time of the Reformation, and who defined orthodoxy in Rome right up to the present time, referred to Aristotle as "The Philosopher". A quote from one of Aristotle's works, *The Metaphysics*: "We assume the gods to be above other beings blessed and happy; but what sort of actions must we assign to them? Acts of justice? Will not the gods seem absurd if they make contracts and return deposits and so on? Acts of the brave man, then, confronting dangers and running risks because it is noble to do so? Or liberal acts? To whom will they give? It will be strange if they are really to have money or anything of the kind. And what would their temperate (tempered?) acts be? Is not such praise tasteless, since they have no bad appetites? If we were to run through all of them the circumstances of action would be found trivial and unworthy of gods. Still, everyone supposes that they live, and therefore are active. We cannot suppose them to sleep like Endyrioion. Now if we take away from a living being action, and still more, production, what is left but contemplation? Therefore, the activity of god, which surpasses all other in blessedness, must be contemplative, and human activities, therefore, which are most akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness."

What constituted true humanity, then, was rational contemplation - or for the Christian, prayer and meditation, which were the activities of the monks in the monasteries. Any other sort of life is seen as lower, inadequate, wrong. In this medieval view the final human destination, for which this life is a preparation, is the 'beatific vision' - staring at God in his glory for ever, just being there in a state of rational contemplation, without change or motion. Disincarnation was the theme of the day; the body, human life, culture, and everything around you is a distraction which you should rigorously set aside. According to Aquinas, who had an empiricist epistemology (basically: all knowledge comes through the senses) you can have no experience of God till you die, as God cannot be seen. There is a problem, though, in relating this to the Scriptures. What happens when you are resurrected? - You get your wretched body back again, even if it's an improved model! The Greek view of a human being as a rational mind on legs is very different from the Biblical view of being a whole person, embodied and culturally related.

Many of the medieval thinkers, including Aquinas, had this sort of scheme:



In the Biblical view there is a fundamental distinction between Creator and creation - "In the beginning God created (not emanated) the heavens and the earth". The creation is not some bit of God that he is later going to reabsorb. We have creation, a fallen creation, a redeemed creation and a restored creation: our future follows a linear course, not a leap 'upstairs'. The meek shall inherit the earth - it will still exist; the heavenly Jerusalem will come down to earth, and glory will come to creation. The medieval view identifies the church with the kingdom of God: to be subject to the rule of God's kingdom means to be subject to the church. The reality, however, is that everything and everyone is answerable to Christ - this is not just how it ought to be, but how things are. And it is also what we ought to recognise: it's not true because we are convinced of it, but because it is there (in the same way that you can't make Jesus your Lord, you acknowledge that he is Lord).

The Christian worldview in government actually gives more freedom to other groups than any other system, as it has a higher regard for people and their convictions.

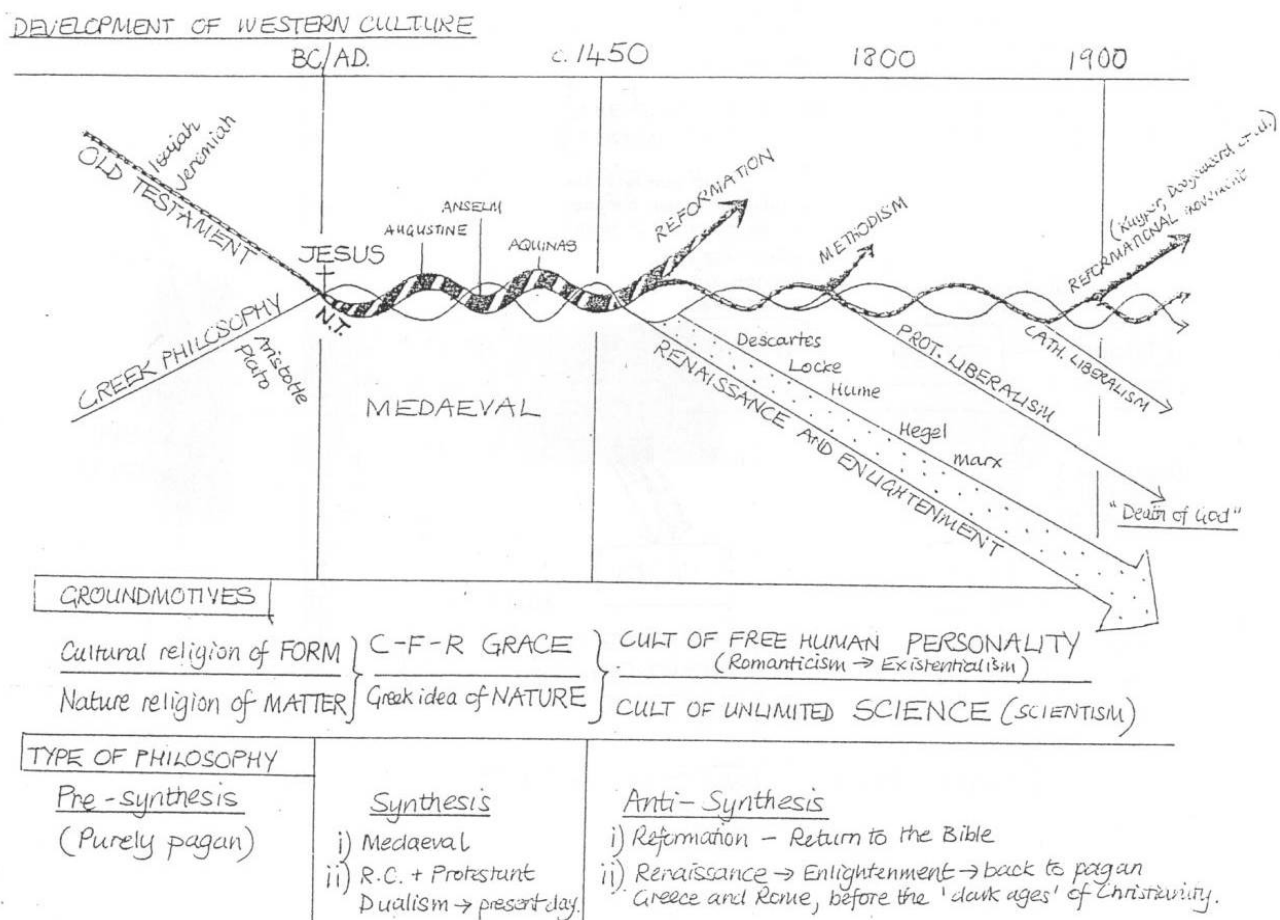
### 3. History of Educational Theory and Practice Turning Points

#### The Reformation

With the disintegration of medieval European Catholic synthesis there emerged three different cultural, religious, political and educational directions: Reformation, Renaissance and Counter-Reformation.

During the Middle Ages Europe was synonymous with Christendom and was completely Catholic. Latin was the universal language, facilitating free movement around Europe for merchants, teachers and the clergy: the culture was unified.

From c. 1450 onwards, however, this medieval synthesis begins to break up. All



parties involved in the disintegration had the same slogan: "back to roots". They each

wanted to break with this sick, wrong, erroneous medieval mix, and both wings proposed a radical alternative.

### **Reformation**

In 1517 Luther posted up his 95 theses for debate on the castle church door at Wittenberg. In that church were 7,000 relics which were said to be able to release a person from 2 million years in purgatory, if you could pay. This practice came from the idea that a great reservoir of merit had been accumulated by past saints, and that this surplus merit could be tapped into via the offices of the church. The Pope decided to build St Peter's in Rome, for which finance was raised by the selling of indulgences, documents which awarded the buyer so many years off purgatory. The 95 theses were propositions intended by Luther to open up debate about indulgences and the doctrine of purgatory, whereby everyone, including believers, would have to spend ages after death in agony in order to atone for their sins and be purified. The methods of some modern-day American TV evangelists seem tame compared to the way in which the Roman Catholic church milked Europe for the building of huge edifices and the maintaining of a sumptuous lifestyle for the clergy in Rome, who lived like medieval princes.

Luther's idea of getting back to the roots was primarily to return to the texts of the Old and New Testaments, but also in a very large measure to the Church Fathers, who were seen as important by all the reformers. He wanted to offload the Graeco-Roman heritage of classical antiquity and return to an authentic Christianity - his comments on Aristotle are unprintable!

### **Renaissance**

Renaissance scholars, on the other hand, saw the problem as the corruption of the classical inheritance by medieval Christianity; they wanted to return to the life of Greece and Rome where men were really men. They wanted to be Christians too, but Christian Humanists, Christians on different terms. Both the men of the renaissance and the reformers wanted to unravel the synthesis.

### **Counter-Reformation**

There were also many in the Roman Catholic church appalled by the sell-out of their leaders to the values of the Renaissance, and who wanted to see the RC church purged of moral corruption. Indeed, Luther also saw himself as reforming the RC church, the only church that existed at the time (catholic = universal).

This led to the Council of Trent in the 1530's and 1540's, which proposed a serious moral, theological and financial and administrative overhaul of the church. There were at the time priests who never visited their parishes, and even bishops who held three or four bishoprics they never visited. Disgusted by the state of the church, many Catholics were worried that they would lose people to the emerging Protestantism and realised the need to live up to the same standards of integrity. In the 16th century many of these movements were muddling their way forward, constrained by circumstances, not yet having crystallised into their final forms.

### **Education during the period**

Medieval education had been for the clergy plus a few lawyers and doctors; that is what the resources and the universities were for. The clergy, of course, provided not just the manpower for the church, but also for the governments of Europe (think of Cardinal Wolsey, Chancellor of the Exchequer for Henry VIII). The rule of compulsory celibacy for the clergy was passed in the 12th century against much opposition.

### **Renaissance Humanism**

Compare with this the Renaissance humanists who did not advocate the setting up of institutions, but rather the employment of private tutors, as the numbers they wanted to educate were very small. Royal and aristocratic families took on tutors to train their sons for future rulership and responsibility: they wanted control of education to leave the church and go to the princely families. There also emerged a rising current of nationalism as nations began to take responsibility for themselves as nations in the face of worldwide exploration and travel, the opening up of trade and the increasing complexity which these things brought to the world situation. Whereas previously kings and princes had been able to feast and hunt while the church ran their governments, now they needed more training to actually rule.

The aim of renaissance education was thus to prepare sons of the nobility for the practicalities of power: how to get it and keep it (cf. Machiavelli's "The Prince", in which he advocates as a means to power the eradication of the whole ruling family at once) \* The medieval world of God, judgement and humility is swept away in favour of modern realism: there is only nature, man and power, and what matters is who

gets it. In addition, a prince's public image was of great importance - he must appear worthy of holding power, and have bearing, dignity and style.

Other important works on the theme were Thomas Elyot's *The Governor* and, Castiglione's *The Courtier*. The ideal of Renaissance education was the *homo universale*, the all-round man, competent in every situation, and very strong elements of this ideal persist in the English public school system. There were three elements to this education: the first was that of knightly exercises of a quasi-military nature such as jousting, fencing and hunting, needed to develop skills for war. Literary studies were also pursued, as a ruler had to be a man of culture, always ready with words and capable of writing elegant prose, who would need to make speeches and noble proclamations with style, dignity, and above all, elegance. Knowledge of the classics was indispensable, and these were quoted to demonstrate one's superior learning. The third element of Renaissance education was that of courtly manners: knowing the ways of relating to and addressing people at court.

### **Roman Catholicism**

One of John Calvin's fellow students at Paris was Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. This was a quasi-military order of highly trained, disciplined, committed and educated men which was intended to form a cultural, intellectual and theological vanguard against the spread of Protestantism, to regain Europe for Rome. They aimed:

(i) to come alongside existing RC rulers to be their priests, consciences and advisors - targeting the most influential rulers in order to keep them or get them back on the 'right' path of orthodox Catholic doctrine. In order to achieve this aim, they obviously had to be trained to the highest levels. In contrast, one of the scandals of medieval Christianity had been that many priests could not read Latin, or if they could read the services, they did not understand them.

(ii) They wanted to renovate the RC education system and set up new institutions to train the clergy and the sons of the aristocracy - a training that would be recognised as good enough for the latter not to be given private tutors. They offered training for the aristocratic role in society, but kept within the Catholic tradition, and to this end they set up secondary schools, reformed the existing universities and founded new ones. (In Britain the Jesuits were banned, deported and put under the death penalty during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth 1, as they were recognised as a threat to the government).

## **Reformation**

The movement was highly diverse, but the crucial need for education for all was a prominent feature. The prime reasons for this were the need for all the people to have access to the Scriptures, and hence to read, and also the newly discovered concept of the priesthood of all believers.

Thus, the idea of universal education was introduced: and education not tied to wealth or career, and not conceived in terms of human rights, as it has been seen in modern times, but as a requirement for people to be able to serve God as they should.

### **1. The Anglican Church**

In England Henry VIII declared himself supreme governor of the Church of England, replacing the Pope and taking on his role over the English church (NB. the doctrine of the divine right of kings stems from the notion of papal infallibility). All education was finally controlled by the monarch, as head of church and state, although in practice the church still ran education, and those with the task of educating had to subscribe to the articles of the Anglican church. There was an explosion of education, financed by money gained from the dissolution of the monasteries, plus hand-outs made by Henry VIII to his friends to pay them off and encourage them not to try to reverse the process of the Reformation. Merchants also paid for schools to be established, as a bulwark against Catholicism and a national bulwark against threats from continental Europe. Also, with the rise of the mercantile class there was a growing demand for competent, trustworthy people.

### **2. The Lutheran Church**

Germany at the time of the Reformation was a collection of feudal states each run by its own prince. Luther aimed at reforming the RC church, but as the church itself did not appreciate this concern, he had no option but to turn to the local autocratic princes, under whose auspices to carry out reform. Luther believed that the religion of the people should be that of the prince, thus a territorial church developed, with churches and schools (which were run by the churches) governed by the princes, from the top down.

### **3. The Calvinists**

Geneva was at this time a sort of republic, not an aristocracy with princes or kings.



Calvin himself was very keen on separation of church and state, being opposed both to a state church and a church state, and in Geneva there was a very clear distinction between the church authorities (the company of pastors - clergy and leading laity) and the state authorities (a separate governing council), with the latter not permitted to bring their staff of office into church. The system, however, was not fully worked out and many overlaps of function occurred. Education was seen as a joint responsibility, but again the distinctions were not clear. Calvin started an academy which became the training ground for leaders of the Reformation from all over Europe (e.g. John Knox studied there), and educational institutions played a crucial role in the city.

The reformers were preoccupied with replacing or retraining the corrupt papist' clergy with people who knew their Bibles (and therefore their Greek, Hebrew and Latin), but they were also concerned to prepare the officers of the state for their increasingly complex duties, as well as to educate the general population in basic literacy and numeracy. A kind of pyramid structure was envisaged: the basics for everyone (and the training of Christian youth, not to be merely head-knowledge), while some would need higher forms of education.

Although Luther and Calvin had great hopes of a new Christian order where the Gospel would bring blessing on all areas of life, tragically the means of achieving this goal was beyond their grasp. This, together with the dissipation of their energies by the wars of the period meant that the curriculum ended up almost the same as that of the RC institutions. Melancthon, for example, is called "the educator of Germany", but his program consisted in lots of Bible and lots of Aristotle, and throughout Europe the pagan classical heritage remained. This heritage was carried along as empty baggage and has led to Christians in the modern world being left on the conservative side lines of debate and action. For the reformers had a big vision for education, but only changed some cosmetic details instead of changing the nature of the beast.

**Reformation:**

Luther	1483 - 1546	Tyndale	1494 - 1536
Calvin	1509 - 1564	Beza	1519 - 1605
Zwingli	1484 - 1531	Bucer	1491 - 1551
Knox	1514 - 1572	Hooker	1554 - 1600
Melanchthon	1497 - 1560		

**Roman Catholicism:**

Leo X	1475 - 1521 (Pope 1513 onwards)
Sixtus V	1521 - 1590 (Pope 1585 onwards)
Ignatius Loyola	1491 - 1556

**Renaissance Humanism:**

Machiavelli	1469 - 1527
Pico della Mirandola	1463 - 1494
Erasmus	1466 - 1536
Socinus	1539 - 1604
Pomponazzi	1464 - 1525

Castiglione <i>The Courtier</i>	1528
Elyot <i>The Governor</i>	1531

## 4. History of Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

### Developments of Reformation Ideas in Education

Early Protestant Luther was concerned with the complete reformation of Catholic higher education - scholastic theology, philosophy and logic. He did not merely want the old framework thrown out, but a new one to take its place with a Biblical vision of life. Luther had rejected Aristotle as a malign influence ("idiotic ass"), but Philipp Melanchthon, who was assigned the task of restructuring German philosophy and education, ended up dragging him back in as the best of the available alternatives. The very teaching which had characterised and dominated the previous two or three centuries of medieval Catholicism was on the one hand being repudiated on the basis of a rediscovery of a Biblical vision of life very different to Aristotle's, and yet as soon as the reformers came down to the serious business of education, Aristotle was brought back in again. (cf. quotes on p6 of Richard Russell's MEd thesis, "Reason and Commitment in Education", 1976.) Melanchthon advocates taking Aristotle as the "principal guide" but allows ideas to be taken now and then from other authors as well precisely the attitude of Thomas Aquinas back in the 13th century, who really defined Catholic orthodoxy right up to the present day. Melanchthon feared that if Aristotle were neglected there would follow "great confusion of doctrine", so the pagan Aristotle was put on a pedestal by the Christians, and venerated. Protestant Christianity and Aristotelianism were made into one package, so any other philosophy was regarded as heretical and un-Christian. From this thinking stems the church's very negative attitude to the rise of modern science, much of which was critical of Aristotelian physics, hence the Protestant church became out of touch with new developments coming from the Renaissance. (In subsequent history, too, Christians have all too often tried to catch up with the latest ideas, only to find by the time they've changed all their doctrine that the ideas are 50 years old. Trying to appear acceptable and in line with modern thought, they have always ended up second-hand and out of date, instead of being proactive and developing things, and leaving other people with the problem of reacting to them.)

### Holland

About a century later, Descartes was his writing in Holland, where he was on the run from the Catholic authorities in France because of his criticism of Aristotle, Aquinas and the Thomistic tradition (although he carried on being a Roman Catholic, of sorts). Holland was a Protestant

country with a strong belief in the freedom of thought, and not given to the use of torture and summary execution, as were most of the other countries of Europe at the time. So, it became a haven for people who were out of line with conventional thought, for whatever reason. At the heart of Descartes' work was the desire for certainty, some rock we can build our lives on, and he looked to the mathematicians (the only group he could see which was not a mass of disputations) for a method. Such a method must build on self-evident axioms and proceed by irrefutable logical steps to build up an argument. What are these basic axioms? Descartes said we need to use the acids of doubt to remove the sand and reveal the rock which cannot be doubted. This doubt touches the existence of the universe, of other people, his own body, God ... what is left is the thinking mind: cogito ergo sum. From his own self-existence, he proceeds to argue various deductions, and does come up with a notion of God (somewhat made in his own image), and a rather mathematical universe. Descartes starts from his own self-existence without reference to anything else (cf. God's revelation of himself to Moses as "I am who I am"), a fundamental repudiation of what Calvin says, namely that man's self-knowledge depends on his knowledge of God, because he is made in the image of God. This new anthropocentric humanist philosophy caused quite a stir in Holland, and was opposed by the reformed theologians, but on the grounds that:

(i) it was contrary to Aristotle, and

(ii) that because Aristotelianism was so fundamental to all education the youth needed to understand its terms and categories. So, 100 years after Melancthon the same arguments were being used - criticism of Cartesianism was purely on the basis of whether or not it agreed with the current system.

## **Britain**

The Puritan divine, John Owen, (Cromwell' s chaplain and vice-chancellor of Oxford University) spoke of theology as "the queen and mistress of the other branches of learning"; a clearly Thomistic view, which envisages a hierarchy of disciplines with the higher ones dealing with ultimate reality and the lower ones being subservient to them, and no concept of there being many callings in the world, all of which God is interested in. At Oxford, even during the Commonwealth period, a very degenerate form of Aristotelianism was being taught, while in Cambridge they were hooked on Plato (Neo-platonism). In fact, during the 1650' s - 1670' s there was a whole movement called Cambridge Platonism, a very deliberate synthesis of Christianity and Platonism, seeing them as totally compatible and mutually illuminating. The message for us is to beware of looking around at what is already on the market as regards educational thought, and picking out the least compromising bits - we will only end up split

along the same lines as the community outside and fighting out the same battles.

As Christians in our century, we have been cut off from our heritage by our basically humanist education which (a) generally doesn't mention our heritage, and (b) when it does mention it, has some hard things to say about it (e.g., the Inquisitions, beating children, opposition to modern science ... ). Both in terms of the past and the present we suffer from a chronic inferiority complex, and we have little to say in defence of ourselves because we don't know what that past has been.

Inquisitions, beating children, opposition to modern science ...). Both in terms of the past and the present we suffer from a chronic inferiority complex, and we have little to say in defence of ourselves because we don't know what that past has been.

## 5. History of Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

The Reformation break into an authentic Biblical direction collapsed rapidly back into the ongoing medieval strand, and the Lutheran /Reformed traditions after Luther and Calvin are often referred to as "scholastic Lutheran/scholastic Reformed". In other words, they were in continuity with the medieval scholastic tradition:

Reformation

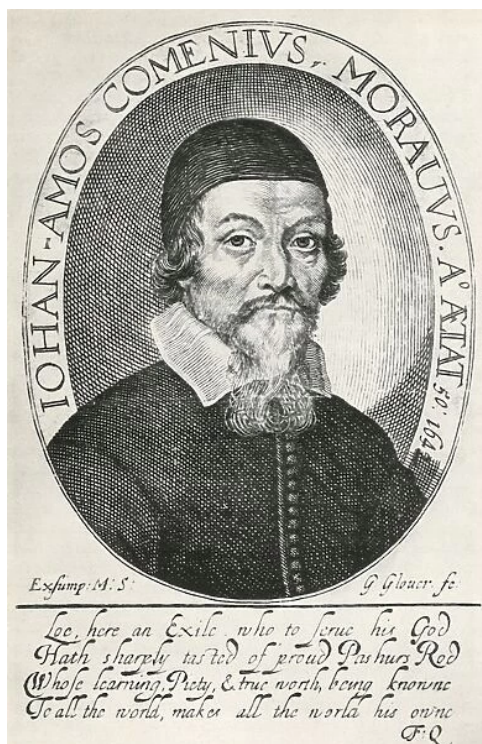
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Roman Catholic

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Renaissance

### John Amos Comenius (1590-1670)



Comenius was born in Bohemia (present-day Czechoslovakia, where he has continued to be a national hero), studied theology at two Calvinistic universities in Germany - Herborn and Heidelberg and was a minister in Poland where he wrote, among other things, his book: "The Great Didactic". He travelled very widely in Europe and came to Britain in 1641 at the invitation of a group of leading Christian intellectuals who were very interested in his work, with a view to setting up some of the educational institutions he envisaged or reforming existing ones. Tragically, however, the Civil War broke out, so all these plans had to be put on ice. Comenius then travelled to Sweden, Germany, returned to, Poland, became a bishop, and lived in Hungary where he set up

a school. A young nobleman who had read Comenius's works provided the land and finance for the school, but after a very short period the nobleman died, and without his support the project fizzled out. In many ways Comenius had a very tragic life; his wife and children died of illnesses, wars were sweeping through Europe at the time, and for much of his life he was like a refugee moving from country to country. Very little of his vision came to any sort of fruition

in his lifetime. He had some influence at different points in European history - certainly in language teaching the idea of picture books for children was very much inaugurated by him, but it was only in the 19th century that he started to become more widely known and appreciated.

His vision: he was convinced that God wanted to bring about major changes in Christian European society (the conditions of his time were appalling, with wars and bloodshed, widespread social chaos, instability and misery). He felt that the best hope for the future and for Christianity lay in educating the coming generations, and the central theme of his programme was to shape the lives of children in the image of Christ. In medieval thought children were regarded as miniature adults (most medieval paintings of the Madonna and child show Jesus as a tiny man, rather than a baby), and there was little recognition of childhood as a distinctive and special period in life.

Children do see things in different ways to adults (cf. Paul: "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child"; also, *some* of Piaget's ideas). Comenius, however, had a great love for children, and made a very detailed empirical study of them - how they learn, and feel, and relate. Before this time hardly any serious work had been done on the subject. The assumption had been that children were little adults, and if they didn't learn, you beat them, instead of asking whether the material was suited to them or had any relevance to them. A lot of the grammar school teaching was teaching by rote grammatical rules for Latin, and flogging the children if they did not do well - an incredibly alienating experience. The notion that learning could be pleasant, that children actually were curious and wanted to learn, was new with Comenius (cf. title page of *The Great Didactic*: they shall quickly, pleasantly and thoroughly become learned"). Many of the older educators assumed that children were by nature lazy and hated learning, so that harsh discipline was the order of the day. Comenius also has a marvellous chapter in the book on how men and women, boys and girls should be treated the same; he talks about their full equality in every way - a startling breakthrough.

"Teaching all things to all men": part of the Reformation tradition that education was not to be reserved just for a certain privileged group. Comenius is emphatic that education has got to be available for all children: he wants universal, free education, for which the church and state together would be responsible. Again, the idea (still around today) that certain people only need to learn what is relevant for certain jobs, merely seeing them as economic functionaries, is challenged by Comenius. All children ought to be given a grasp of everything. He recognises that there are differences of ability, but the aim of a broad, all-round education for all people is motivated by the desire to develop the image of God in them, and to equip them to be stewards of the earth, members of society and servants of God. As to method, Comenius says

that if you are a good teacher, you will be amazed to see what children are capable of.

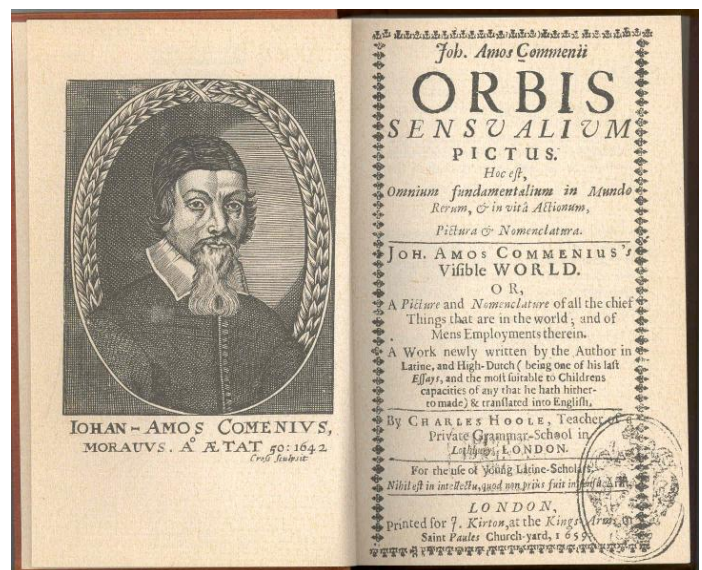
"Instructed in all things necessary for the present and for the future life": it is education for this present age and for the age to come - you don't just educate for life now; and keep silent about the age to come. It is a serious preparation for this present age, properly done in the perspective of the kingdom and of the age to come. In Christian schools today it is easy to focus attention on serving God in this present age, and to take away the eschatological vision, which is the bigger vision within which our present activities ought to be taking place.

Comenius also divides education into four levels: the mother-school (= infants); the vernacular-school (= junior); the Latin school (= secondary); and the university. Never before had a plan of this detail been proposed for education (Plato's *Republic* is not this detailed about education).

*The Great Didactic* sets forth a systematic plan for the whole of education, and for the whole curriculum, very carefully keyed into the abilities and development of the children. And it is saturated in the Scriptures. Interestingly, Comenius spent four hours with Descartes in October 1642. Descartes criticised one of Comenius's books on the basis that he had "mingled theology with philosophy", for Comenius believed in Christian philosophy, whereas Descartes saw philosophy as an independent, rational exercise which should be freed from all religious commitments and prejudices, to work on self-evident principles. Descartes found Comenius far too pervasively Christian in his approach to everything.

Right at the start of *The Great Didactic* Comenius states that knowing yourself is contingent on knowing God, and because of his enlarged vision of life he broke radically with so many of the ancient and medieval prejudices about education. The tragedy was that most of his vision found no fulfilment at all before the 19th century, as Christians were still maintaining the old tradition.

1642 could have been a time of great opportunity in Britain, but with the restoration of the monarchy in 1662 (Charles II) the clock was turned back to the time of Charles I, and the ferment of political and educational ideas that had gone on throughout the Commonwealth period was just wiped out. A very rigid high Anglicanism became the official religion, with





non-conformists being marginalized, all but outlawed from society, not allowed to teach or have schools, excluded from public offices and from attending the universities. 2,000 protestant evangelical Anglican ministers were ejected from their churches (The Great Ejection, 1666), the most conscientious Christian leaders in the country. All the good developments that had taken place under puritanism were rubbished by the return of Charles II, whose arms were displayed in every church in the land, to remind the populace that the king was the head of the church and state. Things went downhill then to a very large measure into the 18th century. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge became a playground for the upper classes, full of idleness, drinking and wenching - a little scholarship continued there, but not very much.

Then in the 18th century when the laws against non-conformists were relaxed somewhat; they started setting up academies for their bright young people who were debarred from the universities. These academies were, in effect, alternative Christian universities which were set up all over the country, and it was here that the most exciting educational work in the country was being done. Also, with the evangelical revival under Whitefield and Wesley there was a new impetus towards education which picked up on elements of Comenius, although the leaders were (probably) not familiar with him, as his works were not yet available in English.

A little-known Scottish philosopher who taught at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities between about 1860 and 1900, Robert Flint, had a major influence in his time on the intellectual life of Scotland. He developed a very interesting, largely Christian systematic philosophy on a major scale, but in all the standard smaller histories of modern philosophy he is completely ignored. Because the basis for his thinking was explicitly Christian, he does not even qualify for mention.

He is just one more example of how much of our Christian heritage has been hidden and needs to be recovered.

## 6. The History of Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

### 17th century

There is a great degree of continuity between the medieval and the 17th century reformed style of education. The solidly orthodox, evangelical puritans of the 17th century were deeply committed to the Bible and to the reformed faith, but also very committed to the classics and the seven liberal arts as the staple of education. (Comenius was one notable exception to this statement: he accorded a much-reduced place to the classics in education, though he did think Latin would remain as the universal language of Europe.)

During the 17th and into the 18th century we find 2 trends emerging:

1. especially fostered by Non-conformity was the move away from the orthodox Christian faith in a more *Deistic* direction. People wanted to get away from the theological controversies over the creeds, the person of Christ etc., and just emphasise good behaviour. A general belief in God was retained, but godliness was for the sake of virtue, leading to moralism. In fact, in some of their educational programmes theology was replaced by ethics. In the dissenting academies of the 18th century, although some were solidly evangelical, there was also a strong tendency towards this Deism, as well as a practical business orientation. Non-conformists had been eliminated from the learned professions - law, medicine, teaching and the church - and so many of them went into business, which was beginning to boom with the advent of the industrial revolution. The academies therefore offered several practical subjects and aimed to pass on a general knowledge of the world, together with basic literacy and numeracy, which would enable people to succeed in business.
2. within the Anglican establishment the Christian side of things was marginalized, and the classics were maximised. There was the idea of "the Christian gentleman", one who could quote Latin and Greek phrases in conversation - a gentleman and scholar first, rather than a Christian, and one who could demonstrate his natural aristocracy by his literacy and knowledge of the learned

languages. Deism again.

In the course of time the classics were demoted, giving way to new subjects, such as the new sciences, modern languages, physics, engineering, physiology etc., but for a long time the classics were the staple of a "good" education, an idea that still persists to some extent today (technical and vocational courses are not seen as giving a rounded education without some component of 'liberal studies' or the like).

So, in the 17th and 18th centuries the state of higher education was a double tragedy. Either you went in the non-conformist direction, and Deism got you, and a kind of pragmatic commercialism set in (which had a lot of good points but little Christian vision). This moralistic commercialism developed into early capitalism and modern humanism. Or you followed the other, Anglican stream with its emphasis on the classics - consider the high proportion of our government who read greats or PPE (philosophy, politics and economics) at Oxbridge, compared to, say, (West) Germany where very many politicians have PhD's in science.

British government and industry have been largely run, even up to the present, by people with arts degrees. This notion of the generally educated man who can turn his hand to anything without any specialist knowledge, is a very powerful one in the British tradition. Also, those who came from the non-conformist tradition and made their fortune in trade/engineering in the industrial revolution, then wanted to move into the other social bracket with the landowning aristocratic Anglicans and send their children to public schools to learn the classics. In one sense even now, the sciences have little cultural prestige, although they are seen as a means to making a lot of money; when you have the money you move to a higher cultural world.

The choice of routes leads either to technicism, scientism, economism or to a snobbish upper-class culture dependent on accent and place in the social order rather than actual learning. Both of these have been profoundly de-Christianising movements, one hanging on to old pagan aristocratic ideas, the other based on modern humanism - in both cases the Christian faith has been left behind as rather passe; the one side keep little bits for ceremonial purposes (weddings, funerals etc.), the other for humanitarian purposes - the church is alright as a free social work agency, as long as it doesn't want to make any other claims.

The tragedy is that if we say the good times are in the past and turn back, we are faced with a medieval package full of problems - we certainly don't want to be neo-medievalists. We need to develop a good critique of where we have come from and show why it was so easy for it to degenerate into these two forms, which are both still with us and form the two dominant popular notions of what the Christian faith is.

In that kind of picture, to talk about Christian education doesn't make very much sense except for seeing Christians as nice pastoral people in schools or taking the children to a Christian service once a year.

1. 'New England's First Fruits'.

Cromwell nearly emigrated to North America; this extract looks at New England. The settlers, having built houses, churches and places for government, wanted schools. The founding of Harvard is mentioned. There is a strong concern for the continuation of the Puritan ministry in the next generation, when those educated at Oxford and Cambridge died. There is also a concern that learned people are needed for government (these two concerns weren't played against each other, they overlapped to a large degree.). The opposite page shows an interest in training in 'the tongues' (i.e., the ancient languages) and the seven liberal arts from the classical curriculum. Disputations, very much a feature of the medieval university, feature here.

2. The Statutes of Harvard.

The entry qualifications are a working knowledge of Greek and Latin. Everyone is to seek and serve God. The statutes have many admirable features. Note 11 says that the scholars shall not use their mother tongue - a few boatloads of Englishmen have landed on the coast of New England and faced a struggle to survive and here in these early days a college is set up with a requirement that the students should only speak classical languages. Culture was brought across from Europe - why did they need Latin? They had English Bibles and were committed to services in the language of the people - they weren't Roman Catholics who would have to say the mass in Latin. Tradition exerted a remarkable power; these people still felt that the educated people of their society needed an education based on the classical languages.

Page 10 of the charter, note 8 - they had to translate the Bible from Hebrew and

Greek into Latin, a very odd requirement which must have used up a lot of their mental energies on a useless activity. The next part, up to M.A., is very much the medieval curriculum.

3. The Extended Charter, 1650.

Education was to be extended to the Indian youth. There was a missionary motivation, and the Indians were not just seen as savages but as fellow human beings in need of salvation; there was no racial discrimination in terms of education. (This is as striking as Comenius' s vision of education for both sexes and all classes, the working category in both cases being human beings made in the image of God.) However, the Indians too had to learn classical languages!

(Harvard's first president was a rascal, robbing everyone, and was fired. He was succeeded by Mr Henry Dunster until his "unhappy entanglement in the snares of anabaptism", when he resigned. They then tried to get that "brave old man", Comenius, to become the 3rd president of Harvard, but he was persuaded otherwise by the Swedish ambassador.

Much of the initial vision of the Puritans, the vision of universal education, was scotched restoration of the monarchy with Charles II.

**Robert Raikes**

Robert Raikes was the proprietor of a newspaper in Gloucester, which had a very wide circulation. He was very conscious of the fact that the vast majority of the population had no education. Children were kept busy in the factories of Gloucester all week (pinmaking), but went wild on the Sabbath, giving rise to all kinds of complaints, for ego farmers did not dare go to church lest their farms be ransacked by mobs of urchins. Raikes, who was an evangelical Christian, also used to visit the jail regularly where conditions were horrible, and he was very



concerned about the Sabbath being violated by these gangs of rampaging kids. He had the idea of starting a Sunday school (a few people had tried similar schemes before Raikes, but none had his scale of vision), and employed a few people as teachers. His basic conviction was that if children were civilised and given some moral values, then they would not fall into the hands of the law so easily and incur the most awful penalties for very minor offences (the penal code was particularly harsh at this time). He was also concerned that they should become Christians, and felt that if they were converted, the whole tone of society would be transformed for the better. The main point of the Sunday school was to teach children to read, and the textbook used was the Bible. (They had classes in the morning and afternoon, with a couple of church services thrown in). It was a school, not like our present Sunday schools, with paid teachers, and it was so popular that within a few decades the movement had millions of children being educated up and down Britain. This was a beginning of the notion of universal education, with people who had no education whatsoever being taught to read, and sometimes to write and do some mathematics. This was happening in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1789 *in* France the Revolution sent shock-waves through Europe. The ancien regime had been destroyed, the royal family eliminated, thousands of aristocrats and clergy executed, and the rest of Europe was terrified at the prospect of the Revolution spreading, as it was committed to doing. It saw itself as having a new vision for humanity: for law and order, for society. This caused a very profound conservative reaction in other countries, including Britain. Some, including the Sunday School movement and the earlier Charity School movement, argued that if the masses were educated, they would become Christians, and God-fearing, obedient citizens. Others said the spread of literacy among the masses was inviting trouble: they should be kept in their place in the social hierarchy, lest the whole social order disintegrate (cf. the present situation in India - riots over educating the "untouchables") (cf. *The Fable of the Bees*, Bernard Mandeville). Hannah More set up some schools on the Mendips for farmers' and miners' children whom she describes as "brutal savages". Her concern was an evangelistic one, and her commitment to the social order was strong - she gave instruction in reading, so children could read the Bible and become Christians, but nothing more.

## 7. The History of Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

### 18th - 19th Century

As the extract about Hannah More shows, there was a strong belief in the idea of stations in life: the notion of class, and of society as a hierarchy. You are born into a particular level, and your responsibility is to stay in it. In the providence and purpose of God you found yourself on a certain rung, so it would be disgrace to slip down and religious revolt to aspire higher (hence the idea of marrying above your station). Order was pitted against chaos, with chaos seen as the inevitable result of changing anything (a Greek pagan view).



Servants exist for their masters. The good, noble and beautiful is at the top of the

hierarchy, while the dodgier bits lower down play their part by getting into line with those at the top. The Christian faith was wheeled in to legitimate this view by endorsing the status quo as God's will. Rebellion against the societal structure would mean rebellion, and would bring judgement. Virtually everyone at the time believed this.



In the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, however, people began to question this, as in the French revolution with its slogan of "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite". At this time a new model attempted to replace the old heirarchical one:

<p>1. [H] the hierarchical model who you are is defined by your place on the ladder. This model permeated medieveal society</p>	<p>2. [L] the leveled model all seen as brothers, equal, on the <i>same</i> level. A violent repudiation of hierarchy and execution of those at the top. Humanist. There is only one estate, all are the same.</p>
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The French Revolution was an attempt to establish [L] through a reign of terror (cf. the Soviet revolution; the result is that the top people in the party take the places at the top). The restoration of the monarchy was an attempt to re-establish [H].

In Britain at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century there was a powerful evangelical revival. All were living in the shadow of the French revolution, and anything which smelt of sedition, getting out of your station or disturbing the social order was uncomfortable to the authorities, who were very edgy and had draconian penalties. If anyone undertook anything they had to assure everyone that it would have no effect.

These two models have been at the back of discussions of issues such as church structure and relations between the sexes, but they impose a false choice, and we should be suspicious of both.

### **Some Consequences of [L]**

The core notion of equality in [L] comes from arithmetic ( $1=1$ ) and is then qualified, eg. legal, social or economic equality. The notion of equality by itself tells us nothing. Procrustes wanted to adjust people to fit beds - does equality mean making all people fit the same mould? (Making them all reach the same level in IQ tests?) Such an approach seeks to minimise the forces which lead to inequality so that all can be treated the same - all children must, for example, be brought into the state kindergarten to minimise the effects of the home environment.

The Bible shows a rich diversity. We are all different,- with tremendous variety, and we also change over the course of time.

### **Some Consequences of [H]**

Education was seen in [H] as preparing people for their station, upgrading their performance and making them more efficient functionaries. (cf. the Hindu idea of Karma; all are reborn into a deserved state, and it would be unjust for the rich to exercise charity to the poor and so frustrate the system. Class ideas were similar - if you were particularly good, you could get moved up a little.) There was an attempt to keep people in their place, to prevent unionisation and withhold the right to vote. Notions of class and station were virtually synonymous.



In our Christian communities, do we still identify people's social class by their speech? Do we have a Christian critique of these issues? What delights/appalls God about the current working class? Does the Bible show God working in terms of [H]? David should properly have been the eldest son, but was the youngest - God, will take people from anywhere, and has no respect for this 'divine order'. Cf. the apostles, Peter the manual worker and Paul the scholar, and the motley collection of the other disciples. Many of the early church were slaves. God looks for faithfulness and single-heartedness. We need to watch this issue of station and class in terms of what we are trying to do in education.

What do we consider to be a 'good job'? In the NT, the question is what jobs need to be done in the community so that it can flourish? There was ongoing development and learning from experience, with the need to adjust and change. [H] focuses on status; we should focus more on function - cf. the NT idea of the body. No form of human activity is to be dishonoured; it all has a function, and jokes are as sacred as prayers.

The status-oriented model locks people into only moving upwards, and there is not enough room for honourable moves downwards (eg. after 50 to relieve pressure or because of promotion above ability, when it would be very beneficial to be able to move down without shame or embarrassment). It also leads to the mistake of having cut-off points, so that from a certain point of entry into a career there is a ceiling on development, with others entering from the side higher up with degrees etc. This does not give room for personal growth without paper qualifications.

Plato, Aristotle and the classics in general remained the staple content of the education of the educated and ruling classes - they were more familiar with them than with the Bible - and this led to the hierarchical, status-based model of society being strengthened and perpetuated.

## 8. The History of Educational Theory and Practice: Turning Points

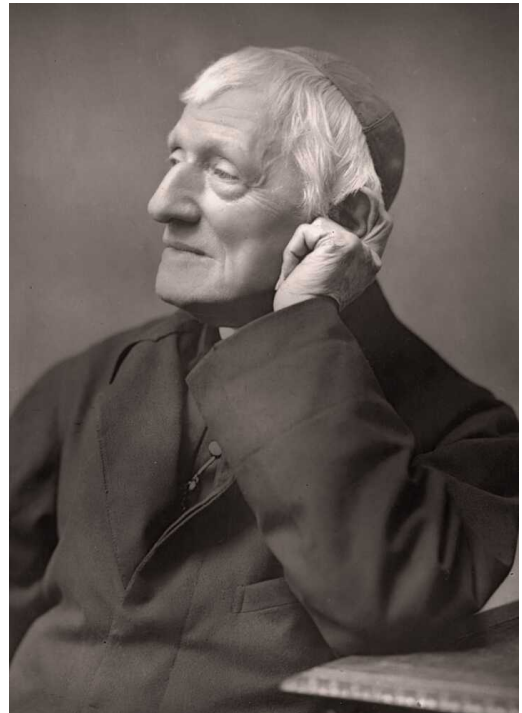
### Mid-19th Century

In this session we will look at the view of higher education which was espoused by different groups in the mid 19th century: Abraham Kuyper, who set up the Free University of Amsterdam in 1880, John Henry Newman and his idea of the university, and other ideas about the nature of higher education which emerged from the humanistic stream (see diagram of Groundmotives of Western Thought), especially Hegel and the University of Berlin in the 1830's. In comparing and contrasting these groups stemming from the three streams (the reformational, the synthetic medieval tradition and the Enlightenment leading to new nationalisms and statism, the secular stream), we will see that they are still very much with us today.

### The Medieval/Synthetic Tradition: John Henry Newman

The medieval pattern is based on the idea that any society that calls itself Christian must have the church as its dominant institution. At the academic level, theology is the dominant discipline (Thomas Aquinas called theology the "queen of the sciences"). This is the classic Catholic view.

Newman came from an Evangelical background, went up to Oxford where he was influenced by the Oxford Movement, a high-church Anglican group, became vicar of St Mary's in Oxford, and some time later went over to Rome and rose to the rank of cardinal. He had a vision of a Christian



university for Ireland, and in his book, *The Idea of the University* (published in 1852), he set out his manifesto for this institution which he hoped to found. The project never succeeded; he put a great amount of work into it, it was launched in 1851 and limped along until 1858 when Newman, exhausted, resigned from it. There were a variety of reasons why it did not work: Newman was regarded as suspect by the Irish for being English, there were differences of opinion, and other reasons. There is much

in Newman's writings that is excellent and God-centred, but he does come from the tradition that sees the church and theology as the most important - what makes something Christian is that it comes under the influence of either of these.

### **The Renaissance/Enlightenment Tradition & Protestant Liberalism**

Two things to note here:

1. The rise and strengthening of modern nationalism replaced the old idea of a federal European Christendom which had crumbled by the 19th century. People then no longer saw themselves as Christian Europeans, but rather as French, English etc. (First World War War memorials: "For God, King and Country" - plays a large part in defining who you are). This still affects us, and in the church particularly we have trouble seeing ourselves as part of a trans-national family.

In this model nation and state get very strongly identified, and statism emerges, along with the view that education, including the university, ought to be an agent of national identity. We still see this most strongly in the teaching of history, which majors on national history and sees other nations as important only when we interact with them. Instead of seeing God's purposes in the whole world, nationalism takes out one segment and concentrates on that part.

*University of Berlin:* In the early 19th century the collection of states and provinces that had existed in Germany started to be drawn together, and the university of Berlin was seen as the emerging nation's central ideological institution. Hegel was appointed professor of philosophy there. Central to Hegel's teaching is that rationality is actually embodied in existing institutions and traditions, i.e. the status quo is right. It was very evident in Hegel's appointment to the university that the young radicals who were criticising Germany were to be silenced: the university was being used as a political institution to stabilise, harmonise, to consolidate the national identity, and to put down dissent. This is still a major strand of educational thinking - education being seen as an instrument of state policy.

2. The other notion that develops in this period is that of the university as a politically free institution. Scholars should be free to write and think what they want, unhindered by either state or church. Along with this developed the idea that the task of the university is not so much teaching, but research. (cf. John Stuart Mill *On Liberty*, written in the 1830's). Classical western liberalism saw the individual as

having the right to pursue his own knowledge and teaching over against any institution, in fact institutions began to be regarded as almost suspect in principle. So humanism develops the twin extremes of sovereignty of the state and sovereignty of the individual.

In the British situation at present, teachers in primary and secondary education seem to follow the statist view of education, accepting that they are state employees and generally towing the line on new exams and curricula decided on by the government. If similar changes were proposed for higher education there would be protests about freedom of scholarship (although the universities are manipulated by government through economic measures - closing of certain departments etc.).

### **The situation in Britain**

In the beginning of the 19th century the CofE set up the National Society for a universal provision of education; the non-conformists set up the free-church alternative, the British and Foreign Schools Society, and right up till the 1870s these two groups really cornered the market. Education was sponsored and controlled by the church institutions, and higher education was almost exclusively controlled by the CofE. This differs from the medieval model, however, in that the statist model was superimposed over it: the CofE itself was largely controlled by the state. The more a school is controlled by a church, the more it resembles church, and hence the preoccupation with R.E. and assemblies as the "Christian" element of school life.

Requirements are very tight on some areas of school life, but for the rest, as long as it has "a Christian ethos". it's OK. Despite all the efforts of C of E and non-conformists to secure universal primary education in England, by the 1870's they still were not succeeding, and much government, private and church money had already been spent in the effort. Two problems with the system were: (1) only "churchy" parts of the curriculum received much attention, and (2) there was much bickering, suspicion and jealousy between the Anglican and non-conformist groups, which led people to the -conclusion that religion was a contentious factor in education that ought to be marginalised. So, in places where the churches could not provide education new County Schools were established to fill the gaps, and provision was also made for parents to be able to withdraw their children from assemblies and R.E. if they objected to the particular religious teaching of a school. This made explicit the dualism that had been implicit all along. Secularists could point to the squabbles

amongst the Christians as an argument for marginalising religion in the County Schools even more, and so the situation came about whereby for the vast majority of the curriculum, everybody had the same agenda, and only the "religious" slot, which was not perceived as being of much importance, differed in the different types of school.

### **The Reformational Tradition: Abraham Kuyper**



Kuyper came from an upper middle-class background in Holland, went through university, got a doctorate in theology from Leiden University and decided to enter the ministry. He was sent to a country parish where some of the peasants who were solid believers began to pray for his conversion. Kuyper was converted through their prayers and their witness, and he came to realise that the vision of life that permeated the whole of society and scholarship at that time was a secularist one coming out of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Within about 20 years his vision had crystallised for a renewal of the whole of society, not just for a reformed Evangelical church, but the Kingdom of God coming in every area of life. He soon became editor of a weekly newspaper, and later of a daily one too, and founded a Christian university, the Free University of Amsterdam, to affect education by training teachers (going for the jugular!). He took over the incipient political party inspired by Groen van Prinsterer and had a great following among the Bible-believing Dutch peasants with whom he had a natural rapport. The Anti-Revolutionary Party struggled for a pluralism in which Christian schools were tax-supported as much as any other schools, and this they finally achieved after much struggle. With respect to learning and knowledge, Kuyper recognised way before his time that the whole of scholarship was rooted in ultimate allegiances, with no neutral ground - hence he wanted a university not a theological college, with faculties of philosophy, law, natural science etc., as well as theology. By the early years of this century (1901-1903) Kuyper became prime minister of the Netherlands.