



Education, Skills and International Cooperation

Comparative and Historical Perspectives

Kenneth King

Education, Skills and International Cooperation

**Comparative and
Historical Perspectives**

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Education, Skills and International Cooperation

Comparative and Historical Perspectives

Kenneth King



**Comparative Education Research Centre
The University of Hong Kong**



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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ASU	African Students' Union
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
BIFS	Bilateral Information Feedback System
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CESO	Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Societies
CICC	China Information and Culture Communications
CMU	Chongqing Medical University
CRIDE	Centre de Recherche Interdisciplinaire pour le Développement de l'Éducation
CSC	China Scholarship Council
CSCUK	Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK
CUSO	Canadian University Service Overseas
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DSE	Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale Entwicklung
EC	European Commission
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECNU	East China Normal University
EFA	Education for All
FASID	Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
FPE	Free Primary Education
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
GUAST	General Union of African Students in Tianjin
IAMR	Institute of Applied Manpower Research

IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICEG	International Centre for Economic Growth
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDTs	International Development Targets
IERS	International Educational Reporting Service
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IJED	International Journal of Educational Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IWGE	International Working Group on Education
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japanese Overseas Co-operation Volunteers
JSS	junior secondary school
KM	knowledge management
K-REP	Kenyan Rural Enterprise Programme
KS	knowledge sharing
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MOLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MSE	Micro- and small enterprise
MTA	Mid-term appraisal
NCCK	National Christian Council in Kenya
NCEUS	National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector
NDS	New development strategy
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
NORRAG	Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training
NSDP	National Skill Development Policy
NUGS	National Union of Ghanaian Students
NVQF	National Vocational Qualifications Framework
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy (doctoral degree)
PTTC	project-type technical co-operation

RRAG	Research Review and Advisory Group
SAREC	Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation
SDC	Skill Development Centres
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
SOVP	Senior Overseas Volunteer Programme
SSS	senior secondary school
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIE	UNESCO Institute of Education
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UKFIET	UK Forum for International Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSF	Vocational School Fallacy
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
VTET	Vocational and Technical Education and Training
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WEF	World Economic Forum
WGICSD	Working Group for International Cooperation in Skills Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YAPS	Young African Professionals and Students
ZNU	Zhejiang Normal University

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Foreword

Mark Bray

It is a great pleasure to write this Foreword in two major capacities. The first is as editor of the series 'CERC Studies in Comparative Education', and the second is as an individual who has known and looked up to Kenneth King for over four decades and who has benefited from significant mentoring.

Beginning with the first, I welcome this selection of Kenneth King's previously-published works, together with his newly-written commentaries prepared through the lens of the contemporary era. CERC has published three previous volumes in a similar genre (Noah & Eckstein, 1998; Gu, 2001; LeVine, 2003). Each has shown not only ways in which the authors' careers and scholarly works developed over the decades, but also how the fields to which they contributed changed. A similar remark applies to the present book. As explained in the Introduction, Kenneth King's career commenced with school teaching in Ethiopia and then doctoral studies at the University of Edinburgh where he focused on the politics of the first education commissions to Africa. Kenneth King then took a post at the University of Nairobi before returning to the University of Edinburgh as a lecturer. From the Edinburgh base he has made enormous professional contributions in all continents, working with and for international agencies, national governments, and other bodies. All the chapters in this book derive from research projects yet benefit from insider perspectives gained through other activities.

The juxtaposition of these chapters within the covers of a single book permits instructive comparisons not only across place but also across time, showing how the wider field has changed in emphases and priorities. For example Chapter 2 focuses on skills in the informal sector of the Kenyan economy in the 1970s, and Chapter 4 revisits the scene in

Kenneth King (2019): *Education, Skills and International Cooperation: Comparative and Historical Perspectives*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC), The University of Hong Kong, and Dordrecht: Springer. © CERC

the 1990s. During the 1970s it had been possible to identify at the secondary level a small number of technical secondary schools and a slightly larger number of diversified (industrial arts) schools, but two decades later all primary and secondary schools offered what could be called pre-vocational education as a component of all-round general education, and the 19 technical secondary schools had become post-secondary Technical Training Institutes. This was part of the massive expansion of schooling not only in Kenya but also across Africa and indeed the globe. Interacting with these changes were economic adjustments, Chapter 7 views Africa's informal economies from the vantage point of 2001, and points out that the understandings of the informal sector had changed from something limited to particular artisan groups in major cities to something that cut across entire economies. "The old certainties of being a full-time pastor, primary school teacher, or government clerk," King remarked, "have been replaced by a new world in which many individuals switch back and forth between a main job and other types of work."

These shifts were partly the result of changed economic approaches in the context of globalisation and major developments in the agendas of national governments and international agencies. Kenneth King has analysed these themes with care, particularly as they relate to (i) the global Education for All (EFA) movement launched in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, (ii) its successor 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, and (iii) the 2015 World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea. The 1990 event was convened by UNESCO, UNICEF, the UNDP and the World Bank,¹ and the sequels were convened by these bodies with additional partners. The resolutions of the 2000 event fed into the education component of the United Nations' eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the resolutions of the 2015 event fed into the counterpart component of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Kenneth King was already sufficiently senior in the field to attend the 1990 event, and made major preparatory contributions to the 2000 one. He thus had a special sense of both continuity and change when participating in the 2015 event. He had a particular interest in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), but also in wider themes from early childhood

¹ UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme.

to adult education. Chapter 9 reports on insights in the domains of TVET and skills from the perspective of 2012, and other writings (e.g. King, 2017) have included insights from the continued trajectory including the 2015 World Education Forum and the SDGs.

In all of these analyses, Kenneth King had a particular though far from exclusive interest in Africa. Much of his fieldwork, as illustrated in the chapters on skills development in Kenya, was locally grounded; but he also had a broader picture concerned with aid flows across continents. The first chapter in this book is an extract from his early writings about such flows from North America at the beginning of the 20th century, and Chapter 3 illustrates his focus on patterns towards the end of the 20th century. Much of his attention has focused on the bilateral agencies of European and North American countries but since the turn of the present century he has conducted much path-breaking work on the African-oriented roles of Japanese, Chinese and Indian development aid. This work has brought a very different set of insights into the agendas for international cooperation on both sides of such bilateral relationships, and has enhanced broader conceptual understanding about power relations in international contexts.

Turning to the second reason why I have great pleasure in writing this Foreword, I have been personally inspired by Kenneth King and his work since the mid-1970s. At the beginning of that decade I was a volunteer teacher first in Kenya and then in Nigeria, and during school vacations took every opportunity to travel not only within those countries but also in other parts of Africa. In 1975, holding a degree in Economics and with strong interest in Africa, I applied for a Masters programme in African Studies at the University of Edinburgh. I was delighted to be accepted, and in those studies focused mainly on Economics and Education. Because of Kenneth King, Education rapidly became the dominant emphasis, and the seeds were sown for the rest of my career. Following the Masters degree I became Kenneth King's first PhD student. I returned to Nigeria to collect data for a thesis on the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme launched in 1976.² I felt that the best way to be anchored in the Nigerian education system was again to take a teaching post, which I did in 1976/77. I returned to Edinburgh in September 1977 to continue work on the thesis. Kenneth King had diligently and helpfully communicated with me by airmail to Nigeria,

² The thesis was in due course published in revised form as a book (Bray, 1981).

and I was glad then to be able to receive further direct supervision in person.

As it happened, circumstances soon required further long-distance supervision. In this book Kenneth King mentions that in January 1978 he moved on leave from the University of Edinburgh to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), which was Canada's path-breaking bilateral research aid organisation headquartered in Ottawa. This could have been disconcerting for me, but fortunately both of us were already familiar with supervision by airmail. Perhaps even more dramatic, and a further great boost to my career, was that the University of Edinburgh advertised a lectureship on a two-year temporary basis to replace Kenneth King. I applied, was shortlisted, and was awarded the post. Two years became two and a half, and eventually three and a half. Kenneth King returned to Edinburgh in mid-1981, at which point I moved to the Papua New Guinea. My three years in that country was followed by a period at the University of London, and from 1986 the University of Hong Kong.

Moving fast-forward a couple of decades, in this book Kenneth King also mentions that in 2006 he became a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Hong Kong. By that time I was Dean of the Faculty of Education, and had had the honour first of inviting him to apply for this very competitive scheme and then of welcoming him following his success in that competition. In what seemed a parallel turn of events, shortly after his arrival I moved on leave to Paris to take up the Directorship of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). Yet the collaboration continued during my absence – not just by airmail this time, because e-mail had been invented; and Kenneth King facilitated continuities by taking over supervision of some of my own PhD students. I returned to Hong Kong in 2010, and it has been a pleasure to welcome him on multiple further visits since that time.

These remarks highlight personal connections and also underscore Kenneth King's observations about the roles of chance and serendipity in the ways that careers and research agendas take shape. They also highlight evolutions within and beyond disciplinary foundations. Kenneth King studied Classics (ancient Greek and Latin) at the University of Cambridge from which, as he explains in the Introduction, he gained a sharpened interest in language and a lifelong concern with the meanings of texts. The classics are of course linked to history, and his doctoral studies were accomplished under the direction of a

distinguished professor in the Department of History at the University of Edinburgh. At the University of Nairobi he was again in the Department of History, but contributed to its Institute of Development Studies. Then, on his return to the University of Edinburgh he moved to a joint appointment with the Centre of African Studies and the Department of Educational Studies, both in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

These labels raise themes about fields of studies and about disciplinary boundaries and interactions. When appointed to a chair at the University of Edinburgh, Kenneth King chose International and Comparative Education for the title of his chair. The series in which this book is published only has Comparative Education in its title, but the editorial team responsible for the series certainly recognises the close links between Comparative Education and International Education. Indeed, one much-cited paper by Wilson (1994) described them as Siamese twins. Wilson had in mind the description by Epstein (1994) of Comparative Education as a conceptual field of study and of International Education as a more applied field including professional action especially in less developed countries. Wilson showed how the two domains had productively complemented each other not only in his own career but also in the careers of others, and these remarks certainly apply also to Kenneth King. They can also be viewed within the context of wider discussions on contours within fields of enquiry, both generally (see e.g. Becher & Trowler, 2001) and specifically in the domain(s) of Comparative and International Education (e.g. Olivera 1988, 2009; Bray, 2014, 2015).

Wilson made his remarks in his Presidential Address for a United States body that had been founded in 1956 as the Comparative Education Society (CES) and had in 1968 had been renamed as the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) (Berends & Trakas, 2016, p.91). Parallel events occurred in the United Kingdom, where in 1966 a British Section was created within the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE), which itself had been formed in 1963 (Sutherland et al., 2007, p.156). In 1979 the British Section split from CESE to become the British Comparative Education Society (BCES) and then from 1983 the British Comparative and International Education Society (BCIES) of which Kenneth King was Vice-Chairperson from 1988 to 1990 and Chairperson from 1990 to 1994. In 1997, the BCIES merged with a related body to become the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE), of which Kenneth King was President in 2015/16.

These dimensions are highlighted here to help readers identify strands both in Kenneth King's career and in the wider arena in which he worked. Not included in the title of his chair at the University of Edinburgh, but very evident in the chapters of this book, are other fields of enquiry which overlap and are related. One is geographic in labelling, namely African Studies. As mentioned, Kenneth King was appointed to the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh in 1972, and he later served for two decades as its Director. During this time he promoted the interdisciplinary status of the Centre and led a vigorous programme of conferences, research and teaching. He also retained a strong interest in Development Studies, evidenced in his career-long membership of and contributions to the Development Studies Association (DSA) and the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI). And in 1991 he was a key member of a small group forming the United Kingdom Forum for International Education and Training (UKFIET), which became known for its biennial International Conferences on Education and Development at the University of Oxford. UKFIET is an umbrella body for a number of professional organisations including BAICE. Its website (www.ukfiet.org) explains that UKFIET "provides a proactive forum for universities, non-governmental organisations, consultancy groups and professional associations to share ideas, knowledge and expertise". The website adds that the Forum's diverse membership is "engaged in research, training, teaching, and campaigning and serve as a significant advisory resource to policy makers and practitioners in government, development agencies and non-governmental organizations". Kenneth King has been much involved in UKFIET throughout its history, and was its Chair from 1999 to 2001.

Again linking back to overlap between but differences in the orientations of sub-fields of research and enquiry, UKFIET elaborates on its history with reference to a publishing initiative. In 1979, the website narrates, two businessmen decided to launch the *International Journal of Educational Development*. The website explains that:

They were concerned about the cynicism that they encountered in the developing countries with regard to the so-called 'experts' who arrived for brief visits and then felt able to write definitive reports. They were also concerned that the importance of education in the development discourse was being squeezed out by economists. They therefore aimed to publish a journal containing articles based

on research into policy and practice in the developing world which might influence policy-makers.

The journal rapidly gained respect in the community concerned not only with direct influence on policy-makers but also with conceptual themes, and in 1989 a conference was organised in Oxford to celebrate its first decade. Discussions during and following the conference led to the formation of UKFIET, as narrated elsewhere by Kenneth King (Watson & King, 1991; Dyer & King, 1993). The *International Journal of Educational Development* maintained an identity different from journals such as *Comparative Education* that had a narrower academic focus. Perhaps in the middle ground was the BCES journal *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education*, for which the sub-title was retained unchanged during the BCIES era and the first part of the BAICE era but which in 2009 became *A Journal of Comparative and International Education* (Bray, 2010, p.712). Kenneth King's publication list to date includes articles in all three of these journals, but with the majority in the *International Journal of Educational Development*.³

These remarks are presented to contextualise the chapters that follow in this book. Kenneth King has made major contributions to the field(s) of Comparative and International Education. Perhaps as significantly, throughout five decades he has uniquely brought his educational research insights to bear in the fields of African History, Development Studies, and African Studies. Few Comparative and International Education specialists have also published in such prestigious journals as the *Journal of African History*, in Development Studies journals such as *World Development*, the *Journal of Development Studies*, and the *European Journal of Development Research*, or in African Studies journals such as *African Affairs*. His doctoral thesis connected the politics of education in the Southern States of the USA with education in colonial Africa, and notably Kenya, and was published by Clarendon Press in revised form in the respected series entitled Oxford Studies in African Affairs (King, 1971).⁴ Alongside Kenneth King's membership of BCIES/BAICE and the DSA has been his membership of the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom (ASAUk) which in 2012 honoured him with the Distinguished Africanist Award. Thus his impact

³ For a list of Kenneth King's publications, see http://www.cas.ed.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/251027/K.King_List_of_publications_002.pdf

⁴ The book was re-issued by Diasporic Africa Press, New York, in 2016.

and influence have been very marked in multiple fields.

With such factors in mind, it has been a challenge to select just 12 items for the present book. Kenneth King has to date (co-)authored nine books and (co-)edited a further 29 books. Alongside these are over 200 chapters and articles, as well as some 60 substantial reports and monographs. The items have been selected for coherence in showing ways in which conceptions of education and skills development have evolved in Africa and elsewhere, accompanied and influenced by the changing roles of international and bilateral agencies. The focus is encapsulated in the title: *Education, Skills and International Cooperation: Comparative and Historical Perspectives*.

Kenneth King has had a huge influence on the field as a whole, and is much respected both in his home country and internationally. I am personally grateful for the modelling provided to me during the last four decades, and I commend this book to readers who may not know him personally but who will find inspiration from both the individual chapters and the collection as a whole.

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Introduction

This book interweaves education and skills development with international aid. It is concerned with both the history of their interactions and their more recent synergies. Its focus is on the policies and politics of their national and international engagement. In the book, the location of these encounters is frequently Africa, but the scene changes to Japan and to China, and also to India. The analysis draws upon my long-term attachment to the Centre of African Studies and School of Education in the University of Edinburgh (30 years), but also to the University of Nairobi (3 years), Wingate School, Ethiopia (3 years) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa (4 years). My insights and changing research focus have been influenced by these locations, but also by building upon a certain amount of serendipity (see further Chapter 1).

The term 'education and skills' covers not only their location in all the formal levels of education and training, but also some of their development in informal settings, including the massive informal economies of so many countries. 'Skills' embraces foundation, transferable and technical and vocational skills, and especially the last. The analysis of aid, on the other hand, is not just concerned with bilateral and multilateral assistance primarily from countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), but it also covers support from philanthropic foundations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In addition, it looks carefully at the international cooperation associated with countries outside the OECD, and particularly at China and India whose so-called South-South Cooperation in the sphere of education is at least as old as the initiatives of the OECD's aid agencies.

The audience for this book is partly the masters or doctoral student setting out to explore a topic of their choice, whether in Hong Kong,

Johannesburg, Santiago or Edinburgh. However, the book is not about the merits of a particular research method - though the merits of an historical lens are acknowledged throughout. It is also testimony to the key role of chance, coincidence and of serendipity, along with career planning and professorial advice, in identifying key research topics to pursue.

The audience is, in addition, colleagues in the aid policy and international education communities whether in London, Bern, Beijing, New Delhi, Nairobi or Tokyo. Many of these I have learnt from over the years.

General readers who want to understand what lies behind some of the education and skill development narratives of the last 50 years will also find many leads and clues here – whether in exploring why it was once thought that Western education should be ‘adapted’ for Africa; or what were the implications for education and skill when the ‘informal sector’ was found to be such an enormous dimension of so many economies. Then there was the sudden consensus that ‘Education for All’ and ‘Meeting basic learning needs’ should be central to both national and international agendas. Often, a single phrase, such as the ‘vocational school fallacy’ has set off ripples right round the international education community. The same would be true of ‘appropriate learning and life-skills’.

Development cooperation agencies and philanthropic foundations have played a key role in both agenda-setting and target-setting, but their agendas and targets have shifted markedly over the last century, with significant impacts on their recipients as well as on the wider narratives about education and skills. The World Bank, regional banks and the United Nations agencies have been central players in these narratives about education and skills, and have directly influenced the policy and academic communities with their changing priorities. The terms such as ‘international development targets’, ‘Millennium Development Goals’, ‘Education for All’ and ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ have all been crucially identified by and supported by development agencies.

Development assistance or aid have not promoted only Western or Northern education and research priorities; countries such as China and India have also been directly involved in education and skills agenda-setting since the early 1960s. However, the language of China’s or India’s narratives about aid has been sharply different from that of the West. They have talked about ‘South-South Cooperation’, as already mentioned,

and about ‘mutual benefit’ or ‘common development’. And they have not focused very much on basic education or on Education for All, but much more on higher education.

These are the concerns of this book: the shifting agendas for education and skills, and the role of many different development agencies in shaping these.

If this volume is to be of value to students or researchers of international and comparative education, African Studies or development studies, it may be useful to outline the history of the author’s professional years so that these different pieces can be better understood in particular historical contexts.

Connecting with African history, development studies, and education in Kenya and UK

Reading ancient Greek and Latin at the University of Cambridge sharpened my interest in language and gave me a lifelong concern with the meanings of texts. Being in Cambridge from 1958 to 1961 also introduced me to Africa for the first time, as there were students in my college from Uganda, Nigeria, Southern Rhodesia (as was) and Tanganyika (as was), and others from Japan and India. Others were British but had families working in countries such as Rwanda.

In the early 1960s, when a large number of African countries achieved independence, the desperate shortages of secondary schools and universities for the majority black African populations became sharply evident. Aid operations, particularly from Europe and North America but also Japan, were mounted to construct new universities and to provide large numbers of secondary and university teachers for Africa. Along with many thousands of others who responded to volunteer schemes such as VSO, which had started in 1958, the Peace Corps initiated by US President Kennedy in 1961, the related US initiative Teachers for East Africa in 1961, Japan’s JOCV in 1961, and Canadian CUSO also in 1961, to mention just a few,¹ I responded to a new British Council scheme for teaching English as a foreign language abroad, and found myself teaching English in the premier school in Ethiopia from 1962 to 1965. Ethiopia’s Emperor Haile Selassie had seized the opportunity to establish the new Organisation for African Unity (OAU)

¹ On this vast multi-stakeholder technical assistance operation, see further King and McGrath (2012). VSO – Voluntary Service Overseas; JOCV – Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers; CUSO – Canadian University Service Overseas.

in the capital in 1963, and offered a large number of foreign African students the opportunity to study in what had been for most of its long history Africa's only independent country. There was therefore something of a Pan-African flavour in the student body of Haile Selassie First University where I also taught English literature in the evenings, drawing on the newly available African Writers Series published by Heinemann (Currey, 2008). I also taught in an extraordinary self-help school started in 1961 by Asfaw Yemiru whilst a student at our school, dedicated to offer good quality free education to poor children. Asfaw and his Asra Hawariat school still thrive on the same principle of providing free education to families without the ability to pay (Asra Hawariat, 2017).

This was also the period, with the end of colonial empires, when area studies centres were being established in order to engage in both policy and academic terms with a very large number of independent countries. The movement was not just a European or North American project, for African studies centres, for example, were also set up in New Delhi, Beijing, Moscow and Tokyo. One of these was established in the University of Edinburgh following the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Hayter Report (FCO, 1961). Illustrating the role of chance in careers, one of my fellow-teachers in Wingate happened to go there in 1964; and I decided to follow suit a year later. Like Addis Ababa, the University of Edinburgh had something of a Pan-African presence with students from all over Anglophone Africa, as well as others from Britain and the USA.

Students interested in African history in the University of Edinburgh were fortunate to have the presence of George (Sam) Shepperson, one of the founders of the academic study of Pan-Africanism (Shepperson & Price, 1959), and Christopher Fyfe, the renowned historian of Sierra Leone (Fyfe, 1962). But setting out on a doctorate in the mid-1960s was very different from contemporary procedures. There were no prescribed methods courses; indeed there were no prescribed courses at all. Several of us elected to attend Christopher Fyfe's undergraduate African history lectures at 9.00 am in Old College. Graduate students learnt a great deal from each other. But you were on your own. It used to be said that if you survived until the second term, you had a chance of staying till the end.

My own doctoral thesis area I came upon completely by chance in the University of Edinburgh library, underlining the need to be flexible

however careful your academic career planning. I found copies of the first ever educational aid missions to Sub-Saharan Africa (see further on these Phelps-Stokes Commissions in the introduction to Chapter 1 below). The exploration of the politics and Pan-Africanism of this international initiative in the early 1920s convinced me of the value of historical approaches to complex educational processes. Shortly, thanks to my father having found a small grant from the Aberdeenshire Educational Trust, I found myself in the archives of black institutes and colleges in the Southern States of the USA, including Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes, as well as missionary and government collections in the UK. It was also a time to learn the key contribution of oral interviews in both historical and contemporary research (King, 1971a). This set of issues is taken further in Chapter 1.

I had stumbled across the Phelps-Stokes reports by accident, but this occurrence was also the very beginning, again by chance, of my life-long interest in technical and vocational education and training. The promotion of what was then called 'industrial education' was one of the central messages of the Phelps-Stokes missions to Africa.

Three years later, in 1968, the venture into the political history of education in Africa, and particularly in Kenya, was deepened by the opportunity to be one of several non-Kenyan staff in the History Department of what would shortly become the University of Nairobi. There were larger numbers of so-called international staff in many other departments, particularly in the sciences, engineering and architecture. The History Department was unusual in having a strong local staff drawn from all the major provinces of Kenya. It had a powerful research culture, a regular conference of the Kenya Historical Association, and a valuable synergy with Tanzania and Uganda through the annual East African social sciences conference (Court, 1979).

Oral history was a special, pioneering strength of the Department of History. My own contribution to this was recording and introducing a book with Kenya's first nationalist leader, Harry Thuku, who had been very active in the 1920s before being sent into exile in Kismayu (Somalia) by the British (Thuku, 1971). A second oral history was with T. Ras Makonnen, a noted Pan-Africanist from British Guyana who had migrated to USA and taken an Ethiopian name to register support for that country on its invasion by Italy in 1936. Although he had gone to Ghana shortly after its independence in solidarity with the Pan-African ideals of Kwame Nkrumah, he had to leave Ghana with the fall of

Nkrumah in 1966. As an intriguing example of the crucial element of serendipity in research enterprise, I was told about Ras Makonnen by a black academic, St. Clair Drake, from Roosevelt and later Stanford University, USA. When we met round a camp-fire in 1967, St. Clair Drake was preparing Peace Corps volunteers to go abroad – and was doing so in the Tuskegee Institute where I was working in the archives. He mentioned that Ras Makonnen had been sent to Kenya a year earlier by the Ghanaian authorities, at the request of Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta who had known him well in the UK. Makonnen had no personal papers; so it was necessary in preparing a book to rely almost entirely on oral interviews, supplemented and sharpened by review of the relevant literature (Makonnen and King, 1972).

Though I was located in the University's History Department, I continued my doctoral interest in education, and began to explore the history and politics of education in the pastoral economy of the Maasai. This also brought me to contemporary educational issues, as other non-pastoral communities such as the Kikuyu and the Kisii were migrating into traditional Maasai areas in order to access schools in which the Maasai were less interested than the agricultural peoples. Thanks to the presence in the University of Nairobi of the pioneering Institute for Development Studies, it was possible to present a first contemporary paper to an audience of economists, sociologists and political scientists. It was the beginning of a lifelong interest in connecting Education with Development Studies (King, 1971b; 1972a). Just before leaving Kenya, I had an opportunity to study the emergence of *Harambee* (self-help) Institutes of Technology in different parts of the country providing a fascinating connection back to the world of Hampton and Tuskegee but in a fundamentally different African context (King, 1972b).

At the end of three years in Kenya with these growing interdisciplinary connections, I had an opportunity to return to the University of Edinburgh having secured an advertised position in African Education at its Centre of African Studies. This provided a chance to work alongside colleagues in the Centre who were concerned with African geography, history, economics, politics, and anthropology. As this was a joint appointment with the Department of Educational Studies of the University, it offered a valuable first connection with comparative and international education through the comparativist Nigel Grant, as well as with adult and community education through John Lowe and, very briefly, Lalage Bown. By this time in 1972, I was

becoming a participant in three disciplinary communities with their conferences, journals, networks and meetings: African Studies, Development Studies and Comparative and International Education; and in all of these there were strong engagements with History.

Stumbling across Kenya's informal sector

During the University's long vacation of 1972, I returned with research funding to examine in more detail the *Harambee* Institutes of Technology which I had been reviewing shortly before leaving the University of Nairobi. I do not want to overstate the role of chance or of serendipity in my research career, but nevertheless stress that readiness to seize and build on such openings is critical even though the roles of chance opportunities do not play any part in most research methodology courses. In the first few days of my time in Kenya, I was looking around Kariakor and Burma Markets in Nairobi – named for the Kenyan troops of the Carrier Corps in the First World War, and for those who served in Burma in the Second World War. I spotted on open waste-land a small number of men who had mounted metal-cutting machines on wooden poles. They were cutting and riveting metal to form bicycle carriers and other items appropriate to strengthening bicycles for Kenya's roads.

Talking to them, I learned they had gained their metal-working skills from a family member in a village not far from Nairobi. Within a day, they had taken me there, to find a compound filled with every kind of metal-cutting machine, all made locally. I had accidentally come across what was, unknown to me, being pursued that very same year by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Employment Mission to Kenya, and being termed the informal sector. I switched the focus of my research to follow these first machine-makers in Kenya and the role of their education and skills acquisition.

Unlike the economists, political scientists and manpower planners who were excited about the discovery of the informal sector for its links to employment, unemployment, productivity and income generation, my concern was primarily with the education and skills dimensions. Accordingly, I examined what training systems were associated with the informal economy and how those differed from training in the formal, so-called modern sector. Equally, I noted the emerging powerful political rhetoric around the slogan 'education for self-employment', as well some considerable international agency interest in non-formal education which had become manifest at almost the same time as the informal sector.

Chapter 2 on 'skills acquisition in the informal sector' teases out some of these connections as well as exploring the culture and context of skills development in Kenya's informal sector.

The role of aid in international education and skills development

Although my doctorate had been concerned with the analysis of philanthropy both in the Southern States of the USA and in Africa, I had not had much direct contact with philanthropy or with international development cooperation since then. Admittedly, my research on skills development in Kenya for several years after 1972 was supported by British aid through the Overseas Development Administration. In addition, my very presence in Kenya, as earlier in Ethiopia, had been part of a vast series of technical assistance projects from USA, UK, France, Denmark, Germany, Canada and Sweden –amongst many others – which were providing the many new universities and colleges across Sub-Saharan Africa with temporary staff while local staff were trained to replace them.

My direct contacts with aid agencies during my Kenyan research were restricted to those bodies such as Swedish SIDA and Canadian CIDA² that were supporting Kenya's technical and vocational schools, along with the ILO that was more concerned with industrial training. Then in 1975, when I had finished a first draft of *The African Artisan* and was attending a conference in Sèvres (outside Paris) of the Comparative Education Society in Europe, I was approached by Robert Myers of the Ford Foundation. He was a consummate networker, and had noted some of my articles on skill acquisition and the informal sector. He asked if I knew the renowned economists of education, C. Arnold Anderson and Mary Jean Bowman from the University of Chicago, as they were also in this conference. They had read my work, he said, and would like to meet. Though I had not previously met them, I knew of their influential edited book, *Education and Economic Development* (1965), not least because it contained the controversial chapter by Philip Foster on 'The vocational school fallacy in development planning' (Foster, 1965a). Also, Foster's *Education and social change in Ghana* (1965b) was one of the first things I had read once I had discovered the Phelps-Stokes Commissions, as he had a short section critical of their approach to education in Africa.

Anderson and Bowman in turn asked me if I knew Hans Weiler who

² SIDA Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. SIDA later became Sida; CIDA Canadian International Development Agency