

deeply enough to reveal the factors that determine the growth of a country's school system. They are all islands and suffer in varying degrees from the difficulties of isolation. All, with the exception of the protectorate, Tonga, have been colonies, and three, in effect, still are. Every one of them is struggling with the intractable problem of preparing its students for two different worlds, the traditional village and a mainland metropolis to which the most able students are tempted to emigrate. It was missionaries who started schooling in all of them, and none, except perhaps Fiji, can afford to support a modern school system without external aid.

The differences between them are striking. Their total population is 4.5 million, but they range in size from the Cook Islands, with 18,000, to Papua New Guinea, with 3.1 million. The average GNP of the 3 colonies (American Samoa and the French territories) is \$6,816; the average of the other 7 countries is \$913. Western Samoa has 2 islands, and Micronesia has 2,100. Vanuatu has had the unique experience of metamorphosis from condominium to independent republic.

Thomas and Postlethwaite approach their task in the same systematic way they adopted for their two earlier regional studies, *Schooling in the ASEAN Region*, and *Schooling in East Asia*. Authors were chosen for each country, and given a firm framework within which to tell their stories, so that the topics they handled could be compared specifically. The editors went even further than this to get statements that are comparable, not only between countries but also, in each country, at different stages of its move towards complete independence. Each author was required to finish his chapter by filling in a formal questionnaire that identifies 'the schools' purposes, administrative structure, personnel, student population, curriculum, and sources of finance'. The same questions had to be answered twice, the first time for the country at its stage of 'classical colonialism', and the second at its present level of self-determination. The authors were also expected to sketch the problems each country faces today, and to make estimates of what might be expected of schooling in the future.

The book is for the serious student and not for the dabbler. It would be unfair to expect a book, so methodically structured, to be lively bedside reading, though some of the writers, notably those on Papua New Guinea, do throw their own revealing sidelights on the scene. Anyone who is interested in a particular country will find the book extremely useful; it is packed with facts and authoritative comments on them. But the reader who will get most from it is the one who will try, as he reads, to compare their educational systems, their problems and their varied responses to them. He can, as he reads, build up his own general conclusions about the growth of an ex-colonial school system, and actively play the part of a comparative educationist. In the editors' excellent summary in Chapter 10, he can then check his judgments against those of two men who have won the right to be considered world experts on this form of comparative education.

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HAWKRIDGE, D. *New Information Technology in Education*. London/Canberra: Croom Helm, 1983, ix + 219 pp. (+ 11 pp. references, 9 pp. index).

The book consists of four parts. Part One (66 pages) surveys new information technology (abbreviated: NIT), setting out to provide readers with an introduction for

which the author rightly claims that it is written, as far as possible, in non-technical language. In this part, the author makes clear that NIT depends on three complex technologies, viz. computing, microelectronics, and telecommunications; he explains that the four principal functions of NIT are the making, sending/receiving, storing, and displaying of information, and he offers a limited introduction to the theoretical elements of human communication. The remaining chapters deal with devices and systems (from which it can be learned that NIT is more than just computers), with makers and sellers (to get some understanding of the forces behind NIT), and with buyers and users (to get insight in the variety of applications of NIT). This first part is not just a bare catalogue of facts and concepts; thanks to the author's style and the many interesting illustrations, it offers the novice in this field the introduction needed to understand the remaining part of the book. Those who already know all about this can skip on to Part Two.

Part Two (68 pages) describes, with many examples, applications of the technology in formal and informal education at all levels: children at home, primary schools, secondary schools, teacher training, higher education, vocational training, and continuing education and informal learning by adults. These descriptions give an almost complete overview (per school subject domain) of the possible applications which are at present available. They are presented in a critical way so that the reader is offered an opportunity to develop his own critical attitude towards NIT.

A further valuable feature of this part is that the examples are organized per appearance of NIT: microcomputers, videodisc, videotex in each chapter, and others (like mainframe computers and cable and open-circuit TV) when appropriate.

Part Three (45 pages) considers the problems and constraints in using NIT in education. It contains chapters on educational, social and political, and economic and technical problems. In the discussion of the educational problems, the author not only takes the objections and resistances often brought against this innovation seriously, but also presents starting points for meeting them. This attitude of not being an uncritical promotor of NIT in education is also demonstrated in Part Four, in which three forecasts for NIT in education in the year 2000 are presented: an optimistic, a pessimistic, and his own forecast. Both the optimistic and the pessimistic forecast are based on views expressed by politicians and experts on NIT and on education. We can share Hawkrige's view that we have to start by looking for the answer to the question: How do we want our children's children to benefit from NIT for their education?

Summarizing, Hawkrige offers us a nuanced, well balanced, well documented, and critical review of the potential of new information technology for education. He does not indicate specific audiences for his book. I recommend it to everybody who would like to learn about the potential of NIT for education; teachers, teacher trainers, teacher students, parents, administrators, educational researchers, and policy makers are addressed in this book and will find it a useful source of information.

In Part One many technical terms are introduced and defined. Readers, especially those not familiar with NIT, will have problems with finding these definitions again, later on. It is recommended that a second edition of this book have a glossary of technical terms.

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