

Immanuel Wallerstein

4. PEDAGOGY AND SCHOLARSHIP

I'm here as Hopkins's first student because, when I was a first-year graduate student at Columbia University in 1953, he was a second-year graduate student, and Goode's assistant in a mandatory course that we had to take called "Sociological Analysis." I believe it was he who corrected the papers and I have to say that he gave me a fairly good mark.

As you know, we both came through Columbia and then we both were appointed to the faculty of Columbia as assistant professors. Shortly thereafter, Hopkins was placed in charge of the M.A. program. The M.A. program was a rather peculiar thing at Columbia because the department actively discouraged its students from taking the M.A. All students were supposed to go for a Ph.D. If, however, at the end of the first year, usually in April, the faculty in its wisdom deemed that you weren't going to make it, somebody broke the sad news that you were going to be a terminal M.A. At which point they turned such persons over to Terence K. Hopkins in order to help them complete at least the M.A. thesis. He actually probably wrote half of the theses but that doesn't matter. That was his first experience as the supervisor

of graduate students. It stood him in good stead I think.

As you know, in 1970 he came to Binghamton for the express purpose of founding its program of graduate studies which had not previously existed. Now that gave him a lot of leeway on the one hand, but on the other hand he had to work with what faculty were there, some of whom were more appropriate for what he had in mind than others. He established the best program in graduate studies he could under the circumstances. The rest of us came there later. And whatever the merits of our graduate program, I give 99.9% of the credit to Hopkins because I think that the particular merit of the program that we established was its pedagogy which was extremely unusual. I came to realize over the years that pedagogy has a lot to do with substance.

This session is entitled "Graduate Education: The Formation of Scholars." And I have entitled my paper "Pedagogy and Scholarship." So let me talk about that a little bit.

Hopkins and I both came through the Columbia program. He, however, was the quintessence of the Columbia program. The Columbia program had a mode of forming graduate students which was not at all unusual, but fairly standard. It was perhaps a little more flexible than many others, but the model was the standard one in American academia then and still now.

What a Ph.D. candidate had to do with Columbia was take a certain number of courses, a number of which were required courses. In particular, there were required courses in theory and there were required courses in methods. There were no required courses in anything substantive. We called everything that wasn't designated as theory or methodology substantive sociology, a sort of residual category. After course work, came the crucial hurdle called "Orals," because they were oral examinations. The oral examination was fairly standard in form. It was a two-hour session and there were four professors, each of whom had a half hour for his subject. There was a fifth professor from another department, an observer, who served as a sort of moral control. The graduate student had to have different areas for each of the four half-hour sessions. These areas were normally

chosen from among a standard list which was in the university catalog. In sociology, one of the sessions had to be “theory” and the student could opt either “sociological analysis” or the “history of theory.” For the other three, there was a list of about 16 or 18 fields, whose names I no longer remember, but they constituted whatever was then considered a standard field: political sociology, sociology of the family, mass communications, organizations, etc. The student could pick any three on the list. The student was required to find a professor who was appropriate to that section. Since the exam was not written but oral, the student was expected to develop a reading list of a reasonable number of representative titles, and obtain the approval long in advance of the examining professor for the list. Once such an agreement was made, the professor was expected to limit his questions to ones that related to this reading list. Of course such reading lists tended to be modified replicas of the professor’s course list. The student then studied the 20–40 books and articles on that list, and in most cases the students passed the exams. In effect, there was a body of knowledge which the student had to acquire. Once one was an ABD, the student proceeded to work on a dissertation, which was often the outgrowth of work on a given professor’s research project.

When Hopkins came to Binghamton, he changed all that, radically. First of all, the department did establish a series of quasi-required courses. But the most important ones were what Columbia called the substantive ones. And then there was something called “theories” (plural) and something called “methodologies” (again plural). The emphasis on the plural was itself an important innovation. Secondly, all students spent a lot of time talking to him in his capacity as director of graduate studies, and his primary concern was to find out what the student’s interests were. Secondly, as the key person in the graduate admissions process, he made great efforts to (a) ensure a very international student body, and (b) make it possible for people who were “mature” students to come back to graduate studies. Many of our graduate students came to Binghamton after doing something else for 5, 10, 12 years. Here again, Hopkins expressed a different attitude. He thought it was an actual advantage that a student had been doing

something quite different for many years. When an incoming student would talk to Hopkins about what he/she had to take, his response was that the student could take more or less anything offered in the university that he/she wanted, as long as he/she could make a persuasive case for it. Hopkins was so liberal about the required courses that the other professors, me included, never stopped complaining to the day he left. But he argued that every student is different and that the job of the Director of Graduate Studies was to figure out what's appropriate for a particular student. And the first clue to that is what the student thinks might be appropriate.

Now that can be put down by saying that Hopkins was a sort of softy or overliberal interpreter of the rules, but in fact he was quite the opposite. He invented the idea that, instead of the oral examinations, the department would require "demonstrations of competence." The very name itself was an innovation that has not been remarked sufficiently outside of Binghamton. And I don't know how many people at Binghamton have remarked on it. The demonstration of competence—a cumbersome name, I admit—involved a very different set of assumptions than oral or even written exams. The student was required to demonstrate his or her competence, a level of competence that would assure the assembled professors that the student could (a) engage in research and (b) teach. Now how do you demonstrate competence? Well, the first way you demonstrate competence, and this was the really original idea, is you *invent* a field, actually two fields. There has never been a list of fields among which to choose in the Binghamton department. There have been no names. You could, if you wanted to, invent a field which was a standard field. We wouldn't object if you wanted to do political sociology, sociology of the family, or any other in use elsewhere. But if you wanted to invent a field that no one had ever heard of before, that was alright too. The only constraint was that only one of the two fields could be geographically or temporally specific. There was no other constraint on what you could invent as a field.

The student, however, thereby assumed the obligation to prove that it was a field. That was the whole point. What you were being

tested on was your competence in demonstrating that the field which you had invented was actually a field in which you and others could do research over a long period of time and which you and others could teach to future graduate students. The burden of proof was on the student, and that was not at all easy. But it was marvelous pedagogy. What is extremely important is that this system inverted the process of graduate education. The student did not prove he knew the received knowledge. He/she proved that he/she had the capacity to be a scholar, and that he/she had some sense on what problems he/she wished to spend energy for a significant amount of time.

When it came to the dissertation, I would say Hopkins's style was that of sympathetic skepticism. Sympathetic skepticism is a very hard style to deal with if you are a graduate student since, once again, the burden is on the student. The student must overcome the professor's skepticism (although Hopkins was remarkably sympathetic about the attempts, however faltering). But the student was writing the dissertation, and discovering the problem to be tackled; he/she was not doing a small corner of the professor's research project. As Hopkins practiced it, there came a moment when he ceased to be as skeptical as he was when the student started. And that day he pressed the student to defend, even if the student had now become skeptical or fearful in turn.

I knew instinctively from the moment I came to Binghamton that this whole system was right, but I couldn't figure out why it was right. I knew also that it was different. And it's only over the years that I came to realize what this has to do with world-systems analysis. Basically, the concept is based on the assumption that all of us—professors, graduate students, world-renowned scholars—are in a beginning learning phase of our scholarly existence, collectively as well as individually. This is precisely the opposite of the assumption underlying standard oral/written exams, that the professors are in an advanced phase of knowledge, and the graduate students have to be taught what the professors already know. There is indeed a second assumption, which is that graduate students have in fact something to teach the professors even in their first year, certainly by the third,

fourth, or fifth year. The students probably end up knowing a lot more about the fields they invented than the people who were in fact questioning them. The idea that graduate students had something to teach was also linked, and I'll come back to that, to world-systems analysis. The third assumption is that what the student is doing is very hard work. There should be no pretense that it's easy. The student has to spend endless amounts of energy doing an awful lot of reading and thinking. There is no text metaphorically which one can just learn. The putative scholar has to invent. What this really says and comes back to our collective methodological concerns is that the scholar can't be nomothetic. There are no sets of accumulated laws which one can digest and then proceed from that point. They don't exist. And there are no canons. There are no sort of aesthetic models or intellectual models which the student just has to absorb.

Hopkins was attacking the idiographic-nomothetic distinction through the pedagogy. The pedagogy assumed that the student had to work hard as a student "inventing" and then had to continue inventing forever after. Since we're all in a beginning state of our collective knowledge, then by the time the student is 93, he/she is likely to be only one little step beyond where he/she was when 23. This may or may not encourage you.

CONTENTS

Immanuel Wallerstein ix

Introduction

I. GRADUATE EDUCATION: THE FORMATION OF SCHOLARS

Walter L. Goldfrank 3

1. Deja Voodoo All Over Again: Rereading the Classics

William G. Martin 9

2. Opening Graduate Education: Expanding the Hopkins Paradigm

Ravi Arvind Palat 27

3. Terence Hopkins and the Decolonization of World-Historical Studies

Immanuel Wallerstein 35

4. Pedagogy and Scholarship

II. METHODS OF WORLD-HISTORICAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Reşat Kasaba 43

5. Studying Empires, States, and Peoples: Polanyi, Hopkins, and Others

Richard E. Lee 51

6. Thinking the Past/Making the Future: Methods and Purpose in World-Historical Social Science

Philip McMichael 57

7. The Global Wage Relations as an Instituted Market

Elizabeth McLean Petras 63

8. *Globalism Meets Regionalism: Process versus Place*

Beverly Silver 83

9. *The Time and Space of Labor Unrest*

III. SCHOLARS AND MOVEMENTS

Rod Bush 89

10. *Hegemony and Resistance in the United States: The Contradictions of Race and Class*

Nancy Forsythe 101

11. *Theorizing About Gender: The Contributions of Terence K. Hopkins*

Lu Aiguo 115

12. *From Beijing to Binghamton and Back: A Personal Reflection on the Trajectory of Chinese Intellectuals*

Evan Stark 127

13. *Sociology as Social Work: A Case of Mis-Taken Identity*

Terence K. Hopkins 143

14. *Coda*

Mohammad H. Tamdgidi 145

The Utopistics of Terence K. Hopkins, Twenty Years Later: A Postscript

Colloquium Photos 169

About the Contributors 193

Terence K. Hopkins Bibliography 205

Index 309

Copyright © 1998, 2017, by Immanuel Wallerstein; The Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economics, Historical Systems, and Civilizations; Mohammad H. Tamdgidi, Ahead Publishing House; each chapter or part by its contributor

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any informational storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher (representing copyright holders) except for a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

Published by:
Ahead Publishing House (imprint: Okcir Press)
P. O. Box 393 • Belmont, MA 02478 • USA • www.okcir.com
For ordering or other inquiries contact: info@okcir.com



Library of Congress Catalog Number (LCCN): 2016920666

For latest and most accurate LOC data for this book, search catalog.loc.gov for the above LCCN

Publisher Cataloging in Publication Data

Mentoring, Methods, and Movements: Colloquium in Honor of Terence K. Hopkins by His Former Students and the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economics, Historical Systems, and Civilizations / Immanuel Wallerstein and Mohammad H. Tamdgidi., eds.

Twentieth Anniversary Second Edition

Belmont, Massachusetts: Ahead Publishing House, 2017

334 pages • 6x9 inches

Includes bibliographical references, photos, chronological bibliography, and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-888024-98-2 • ISBN-10: 1-888024-98-4 (hard cover: alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-1-888024-88-3 • ISBN-10: 1-888024-88-7 (soft cover: alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-1-888024-91-3 • ISBN-10: 1-888024-91-7 (PDF ebook)

ISBN-13: 978-1-888024-92-0 • ISBN-10: 1-888024-92-5 (ePub ebook)

1. Hopkins, Terence K., 1929-1997—Congresses. 2. Historical sociology—Congresses.
3. Sociology—Study and teaching (Graduate)—New York (State)—Congresses. 4. Social movements—Congresses. I. Wallerstein, Immanuel, 1930– II. Tamdgidi, Mohammad H., 1959– III. Title

Photo Credits: Sunaryo • Gloria N. Hopkins

Cover and Book Design and Typesetting: Ahead Publishing House

Printed by Lightning Source, LLC. The paper used in the print editions of this book is of archival quality and meets the minimum requirements of ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992 (R1997) (Permanence of Paper). The paper is acid free and from responsibly managed forests. The production of this book on demand protects the environment by printing only the number of copies that are purchased.