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From all-round to professional education. How young historians became members of an academic community in the nineteenth century

Rolf Torstendahl

When the young Swedish historian Fredrik Ferdinand Carlson (1811-1887) made a tour on the European Continent in 1834-36, he stayed in Italy, Austria, France and for rather long time in Germany. He went to universities in a number of places, but he did not choose them quite at random. His aim was to get a good all-round education suitable for a future historian.

The actual visits to persons that he made took place mainly in Germany, and he said himself that 'in Austria one is not expected to visit learned men'. He does not mention such visits in Italy or France, but goes into details on them in Germany.¹ With a fresh degree of magister (there was still no higher degree in the philosophical faculties in Sweden, contrary to Germany where he found the doctor's degree easily won) he got introductions to some of the learned stars of the period from his teachers in Uppsala. When he met these scholars, he sometimes got letters of introduction to others etc. He used these meetings to widen his network of contacts and paid visits to a great number of professors and often listened to their lectures if he met them during semester. The contacts he sought were from different faculties, but in his diary he commented mostly on the visits to quite a number of philosophers, a few theologians, some legal historians and many historians and archaeologists. For example, he met some prominent cultural men, such as Franz Grillparzer and August Wilhelm Schlegel. Further he met, among others, the philosophers Franz

¹ Carlson's diary from the journey 1834-1836. The Swedish National Archive (Riksarkivet), Stockholm, Carlson's collection. I have treated this diary more fully in my unpublished licentiate dissertation (R. Torstendahl, 'F.F. Carlson som historiker intill 1857' [1961]) and recently also in a short historiographical essay: 'Fredrik Ferdinand Carlson' in: R. Björk and Alf W. Johansson ed., *Svenska historiker*, (Stockholm Norstedts 2009). It should be noted that the diary is very difficult to read and full of abbreviations of odd, personal sorts. Only readable names are mentioned here.

Baader and Eduard Gans, the philologists Jacob Grimm and Georg Friedrich Creutzer, and the archaeologists Karl Otfried Müller, Friedrich Wilken, and Eduard Gerhard. He also met both Karl Friedrich Eichhorn and Karl von Savigny, the most renowned legal historians of those times. Finally, among his contacts were several of the most celebrated historians of the day: Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann, Arnold Herrmann Ludwig Heeren, Heinrich Leo, Friedrich von Raumer and, most important, Leopold von Ranke.

We will have reasons to return to Carlson, but before that some points in his German peregrination should be noted. It is quite clear that neither he nor his teachers tried to lead his attention in a specific direction with the letters of introduction that he asked for and got. They were meant as an opening into the learned world, such as had been usual for a long time. At the same time such a letter was a sign from the teacher that he had not forgotten his old friends on the Continent. Carlson used the introductions as was meant. He called at the homes of the persons he had introductions to and saw them there. Often he got to know their families and close acquaintances, and he listened to their lectures when this was possible. Philosophy, theology, law and history from all periods were the subjects of these lectures. The idea was obviously to widen horizons. Nothing indicates that Carlson objected to this general purpose. The comments in his diary were harsh on what some of the established authorities had to say, but the argument was rather that their lectures consisted of 'loose babble' than that he was uninterested in the matter or found methods inadequate.

Ranke's formation of an academic community

Carlson found something different with Ranke. He was one of many young foreign historians who assembled around Ranke, whose reputation was growing. Certainly many of them, as Carlson, became convinced of Ranke's ideas of history and impressed by his teaching methods. Although, Carlson was not eloquent in writing praise in his diary, he noted on some occasions that Ranke's lectures had been interesting and gave rise to many thoughts. Many times he also studied Ranke's works (his *History of the Popes* is explicitly mentioned on a number of occasions). The impression that Ranke made is also obvious by the sheer fact that he listened to Ranke more often than to

any other professor. From his comments it would seem that he was also allowed to participate in Ranke's *Übungen*.² This is noteworthy for it was an honour to be accepted among the selected.³

While other professors were only local or, at best, national celebrities, Ranke attracted listeners from the whole world. A numerous circle of successful historians looked upon him as the master of their discipline. As Conrad Varrentrapp and Gunter Berg have shown, Ranke was an outstanding teacher for his time. Varrentrapp has quoted some very flattering letters of admiration, but it should be kept in mind that some of these date from the celebration of Ranke's birthdays or academic anniversaries.⁴ Berg has tried both to make an overview of the content of his teaching in seminars and lectures and to analyse the scope of Ranke's influence through the amount of his listeners.⁵ According to his calculations around 1100 persons listened to Ranke's lectures, in all 85 series of lectures. This number is a very rude estimate. The audience at these series had to pay for registration as students and the number of registered students varied considerably. As most original university lists of registered students are missing Berg used occasional observations and different sources to create an image of the variations in the audience. The number of students rose from twenty to thirty listeners in the 1820s and early 1830s to around fifty in 1835 and more than a hundred in 1837, according to such estimations. Ranke's popularity culminated in 1841-42 with over 150 students, Berg's sources say. After 1848 the number of students taking Ranke's courses rapidly sank and was, in 1860, again only twenty.⁶ In passing, it should be observed that there is evidence, as Kasper Risberg Eskildsen has shown, that criticism grew in the 1860s of Ranke's performance as a lecturer.⁷ Berg

² Ranke's *Übung* (Sw. *övning*) occurs twice, 18 Nov. and 2 Dec. 1835, but Sw. *hos Ranke* (= at Ranke's place or, possibly, at Ranke's lecture) is a frequent expression.

³ G. Berg, *Leopold von Ranke als akademischer Lehrer* (Göttingen 1968) 52-56. Berg has Carlson on his list of Ranke's listeners and has taken him down as a participant in the *Übungen*, but with the remark that is questionable when.

⁴ C. Varrentrapp, 'Briefe an Ranke von einigen seiner Schüler: Sybel, Carlson, Herrmann, Pauli und Noorden?' *Historische Zeitschrift* 107 (1911) 44-69, esp. 62-64, 68-69.

⁵ Berg, *Leopold von Ranke*, 51-56, 65-103.

⁶ *Ibidem*, 56-57.

⁷ K. R. Eskildsen, 'Leopold von Ranke, la passion de la critique et le séminaire d'histoire' in: C. Jacob ed., *Lieux de savoir. Espaces et communautés* (Paris 2007) 471.

has used biographies of students to compile a list of almost five hundred names of known listeners to Ranke, many of them attending more than one series of lectures. Berg has also used one preserved list from 1865 with additions from other sources of persons who participated in Ranke's *Übungen*.⁸ Most impressive is the wide span of people from other countries than Germany who have sat at the master's feet. As Berg stated the loss of foreigners in the listing must have been extensive. Among the listed non-Germans were people from all Europe and some even came from greater distance to listen to Ranke. Of course some of these attended only some lectures or seminars but others were there for several years.

Carlson also made friends with some students who sat at Ranke's feet in this period, especially Alfred von Reumont, later diplomat and a friend of Ranke's, Ernst Herrmann, who became professor at Marburg, and Georg Waitz, soon afterwards renowned as *Monumenta Germanica* editor and professor at Göttingen.⁹ He had meals with them and other disciples of Ranke. Obviously discussion was lively on these occasions, for Carlson made long notes on the content. Most often they voiced their opinions on contemporary German historians, especially the older generation, and Raumer, Schlosser, Heeren and Leo were most severely criticised at such dinners in late 1835 and early 1836.

Even if Carlson didn't state this in his diary explicitly, it is quite evident that he became impressed and influenced by Ranke and the young scholars who assembled around him. It is perhaps more correct to say that he was won over to their views and standpoints. He had become a member of their 'academic community', something new that grew up around Ranke. The historical philosophy of Ranke and his wide recruitment of disciples was an innovation of great importance. Earlier, professors had not created 'schools' with a content that went beyond personal loyalty and local recognition. An international academic community was emerging.¹⁰

Carlson became a Rankean and brought the new-found convictions home to Sweden. After Carlson's return to Sweden in 1836 he sent a letter to Ranke in which he expressed his thanks to Ranke 'for the many-sided

⁸ Berg, 'Leopold von Ranke', 220-242.

⁹ Letters from Reumont and Waitz. National Archives, Stockholm, Carlson's collection.

¹⁰ R. Torstendahl, 'Historical Professionalism: A Changing Product of Communities Within the Discipline', *Storia della Storiografia* 56 (2009) 3-26.

benefit that I have had from your instructive teaching' and for Ranke's kindness to him when he was in Berlin.¹¹ A sign of his affection is the Swedish Order of the Pole Star that he, as minister, procured to Ranke in 1877, for which Ranke expressed his gratefulness by sending a copy of his work on Hardenberg to both Carlson and the Swedish king.¹² In the accompanying letter that he sent to his old disciple on this occasion he professed that the gone-by days when Carlson and many others were the listeners constituted the best period of his university teaching.¹³

In Sweden Carlson became an influential professor (from 1849), politician and minister of church and education. In spite of his many obligations he never forgot that he was a historian and he took care to start a historical association with his students of history in Uppsala in the 1860s. The meetings of this association took the form of seminars or *Übungen* in Ranke's sense.¹⁴ Carlson also became the first president of the Swedish Historical Association in 1880, forming a nation-wide platform for historians and publishing a journal, *Historisk tidskrift*, in the style that had become usual in many countries from the 1830s and onwards. In the 1880s Carlson was still busy with the eighth volume of his magnum opus on Sweden's political history between 1654 and 1718, which he never concluded. But historians of new orientations, different from Ranke's, had already become trendsetters both internationally and in Sweden.

Education and the change in the conception of professionalism, 1830-1880

Carlson provides a good example of what happened in the academic discipline of history in the decades from 1830 to 1880. When he went away on his tour in Europe in 1834 his aim, obviously shared by his teacher in

¹¹ Varrentrapp, 'Briefe an Ranke', 44-69.

¹² Carlson was minister for church and education in 1863-70 and 1875-78.

¹³ The letter is dated 6 Jan. 1878. National Archives, Stockholm, Carlson's collection.

¹⁴ R. Torstendahl, 'Disputation eller information. Den pedagogiska linjen i Historiska föreningens verksamhet' in: *Hundra års historisk diskussion. Historiska föreningen i Uppsala 1862-1962* Studia historica Uppsala 8 (Uppsala 1962) 9-48; Torstendahl, 'Fredrik Ferdinand Carlson', 209.

history, Erik Gustaf Geijer, seems to have been to encounter different viewpoints on how history ought to be told and different ideas on method, content and style. In Carlson's late career, when he was not too busy with politics, he consistently worked for historical professionalism of the Rankean model such as it has been developed above.

In the early nineteenth century the discipline of history had little uniformity in research and history was regarded as a sort of general background knowledge. Those civil servants and teachers who took a somewhat deeper look at history needed overview, and surveys were even more general for all those who passed the chair of history (and all other chairs) in their first years in order to get a permission to study at the 'higher' faculties of theology, law and medicine. The few of them who remained at the university and had the ambition to become professors only gradually dared to give up other disciplines in order to specialise in history.

Only in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century the discipline of history started to develop scholarly rules of its own. In Germany some professors had the ambition to specify methods and scope of history already in the eighteenth century, but they worked single-handed in different directions and without any large audience.¹⁵ In other countries diversity was even more apparent. Thus pluralism was reigning in the sense that only a strong personality like Ranke (with his international impact) dared to challenge the reign of diversity and pronounce definite evaluations of states, human actors and events in the past.

Another aspect of the change within the discipline of history that took place in the early part of the century has to do with the form of teaching. Up to then all teaching was lecturing. Professors had sometimes abstracted the main content of their lectures (or an entrepreneurial student may have done so) and such abstracts were copied and sold. Only in the decades around the middle of the nineteenth century printed books began to be recognised as presenting the history that students should know. First, such books were the products of active research by their authors. Only in the latter half of the century manuals and specially produced textbooks were accepted as the definition of the curriculum.

¹⁵ P. H. Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley, LA 1975); H. W. Blanke and J. Rüsen ed., *Von der Aufklärung zum Historismus* (Paderborn 1984) esp. 167-200; H. W. Blanke, *Historiographiegesehichte als Historik* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt 1991) 111-204.

Ranke's teaching through group meetings with advanced students gradually won acceptance. The informal *Übungen* that were held originally in his home functioned in a way that later became known as 'the historical seminar'. This form turned out to be especially suitable for showing how historical analysis should be made. Even though Ranke had, at a period, great success as a lecturer, the lasting effect of his teaching was closely associated with his *Übungen* or seminars as we may call them. Several participants have testified to the enthusiasm that Ranke showed and induced in his pupils at these seminars.

The empathy into the past and the eagerness for its clarification went from teacher to students.¹⁶ Thus it is not astonishing that former participants in Ranke's seminars continued the success of what was new in Ranke's methods of education, his *Übungen*. Historical seminars were started, the first ones by Ranke's disciples, at several German universities from around 1855 to the end of the century. For example in Göttingen in the early 1850s by Georg Waitz,¹⁷ in Munich in 1857 by Heinrich von Sybel continued by Wilhelm Giesebrecht, and in Marburg by Ernst Herrmann in 1864 historical seminars were started – all these founders were Ranke's former students. This form of teaching proved to be very successful and spread around Europe and North America during the last few decades of the nineteenth century. Charles K. Adams in 1869 explicitly proclaimed his seminar, the first in the U.S.A, as brought from Germany in order to make students work with research-like investigations.¹⁸

Already before the era of copying machines students could gather around a table and look at the same text in a printed volume (sometimes available in a couple of copies), but often they had to rely on a summary of the text by the author or the teacher of the seminar. Obviously the seminars depended heavily on the rapid growth of editions of medieval (and some other) sources, for in such editions the seminar participants could find the material that they were expected to be able to analyse. The *Monumenta*

¹⁶ Eskildsen, 'Leopold von Ranke', 472-474.

¹⁷ No exact year is given for the beginning of Waitz' *Übungen* in Göttingen. *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, Georg Waitz, vol. 40, 112-113.

¹⁸ K. R. Eskildsen, *The Portrait of Hermann von Holst: Ethos and Objectivity in Nineteenth Century Historiography* (unpublished manuscript, 2009).

Germanica had become a paradigm of such source editions.¹⁹ These editions were used in seminars, where the professor led students into the text and made them aware of its peculiarities and drew his conclusions from the analysis. This was a new way of engaging students in learning the practice of historical research.

The seminars from the 1860s and onwards tended to become institutionalised in a way that Ranke had not favoured, as noted by Eskildsen.²⁰ The practice then most often took place in specific seminar rooms where students gathered around a big table and most often had a library at hand. The model of seminar work that spread around East and North Europe and the United States thus abandoned Ranke's improvised form became institutionalised with the seminar table as an obligatory accessory. However, students and young researchers learnt both from Ranke and from later seminar leaders to analyse sources with a critical mind. This analysis had two purposes: method and historical understanding. For Ranke and many others at the middle of the nineteenth century the understanding of what history was about, its driving forces and the place of mankind in history at large was the first-hand issue. The forming of a critical mind was related to this overarching purpose as well as to methods in a strict sense.²¹

Rankean professionalism, disseminated through seminars and by his disciples, was centred on Ranke's ideas of history and its actors rather than on historical method. According to Ranke European states were interconnected by a system of states. States were of divine origin and were formed through history and had important roles to play in the lives of men through their organs of a bureaucratic order. Not least important was that states acted in relation to each other through their foreign policy, which, in Ranke's view, determined the internal policies of the state (the so-called primacy of foreign policy).²² Ranke's critical examination of his source material to his *History of the Latin and Germanic peoples*, published as an

¹⁹ Neues Archiv, Hannover, H. Bresslau, *Geschichte der Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, 42 (1921).

²⁰ Eskildsen, 'Leopold von Ranke', 478-480; idem, 'Leopold Ranke's Archival Turn: Location and Evidence in Modern Historiography', *Modern Intellectual History*, 5 (2008) esp. 427 footnote 9; Eskildsen, 'Hermann von Holst'.

²¹ Further elaborated in Torstendahl 'Historical Professionalism'.

²² Torstendahl, 'Historical Professionalism', 7.

appendix,²³ has given him the reputation of being an innovator of methods, which is hardly the case. Some of his disciples, e.g. Waitz and Giesebrecht, became known for critical achievements, but this was no first-hand interest with Ranke but rather seen as a precondition for the analysis of the past. The core of Rankean professionalism thus consisted in his original an innovative thinking on states and the historical embeddings of their actors.

Education and the new professional ideals of methods and methodology

After the middle of the century a change took place in the teaching of professional ideals in history. It was motivated by the flourishing projects of source editing that had won ground in almost every state in Europe. Not only medieval documents and chronicles but also narratives from the modern period were the object of publishing²⁴. As the material to be published varied in many respects – some was poorly preserved, other was partial and contradicted other material, some was relatively recent and some was contemporary with events, etc. – new and gradually sharper principles of editing and commenting were elaborated. In view of this development many historians felt an increasing need to incorporate more of the methods developed in editing in their professional outlook and to make them a substantial part of their professionalism.

Such a transformation was not quite easily performed. In 1868 Johann Gustav Droysen published the first version of his *Grundriss der Historik*, where he wanted to present the rules for a scholarly treatment of history. It was later published in revised editions by him in 1875 and 1882,

²³ L. von Ranke, *Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtsschreiber* (Leipzig 1824).

²⁴ For instance, in Sweden medieval documents were edited in a huge project from 1829 medieval chronicles and narratives were published in another series from 1818 and a special association from 1817 published documents and narratives on Scandinavian history in the ‘modern’ period, i.e. after ca. 1500. Thorough revisions of editorial principles made the early products appear inadequate by the 1880s or earlier. Similar arrangements were at hand in most European countries.

but the general format remained intact.²⁵ It was a meagre booklet of a hundred pages, very small to cover the whole process of history-writing, its methods and its philosophical aspects. The book included some essays on H.T. Buckle's positivism and on history as one of the arts.²⁶ These are much more nuanced than the preceding chapters. Because the main part of the book is a summary of Droysen's lectures on history-writing. The manuscript of these lectures is preserved, and was published for the first time in 1937. After this time researchers who have analysed Droysen's book, have very often supplied what is missing in the book with what is expressed in the manuscript lectures on the same problem.²⁷ Jörn Rüsen has gone one step further and has taken the whole of Droysen's works into consideration for the interpretation of his *Historik*.²⁸ This is, of course, quite acceptable and laudable if we want to know what Droysen may have thought or wanted to say. However it goes beyond the point if we want to know which impression readers got from Droysen's book. In fact his book is an analysis of the formation of the historian's text from three points of view: the method, the systematic approach, and the topical approach (i.e. recurrent themes). I have to quote what I wrote in 2003 about Droysen's treatment of these aspects:

Methodology consists [according to Droysen] of three main parts: heuristics, criticism, and interpretation. The heuristic method shows the materials, which are of three sorts: *Überreste*, *Quellen*, and *Denkmäler* (approximate translation: remains from historical

²⁵ I have treated Droysen's text in detail in R. Torstendahl, 'Fact, Truth, and Text: The Quest for a Firm Basis for Historical Knowledge Around 1900', *History and Theory* 42 (2003) 305-331, esp. 310-315.

²⁶ Wilfried Nippel has found that almost all references to Droysen's booklet before the 1930s went to the essay on Buckle which gave to Droysen a reputation of originality. W. Nippel, 'Droysen-Legenden' in: H. W. Blanke ed., *Historie und Historik. 200 Jahre Johann Gustav Droysen* (Cologne 2009) esp. 173-174.

²⁷ The lectures are found in an edition of *Historik* edited by Peter Leyh in 1977. He presents three versions, a reconstruction of the first lectures in 1857, Droysen's own first manuscript to the *Historik* from 1857-58, and the last printed edition of the *Historik* from 1882. J. G. Droysen, *Historik*, ed. P. Leyh (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt 1977).

²⁸ J. Rüsen, *Begriffene Geschichte: Genesis und Begründung der Geschichtstheorie* J. G. Droysens (Paderborn 1969) 15.

developments in a wide sense, texts from the past, and monuments). As for the *Überreste* there are four sorts plus what goes over into *Denkmäler*. *Quellen* can be divided into three categories: subjective, pragmatic, and secondary. Criticism also is subdivided into four fundamental types, the third of these with four subtypes, with the aim of observing three types of relation between text and author. And so on. This is characteristic of the whole part of the book that concerns methodology in the limited sense (and which is also called methodology by Droysen), comprising eleven pages in all. (13-24) The following section, called *Systematik*, is equally taxonomic in its form, the main aim being to classify historical works as to their type of content, their form, their agents (state, people, church, art, and so on), and their purposes. In the first two of these Droysen frequently uses subcategories. (25-36) The *Topik*, finally, which discusses the forms of historical presentations, is divided into four main parts, taking up the investigating, narrative, didactic, and discussing forms of historical writings. In that part no subdivisions are found.

Droysen's *Historik* thus may serve as an instrument for the classification of different parts of a historical work. However it must have been very difficult to use for the inexperienced historian as guidance how to proceed in elaborating a historical work in a professional form. The latter purpose is not really what Droysen had in mind (as it seems) or, if he had this ambition, it is not what he managed to achieve. It was different with Ernst Bernheim.

Like Droysen, Bernheim was already an experienced historian when he wrote the first version of his very influential manual *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode*. First published in 1889 it survived many editions. The book started with a little less than six hundred pages and grew considerably up to the fifth and sixth editions in 1908 (they seem to be identical) with 840 pages. The following editions did not result in further growth. This publishing history is interesting from the perspective of the teaching of history at universities. The commercial success of Bernheim's huge volume meant that it was available at almost all the libraries of universities and higher educational institutions where history was taught in central, eastern and northern Europe. In countries where the language may have been a hindrance for its use as part of the students' syllabus like Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, the book was yet available at many libraries.

It seems that Bernheim takes for granted another situation in the teaching of historical methods than did Droysen or Ranke. Already by the

title with the word *Lehrbuch* and because of the size of the volume it is evident that he did not regard the book as a complement to his teaching. It was meant to be a book that ought to be studied in its own right, providing all the arguments and explanations that a reader might be in need of. Contrary to Droysen's small book, which only systematised the forms and procedures of writing historical texts, Bernheim's *Lehrbuch* included arguments, why one should use certain methods in a wide sense. A basic division of historical work in its elements is united with a careful examination of the possibilities of different procedures and a scrupulous evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages from both a practical and a theoretical point of view. His discussion of historical certainty and criticism takes up the bulk of the book.²⁹

Even if Bernheim entitled his book *Lehrbuch* it could not be part of students' curricula. It was too extensive and too comprehensive in its ambition to cover all aspects of historical methodology. Thus it was normally used as a handbook where one could find discussions of important theoretical issues and examples fetched from historical literature of different procedures. In this manner it did not substitute lectures and seminars on historical method but was a complement. It also opened up the possibility for other authors to provide a shorter version of the fundamentals of historical method that students could be demanded to read and grasp.

In the Scandinavian languages three methodological books of this kind were published around the turn of the century. The Dane Kristian Erslev published two, first a very short booklet on source criticism in 1892, but he revised it completely later and in his second book he covered the whole process of historical writing within a hundred pages. This small volume was a standard item on curricula for historical students in all Scandinavia during many decades. Another book by the Norwegian Gustav Storm was far less successful.³⁰ Similar books must have been written at the

²⁹ E. Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie* (5th/6th ed.; Leipzig 1908). For a more detailed analysis of the content see: Torstendahl, 'Fact, Truth, and Text', esp. 315-321.

³⁰ K. Erslev, *Grundsætninger for historisk Kildekritik* (Copenhagen 1892); K. Erslev, *Historisk Teknik: den historiske undersøgelse fremstillet i sine grundlinier* (Copenhagen 1911); G. Storm, *Innledning i Historie* (Oslo 1895).

same period in other European countries and languages, for the situation asked for this kind of introductions to historical practice.³¹

The only book that could be a rival to Bernheim's is the *Introduction aux études historiques* that was authored by Charles-Victor Langlois and Charles Seignobos. It appeared in 1898 and its only new edition came in the following year. As to the rules for source criticism the two books agree, but there are huge differences in their arguments and directives for conclusions from the critical procedure. While Bernheim's ambition was that the historian should get as close to the past reality as possible this was not the idea of the two Frenchmen. In a long and detailed argument, where they repeatedly refuted Bernheim's ideas, especially the notion that there is a "history in itself" (my term), which historians have to refer to, they state that the historian's task is to get rid of illusory information and they maintain that the only firm results that can be reached by critical examination are negative results.³²

Conclusion

In spite of the differences, the three books by Droysen, Bernheim, and Langlois and Seignobos were part of a transformation of historical professionalism and thereby also of historical education. Ranke and his followers spread in the academic community of historians the idea of professionalism as a theoretical conception of history as a product of states and politics. This was the foundation of their professional outlook and to be realised it asked for certain methods and certain schooling. The new kind of professionalism that arose from around 1870, when Rankeanism had passed its prime, made methods and methodology the central part of the professional schooling and outlook. In the teaching of history at universities methods and methodology began to be taught consistently. It became the central object of seminars, although these had their roots in the Rankean tradition. In some universities even so-called 'laboratories' were set up for

³¹ This is a hypothesis that I have not yet tested.

³² C.-V. Langlois and C. Seignobos, *Introduction aux études historiques* (Paris 1898) 167. On Langlois and Seignobos, cf. Torstendahl, 'Fact, Truth, and Text', esp. 321-328.

the training in critical methods,³³ though the term was not common. Seminars gave to the professor a chance of exhibiting his professionalism. The historians who made most successful imprint on the minds of their students in the late decades of the nineteenth century onwards were no longer the artistic and narrating lecturers but the authoritative, empathic and learned seminar-leaders who could convince their students by arguments rather than by persuasion. Such professors were found around 1900 in many universities all around the world.

The road to professionalism from the pluralism of all-round early nineteenth-century education was not one single process. First Rankean professionalism unfolded through a community that was influenced, directly or indirectly, by Ranke's ideas on the driving forces and essential elements of history. The adherents shared an evaluative basis, which dominated from around 1830 to around 1870. A later step was taken when methodological professionalism won ground and gradually took over in the following two decades. The accent moved from what history ought to be about to what was acceptable as scholarly history. The new professionalism became clearly dominating from 1890 but had a firm foothold from the 1870s. In both these phases the schooling of advanced students and young researchers into the current ideas of professionalism became a leading object of professorial concern. New methods in teaching, such as (informal) *Übungen* or (institutionalised) seminars, became established as the way of keeping professionalism at a high level in the late nineteenth century. All this aimed at the advanced students. Beginners and undergraduates still had to be content with the traditional series of lectures by professors and occasional junior teachers. From late nineteenth century textbooks for students helped them, though such books were not always favoured by professors, who would have more difficulties to select their lecturing topics, if the main content of the course was defined in textbooks.

Professionalism continued to develop with new phases,³⁴ and so did university education. In the twentieth century the of departments of history within universities, the interest in new sorts of history, the growth of faculty staff and the enormous new demand for university education meant new

³³ In Copenhagen there existed a philological-historical laboratory, instituted on Erslev's initiative, 1895-1938. In French-speaking countries the term has been more commonly accepted.

³⁴ Torstendahl, 'Historical Professionalism', 16-26.

transformations of the whole system. Therefore twentieth-century education in history is quite another story.