"I Had Made a Mistake": William H. Kilpatrick and the Project Method

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Background/Context: *William H. Kilpatrick is known worldwide as "Mr. Project Method." Despite considerable scholarship by Lawrence A. Cremin, Herbert M. Kliebard, Milton A. Bleeke, John A. Beineke, and others, the origin of Kilpatrick's celebrated paper of 1918 has never been explored in depth and its historical context.*

Focus of Study: *The reconstruction reveals that the concept of teaching by "projects" arose in seventeenth-century Italy and reached the United States in 1865 where it served as an instructional device in manual training, agricultural education, and general science. Kilpatrick came into contact with the project method movement in 1915. He jumped on the bandwagon, adopted the two-hundred-year-old concept, and used it in a provocative new way to be not only remembered as a genial teacher but as an "originator" as well. Supported by the "Project Propaganda Club," he had already initiated in 1917 and which became known as the National Conference for the Promotion of Educational Method in 1921, Kilpatrick advocated a decidedly child-centered approach that in New York, Milwaukee, and Bethpage, Missouri, failed the practice test and evoked fierce criticism from friend and foe, including Boyd H. Bode, Ernest Horn, Guy M. Wilson, and John Dewey. In the late 1920s, Kilpatrick decided that in defining the project as a subjective "philosophy" of education and not as an objective "method" of instruction he "had made a mistake." Subsequently, he gave up the term and spoke of "activities" when the students carried out their plans and ideas "heartily" and "purposefully."*

Conclusions: *Historians worldwide have fallen victim to an error. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Kilpatrick is not the classic of the project method, but rather the classical outsider.*

Next to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine,
our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism.
—John Dewey

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In April 1918, William Heard Kilpatrick was sitting at his desk in New York City laboring over an essay. He was getting desperate at the slow progress he was making, although he merely had to revise a manuscript he had already finished a year before. Kilpatrick was aware that his real talent was for speaking rather than writing. This time, however, progress was particularly laborious. "I am so critical," he noted in his diary, "that I am like the antipode whose self-consciousness stood in the way of his walking."[1] His courage vanished, and his fear amplified. Kilpatrick got into a panic. "My writing is so slow as to be almost a failure. I am becoming increasingly concerned. If I do not do better I shall have to take a half year off; and retire to some quiet place and write until I master myself."[2] But it was not to come to this. Kilpatrick recovered, and on May 31, 1918, handed the finished essay to the publisher. While his ordeal was over, he could not rejoice. The result of his labors did not match his high expectations. "Rough in many places," he recorded worriedly. "I am even apprehensive of the argument in spot[s]."[3]

The essay appeared under the title "The Project Method" in the September 1918 issue of the *Teachers College Record*, and—as Lawrence A. Cremin put it—"catapulted" its author into the forefront of American education.[4] To the historians of education, Kilpatrick is the project classic par excellence: he was the one who gave the project method its definitive meaning, who made it the focal point of progressive teaching, and who spread it throughout the world. Without Kilpatrick, they like to say, the project method and the project movement are unthinkable.

This view did not exist from the beginning. The educationalists of the 1920s, such as S. Chester Parker, Charles A. Bennett, William H. Burton, still knew about the traditional concept of the project, as it had been used during the nineteenth century in manual training by Calvin M. Woodward, Charles H. Ham, C. Hanford Henderson, Charles R. Richards, and others.[5] They pointed out that Kilpatrick had broken the mold in no longer regarding the project as a "method of teaching" concerned with "practical, constructive activity," but defining it as a "philosophy of education" founded on "wholehearted purposeful activity." Even friends and colleagues of Kilpatrick such as John Dewey, Harold B. Alberty, and Boyd H. Bode criticized Kilpatrick's broad definition of project, with the result that the campaign initiated by Kilpatrick collapsed, and virtually all educators returned to the traditional meaning. Kilpatrick himself shunned the term project since the early 1930s when speaking about education, curriculum, and instruction.

Historians of the postwar period have missed this controversy. They have trusted Kilpatrick's effective propaganda and maintained in a stereotyped manner that his approach to the project is the sole concept

of import and relevance. Numerous articles and monographs on Kilpatrick and the progressive education movement have appeared that give an, at times excellent, account of what Kilpatrick experienced as a child, youth, or teacher, what he thought of religion, race, or age discrimination, how he felt about John Dewey, Maria Montessori, or William C. Bagley.[6] There is, however, not a single thorough interpretation of the project method, i.e., the topic to which Kilpatrick owed his whole renown. The biographies of Samuel Tenenbaum and John A. Beineke are in this respect as deficient as the standard histories by Lawrence A. Cremin, Herbert M. Kliebard, Diane Ravitch, and Daniel and Laurel Tanner.[7] In their works, they present either a "big bang theory" according to which, in a particularly fruitful moment, Kilpatrick, "invented" the project method, that revolutionized teaching and "all at once" and "unexpectedly" brought him fame and glory. Or else they tender an "irrelevance theory" according to which it is agreed to that concepts of project learning had existed since 1908 in agricultural education, but that these concepts were of no significance for Kilpatrick and the rise of the project movement. Even the best study on the subject, Milton H. Bleeke's dissertation, fails to go beyond the established pattern and remains, like all others, unsatisfactory, because it neglects the early development, and gives no convincing answer to the central question of the project's historiography: When did Kilpatrick come across the project method, and why did he adopt it for his teaching program?[8]

Meanwhile, nearly a hundred years have passed since 1918. It is about time to trace the origin and history of Kilpatrick's project paper, and examine whether he in fact was the initiator and undisputed leader of project education. Two sources have not been exploited in depth: Kilpatrick's eighty diaries and scrapbooks dating from between 1904 and 1961, which are kept at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York, and the ten boxes of letters, manuscripts, and documents covering the same period kept at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia.[9] The evaluation of these and other so far unknown texts paints a new picture of Kilpatrick and project teaching; indeed, all the accepted assumptions will turn out to be wrong: Kilpatrick did not provide the authoritative project definition, he did not launch the project movement, and his essay does not deserve the place of honor that it habitually occupies. Historians worldwide have fallen victim to an error. They have taken propaganda as reality, and discussion as outcome. They have failed to see that Kilpatrick was an ambitious entrepreneur who took up the term "project" because it was popular, and who later renounced it because his definition was mistaken.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT METHOD

The beginnings of the project method go back far beyond Kilpatrick and progressive education.[10] Generally speaking, the "project" belongs in the same category as the "experiment" of the scientist, the "case study" of the lawyer, and the "sand-box exercise" of the staff officer; for, like the experiment, the case study, and the sand-box exercise, the project method has its origin in the professionalization of a specific occupation, and like these it was introduced so that the students of architecture should already learn during their course of studies to work independently and to solve problems they would encounter later as professionals in the studio, in the workshop, or on the building site. In fact, the history of the project method begins in the early eighteenth century, when in Paris the advanced students of the Académie Royale d'Architecture had to demonstrate that they were fit to apply the principles of composition and construction they had acquired in lectures and tutorials. Hence, they were at regular intervals challenged to draw up plans for a "projet," i.e., a building project, as for instance, a monument, a church, a riding hall, a palace.

Learning by projects did not long remain the privilege of architects. With the professionalization of the engineers, it extended to the newly created colleges of technology and industry in France, Germany, and Switzerland. In the United States, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1865 first adopted the project as a standard method of instruction. And it was Calvin M. Woodward, dean of the School of Engineering at Washington University and founder of the Manual Training School in St. Louis, who in 1879 transferred the project idea from the college to the high school. At his Manual Training School, students fourteen to eighteen years of age were taught handicraft and mechanical drawing, instead of Latin and Greek. Successively, they worked in the carpentry, the smithy, the foundry, and the machine shop. There, in accordance with the "Russian system," they first learned the "alphabet" of tools and techniques, by passing through a series of basic exercises. In the machine shop, for instance, they filed cubes, turned screws, and drilled cylinders. Then—at the end of each teaching unit and school year—they were given time to carry out "projects" independently, either alone or in groups. Woodward regarded the projects as "synthetic exercises." The techniques earlier learned in isolation were now applied in context, say in the making of book racks, fire tools, or steam engines. Thus the training advanced systematically from principles to applications, or—in Woodward's words—from "instruction" to "construction." At the close of the fourth year, the manual training course was completed by what was called the "project for graduation."[11]

In the late 1890s, when manual training hit the elementary school, a second model emerged. Charles R. Richards, professor of Manual Training at Columbia's Teachers College in New York, proclaimed—nineteen years before Kilpatrick—that the aim of educative handwork was "to arouse the highest degree of *purposeful* self-activity through a direct appeal to the life and healthy interests of the pupil."[12] Influenced by Herbart and Froebel, but also by William James and John Dewey, Richards reorganized the curriculum. On the one hand, he changed the content of teaching: from the study of "tools and processes" he made the study of "industry and arts," since manual dexterity and technical intelligence appeared to him far less important than creative power and insight into the social aspects of culture and technology. On the other hand, Richards changed the structure of learning: he replaced the consecutive system of instruction and construction with an integrative system of "natural wholes," so that his students could participate in the planning and executing of the project right away. In the unit "dwelling and building," for example, fourth-grade students reconstructed a Greek temple. Each child made a column, a capital, and a gable out of clay, as well as a segment for the foundations, the wall, and the roof. Evaluating the results, the students picked the best pieces of work, cast them in plaster, and put them together in a temple two yards long. According to Richards, the pupils acquired knowledge and skills when they needed them. Hence, "instruction" did not—as with Woodward—precede the project, but was an integral part of "construction."

The project method attracted more and more adherents as the years passed, but it excited no attention outside manual training and industrial arts until Rufus W. Stimson of the Massachusetts Board of Education began his campaign for the popularization of the "home project plan" in agriculture around 1910. The natural scientists in particular were so enthused by Stimson's scheme to relate school with life and theory with practice that in 1913 they initiated a movement to merge physics, chemistry, and biology in one subject and teach them as "general science" according to the "project" approach. Led by John F. Woodhull, the physicist of Columbia's Teachers College, they defined the concept broadly. To them, project work did not have, as had been the case, to consist necessarily of "constructive" problems, but could also tackle "life problems" of a more theoretical and analytical nature. Typical topics were: "Why does the sun sometimes turn red?," "What makes the street car run?," or "How can animals breathe when under water?"[13]

After five years of intensive propaganda, the project was regarded as the most advanced method of teaching, for it seemed in exemplary fashion to realize the demands of the new psychology according to which the

children were not to be stuffed with knowledge "like geese," but must themselves be active "as in real life," if they were to develop initiative, creativity, and judgment. The project method was a matter of heated discussion everywhere—at the meetings of the Eastern Association of Physics Teachers, Michigan School Masters Club, the National Educational Association; in the pages of the *Teachers College Record*, the *Elementary School Journal*, and the *Journal of Home Economics*; in the curricula of industrial arts, agricultural education, and general science. Even Herbartians and "conservative" educators such as Charles A. McMurry, James E. Russell, and David S. Snedden spoke in favor of the new method, and the U.S. Congress followed the example of the legislatures of Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania by making, with the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, considerable funds available for the promotion of "learning by projects" at the newly established continuation schools. Surveys conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Education found that manual training was taught at 80 percent of schools, and agricultural education at 60 percent, consistent with the project method.[14] By 1915, the "project movement" had actually come into being.

KILPATRICK'S QUEST FOR FAME AND GLORY

William Heard Kilpatrick was born on November 20, 1871, the son of a baptist preacher, near Macon in Georgia. He studied at Mercer University, a small college with two hundred and fifty students founded by the Southern Baptists in 1883. After further studies in mathematics at Johns Hopkins University, he spent four years at elementary and secondary schools in Blakely and Savannah as a teacher and principal, introducing innovations such as abolishing corporal punishment and replacing numerical grades with verbal reports. In 1897, Kilpatrick returned to his alma mater as professor of mathematics. He became vice president and in 1903, owing to the illness of the incumbent, acting president of the university. At this point, however, his career took a downturn. When, on the death of the president, a new one was to be elected, Kilpatrick was passed over twice in succession, because of his failure to publicly recognize the "five articles of belief" of the orthodox Baptists, who determined the policy of the university. Kilpatrick, a man of pride and honor, left Mercer, becoming principal of a high school in Columbus, Georgia, and in 1907, enrolling as a student at Columbia's Teachers College where he took courses in education, psychology, and philosophy, in particular with John A. MacVannel, Edward L. Thorndike, F. J. E. Woodbridge, and John Dewey.[15] Having attained his doctorate in 1911 with the historian Paul Monroe, Kilpatrick was successively

appointed assistant professor and associate professor of philosophy of education.

In 1915, Kilpatrick was in his mid-forties, and, according to his own statement, one of the most popular faculty members at the College. Impatiently, he was awaiting promotion to full professor, but his ambition far exceeded his performance. He wanted, as he confided to his diary, to achieve "power and influence" and to go down in the annals of history as an "original thinker," not merely an "acceptable teacher."[16] Kilpatrick realized, though, that for achieving his goal he lacked one crucial precondition, namely publications that were conspicuous and had an impact on the public. He felt disheartened by the small number of his writings. Nevertheless, he had, in addition to six essays, seven reviews, and eleven contributions to Monroe's monumental *Cyclopedia of Education*, published two books—his dissertation, *The Dutch Schools of New Netherland and Colonial New York*, and a report on his visit to the Casa dei Bambini in Rome, *The Montessori System Examined*. His third book, *Froebel's Kindergarten Principles Critically Examined*, was approaching its conclusion. Kilpatrick was aware that these accomplishments could not provide the basis for a rapid rise to fame. His books were thorough and critical, but neither original nor inspiring. They addressed just a small circle of readers. "I must now begin," he noted in his diary, "to think of a small + popular book," "which will appeal constructively + so sell better."[17]

Although his books had not brought a breakthrough, they had received a friendly welcome from the academic audience, and had given him the feeling of being "on a plateau" "ready for a later rise."[18] What Kilpatrick was seeking in the spring of 1915 was a topic with which he could attract attention and prove himself as an independent educational philosopher. It is no wonder that, during the course of his search, Kilpatrick came across the project method, which now—two centuries after its introduction in the academies of architecture in Rome and Paris, and fifty years after its transfer from Europe to America—was widely discussed as the progressive alternative to the old style of teaching through books and recitations.

APPROACHING THE PROJECT IDEA

The fact that Kilpatrick warmed so rapidly to the project method had of course to do not only with its popularity but also with his own interest in modern methods of instruction. As a young teacher, Kilpatrick recalled later, he had already had the vision of finding a procedure by which drill, discipline, and compulsion would be abolished, and democracy, responsibility, and autonomy would be promoted. He was fascinated by Otis

Ashmore, Kilpatrick's supervisor at Rock College in Athens, Georgia, who would leave the classroom in the middle of a lesson without chaos resulting, since his students, motivated as they were, continued to work independently, and even, when necessary, supported one another in finishing the tasks they had to solve. "I did not see far into the future then," reported Kilpatrick in his never completed autobiography "Two Halves of One Life," "but this 1892 lesson eventually led to the 1918 'Project Method.' The idea that a class could and would work with no teacher watching came to be an ideal for me."[19] After this experience, Kilpatrick began to read the writings of Pestalozzi, Herbart, Spencer, and William James, and to attend summer courses with Francis W. Parker, G. Stanley Hall, Charles DeGarmo, John Dewey, and Edward L. Thorndike, to get to know the doctrines of the "new education" and the "new psychology" at source.

Actually, in his first essay not dedicated to a topic from history or philosophy, Kilpatrick dealt with Dewey's booklet *Interest and Effort in Education*. In his hitherto unknown paper, entitled "Dewey's Doctrine of Interest," Kilpatrick stressed how man is essentially an active being pursuing goals and "purposes" of his own. His activities, as Kilpatrick paraphrased Dewey, were "propulsive," and "projective," and always had to be an affair of the "heart" and of "identification" —Dewey himself had spoken of "whole-hearted identification"[20]—without which no thinking or learning could take place.[21] Hence, Kilpatrick's essay of 1913 covered the three keywords that moved him, five years later, to define the project as "wholehearted purposeful activity." Furthermore, Dewey's characterization of interest as "projective" may have contributed to making him receptive to the notion of "project" method.

Kilpatrick felt encouraged in his opinion that all school work should be "consciously wished" by Thorndike's *The Psychology of Learning* (1913) in which the behaviorist confirmed the pragmatist's point of view that "purpose" was the "most important" factor influencing conduct, thought, and action.[22] Besides the "laws of learning," Thorndike's statement made such an impression on Kilpatrick that he was to quote the respective paragraph later in his *Foundations of Method*.[23]

Apart from the writings of Dewey and Thorndike, Kilpatrick may have been won over by a third text of a quite different kind to take up the notion of "project" and to connect it with the term "method." The essay "Principles Underlying the Organization of Kindergarten Materials" by Luella A. Palmer, supervisor at the New York City Board of Education, was a contribution to the special issue that appeared in January 1914 in Kilpatrick's home journal, the Teachers College Record, under the title

Experimental Studies in Kindergarten Theory and Practice, presenting the latest research on early childhood education. Surely, Kilpatrick read this issue as a preliminary to his studies on Froebel and Montessori, the more as it contained articles by Dewey and by Patty Smith Hill, whose work as kindergarten specialist and colleague at Teachers College Kilpatrick revered.[24] In her essay, Luella Palmer distinguished between four procedures: "experiment," "imitation," "repetition," and a method that she called—where it proceeded from the teacher—"suggestive" or—where it proceeded from the student—"purposive," to which she accorded the greater value but also attested the greater risk of failure. "If the purposive method is never used," Palmer explained, "the material will never be organized upon the highest basis. A desirable end in view demands a child's best effort." "If this method should be used exclusively," she continued, thereby criticizing Kilpatrick even before he had conceived his project plan, "it would defeat its own object, the children would become discouraged and effort paralysed because they would be tasked to arrive at a result before they could control the means through which to attain it."[25]

Thirty years later, Kilpatrick himself drew attention to another aspect. After the Second World War, when he occupied himself once again with his autobiographical notes, he included in his diaries numerous commentaries calculated to make him—and his future readers—aware when, where, and how the project idea had taken root in his mind. According to these 1948 notes, one important impulse for the formulation of his project approach was a change in behavior he had observed in his thirteen-year-old daughter Margaret Louise. Bound by a typhus infection to her bed, his daughter had suddenly taken an interest in history. She read biographies of Charles I and Henry of Navarre, painted historical pictures, and wrote a tale about the irruption of the Goths in Rome. Pondering over the instance, Kilpatrick commented on these entries dating from the summer of 1914 with remarks such as "project idea beginning," is "at work," and "brooding here."[26] Yet Kilpatrick associated with his turn to the project method some other incidents, too. For example, when he read in his diary how he had admired the "free play" of the children with Mary Rankin in the university kindergarten, how he had discussed Dewey's "revolutionary" concept of teaching with his students, or how he had given a lecture at the convention of the Michigan State Teachers Association in Kalamazoo on the importance of "spontaneity" in the learning process, he thought he could see in retrospect the "project idea" "slowly emerging," then "becoming clearer," and finally "taking hold."[27]

FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH THE PROJECT

It is uncertain on what occasion Kilpatrick came into contact with the project method. In a letter to Lawrence F. Ashley, a professor of industrial arts at the Eastern Illinois Teachers College, written on July 15, 1935, Kilpatrick stated that he had encountered the concept for the first time "about 1914" on reading an essay by his colleague John F. Woodhull at Teachers College, in which the latter advocated "the use of specific enterprises in teaching general science and called this the 'project method.'"[28] Kilpatrick's relations with Woodhull and the natural scientists were indeed very close. In April 1916, and in November 1916, he attended the conferences of the General Science Society and read two papers on "Teaching Science by Projects;" in December 1916, he was informed of the latest developments in the field by Woodhull's assistant George Hofe; and in January 1917, a summary of his lectures on the project method appeared in the General Science Quarterly.[29]

Kilpatrick's diaries permit two further possibilities, which he no longer remembered. The first opportunity to become familiar with the project approach presented itself on May 11, 1915. Kilpatrick noted for this day that he had studied William C. Bagley's *School Discipline*. The book, he commented, was "fairly sane," but "thoroughly common place" and bound to "thought antedating Dewey."[30] In the chapter "Individual Assignments," Bagley, at that time Professor at the University of Illinois, devoted more than two pages to the project method. "The use of the term 'project,'" Bagley pointed out, "to designate the 'problem' in construction work of all sorts and in manual training, is particularly apt. It implies a plan to be worked out in detail, an idea projected into the future as a guide for systematic effort." He suggested that the project method should not only be applied in practical subjects like manual training, general science, and agricultural education but also in "'book' subjects" like mathematics, geography, and history.[31] Ironically, Bagley who was to become Kilpatrick's chief rival and main opponent at Teachers College proposed ahead of everyone applying the project scheme in all fields of study, thus recommending just what Kilpatrick later radicalized in his famous essay.

The next occasion to become acquainted with the project offered itself a day later, that is, on May 12, 1915, when Frank M. McMurry, professor of elementary education at Teachers College, met Kilpatrick and nine other colleagues to talk about a manuscript that he was preparing on the "principles" of curriculum construction.[32] In his paper, McMurry wrote that the course of study should relate to the "social life" and the "specific needs" of the students. "The subject-matter for a curriculum," he

declared, "should be selected from among those experiences that are related to life and are likely, owing to their intrinsic nature, to appeal to the students directly as worth-while."[33] As in his book *How to Study* (1909), in which he had revised and modernized the Herbartian approach of apperception and motivation, McMurry declared the solution of "particular problems" the central task of the teacher. In contrast to a logically arranged course of studies, problem-based learning was, he stated, an effective method for stimulating the thinking and expanding the knowledge base of the students. The children, McMurry explained, should not go through given materials, but tackle issues that interested them. For instance, they should examine how roads were built, goods transported, diseases transmitted, or contracts concluded. To solve such problems, students should also engage in practical work and carry out "projects" of their own. Like Bagley and Luella Palmer, McMurry made it clear that work in class could not consist solely of problems and projects. Dealing with questions of everyday life—whether in a theoretical or practical way—increased motivation, yet when employed exclusively hindered the development of mental ability and useful skills.[34]

McMurry's proposals were of course not new. Correlating subject matter with social life corresponded to the position that had been expounded by Francis W. Parker, William N. Hailmann, John Dewey, and many other representatives of the "new education." Hence, it was no surprise that McMurry used the notion "project;" after all, the project method had been firmly established at Columbia's Teachers College since its foundation in 1888 in the programs of the manual training department and in the curricula of the experimental and training schools attached to the College, the Horace Mann School and the Speyer School.[35] If one further considers that almost half of the educationalists meeting with McMurry on this occasion—that is, apart from McMurry himself, Frederick G. Bonser, Ernest Horn, Henry C. Pearson, and Henry Suzzallo—had recently supported learning through "projects," it is probable that they spent more than just one word on the project method.[36] At any rate, Kilpatrick was content with the work of his colleagues: "We have a good discussion + agree surprisingly well."[37]

McMurry's manuscript was published under the heading "Principles Underlying the Making of School Curricula" in the September 1915 issue of the Teachers College Record. "The following principles in regard to the making of curricula," McMurry wrote in the introduction, "were originally drafted by the writer. After discussion and some slight modifications they have been approved by a number of my colleagues specializing in widely different phases of education."[38] Kilpatrick was among the ten professors who had signed the article. With his signature, Kilpatrick not

only documented that he had taken note of the project but also confirmed that he agreed with McMurry's concept of problem solving.

OPPOSITION TO MCMURRY'S PROBLEM METHOD

The agreement did not last long, however. Indeed, the article had not yet gone into print when Kilpatrick had already changed his mind. In August 1915, he vehemently rejected McMurry's problem method. A diary entry on his seminar S 442 "Practicum, philosophy of education, advanced course" shows his turnaround with great clarity:

> With S 442 discuss organization of subject, particularly as regards "problem." It seems to me that the problem is not properly the unit, but the scheme, the project, the portion of life process marked out to follow up. In this the problem enters as a factor.[39]

On August 6, 1915, Kilpatrick used the term "project" himself for the first time, and he rightly identified this date as the "birth day" of his project conception.[40] At the same time, it should be noted that Kilpatrick used the notion of the project from the beginning in a sense that contradicted tradition. Hitherto, educators had regarded the project method as one method among others, and defined it as "constructive activity." Now Kilpatrick declared categorically, and going far beyond Woodhull, Bagley, and McMurry, that the project was not a specific method for practical subjects but a general principle of all teaching, and more comprehensive than the "problem."

What had happened? Why did Kilpatrick briskly speak out against McMurry? Why did he suddenly plead for replacing the problem concept with the project approach, and declare the problem to be a sub-form of the project?

Kilpatrick gave the answer to these questions himself, twenty years later. In the letter to Lawrence F. Ashley, Kilpatrick reported that he had attempted about 1914 to find an educational standpoint of his own and—like McMurry—conceive an attractive formula for his idea of child-centered education. "I needed a term to contrast with 'problem' so that I might publish about my unit conception in opposition to Professor McMurry's 'problem method.'"[41] Therefore, having studied the educational principles of James, Dewey, and Thorndike and having thought over his experiences as teacher, father, and visitor to the university kindergarten, Kilpatrick wanted to present a new approach to teaching. In this respect, he felt himself in competition with McMurry, and as we shall see with Dewey, both of whom he personally highly esteemed, but

whose problem method failed to satisfy him, since it did not identify learning as a holistic process, and took too little account of factors like spontaneous interest and physical action.

It was the idea of "conscious purpose," of "wishing," "intending," and "getting something going," that moved Kilpatrick to decide in the summer of 1915 against the "problem" and for the "project." At that time, he could not have made a better choice. The project concept was under discussion everywhere, and did not need to be laboriously popularized. The definition "wholehearted purposeful activity" suited the adherents of the "new education," who, as successors of Comenius, Rousseau, and Herbart, called for learning "by doing," "through freedom," and "with interest." The expression "project" possessed an openness that permitted it to be filled with new ideas and concepts. The label "method" appealed because it promised to address difficult teaching problems. Above all, the term had the invaluable advantage of not yet having been adopted and systematically marketed by any educationalist of name. Kilpatrick did not take the opportunity that suggested itself of simply speaking of "purposive method," as Luella Palmer had done. This phrase was evidently too colorless and unimpressive to be of service for his planned spectacular appearance on the educational stage. Kilpatrick recognized that this was a propitious moment. With a sure feeling for the power of the concept, he saw in the project method the chance of making a name for himself.

KILPATRICK'S FIRST PROJECT LECTURE IN AKRON

Kilpatrick was fascinated by the project idea. Only three months after he had made his first statement, he gave his first public lecture on the subject. On November 6, 1915, at the invitation of the Summit County Teachers Association in Akron, Ohio, he spoke about "The Problem-Project Method: Its Advantages, Its Limitations." The handwritten outline of this address is preserved.

Kilpatrick began his remarks with an account of McMurry's "problem method" illustrating the procedure by issues topical at the time, "What led up to the present world war?" and "How has the war affected America?"[42] The problem method, Kilpatrick went on to say, had the virtue that the children, instead of being given subject matter to be recited, were confronted with questions they should answer with the aid of "reference books, etc." The "problems" provided the students with meaning and direction, and the "facts" presented themselves in their natural order and "true perspective." Kilpatrick emphasized, however, that McMurry's method had one crucial defect: the questions in which the students were to engage in were "teacher's problems" that left the chil-

dren no scope for self-determined action. To remedy this flaw, Kilpatrick suggested expanding the "problem method" into the "problem-project method." The students should not tackle "problems" per se, but rather meet incidentally with "difficulties" which they "felt" themselves, and which they dealt with on their own—from an "examination of the situation" to the "elaboration" of a plan and the "solution of the problem," just as Dewey had proposed it in *How We Think* (1910). Young children, Kilpatrick added, are "more concerned with doing rather than with 'problems' as such." They wish to "act" and embark on "actual life situations."

It is striking that Kilpatrick argued more cautiously in front of the teachers in Akron than before his students in New York. The phrase "problem-project" implied balance and mediation. Apparently, Kilpatrick did not want to expose himself all that much. So he sought to combine his own wish for free child activity with McMurry's and Dewey's plea for tasks related to real life. The compromise he found corresponded—except for the insistence on physical activity—with Dewey's concept of the "complete act of thought," according to which the children were to master the questions vital to their own lives, planning "projectively" and behaving "actively."[43] In his lecture, Kilpatrick gave no example of how his plan could be realized in the classroom. It was perhaps for this reason that his audience reacted with such reticence. "I cannot say," Kilpatrick wrote in his diary, "that my remarks made any profound impression."[44]

The cool reception of his talk did not discourage Kilpatrick—on the contrary: the project method became his standard topic. In 1916 he gave eight lectures, in 1917 five, and in 1918 again eight, which took him from New York to Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Georgia, and North Carolina, and made him known throughout the country as a project specialist.[45] His first paper on the subject, published January 1917 in the *General Science Quarterly*, had some new features but lacked a clear aim and an inner coherence. Kilpatrick knew about these deficiencies, and attempted to correct them in a working paper that he drew up a few months later for a subcommittee of the Committee on Economy of Time in Education.

GOING BEYOND DEWEY: THE PROGRAMMATIC MANUSCRIPT OF APRIL 1917

The Committee on Economy of Time was an organization of the National Education Association, with Harry B. Wilson as chairman and with Franklin Bobbitt, W. W. Charters, Ernest Horn, and Cliff W. Stone as the leading members of a subcommittee for the "remaking of school procedure."[46] With his books on Froebel and Montessori, Kilpatrick had proven himself as an expert in preschool and elementary school education, and

was invited in February 1917 to discuss the latest state of the art, and that meant the "problem method," as educationally developed by McMurry in *How to Study* (1909) and psychologically interpreted by Dewey in *How We Think* (1910). Of course, Kilpatrick made no secret of his opinion. He criticized the problem approach so impressively that his colleagues urged him to prepare a paper for the next meeting.[47] The "confidential draft" he presented in late April 1917 had twenty-nine typewritten pages, and bore the long-winded title "How Shall We View Method? The Place of the 'Problem Method' in a Theory of Education. Do We Need a More Inclusive Conception?" Kilpatrick later called this study quite rightly "the first full statement" of his project concept.[48]

In his paper, Kilpatrick hardly mentioned McMurry; he instead concentrated on Dewey and the "full act" of learning.[49] "The full act implies," Kilpatrick declared, "that the agent (i) sets up ends, (ii) devises means, (iii) executes, and (iv) judges the results."[50] Applying Thorndike's "laws of learning," he maintained that an action accommodating an existing "inclination" and causing a "pleasant feeling" provided "satisfaction," and was rather practiced than an action that took place under "compulsion," causing "stress," "annoyance," and "frustration." "A project may then be defined as any line of activity which one proposes to himself and accepts for execution."[51] To illustrate his notion, Kilpatrick gave numerous examples, equally from the breadth of history and the experience of the child:

> Columbus set out upon the project of finding a westerly route to India. Benedict Arnold formed the project of yielding West Point to the British. These boys have a project of building a motor boat. This girl has set for herself the project of committing to memory "The Ancient Mariner." If I propose to myself to 'think through' this question and will to do it, that becomes then a project for me. A girl decides to read Ivanhoe, the reading of Ivanhoe becomes then a project to her. These children decide to play tag, playing tag becomes then their project. Newton set for himself the project of explaining the movements of heavenly bodies upon the principles of terrestrial mechanics.[52]

The decisive element of Kilpatrick's definition of the project was the stern and serious will. Whatever an individual undertook, as long as it was "purposeful" and carried out "wholeheartedly," this was a project. No valuable aspect of life was excluded. According to Kilpatrick, a project proceeded ideally when all four phases—that is, "purposing," "planning," "executing," and "judging"—were initiated and carried out by the student, not by the teacher. With Kilpatrick's predecessors, the teacher

had relinquished her supremacy in planning and organization after the students had acquired all necessary skills to carry out projects on their own; now, with Kilpatrick, she lost all her power, including her mandate to determine the aims and assess the results, right from the beginning. At bottom, the student was solely responsible for all his doings. For only when he was allowed to realize his interests and needs, and decide himself on the objectives, methods, and outcomes of his efforts, he would expand, grow, and progress.[53] Free work engaged the "whole child" and supported his advance in manifold ways. "The full act (wholehearted activity)," Kilpatrick explained, "presents the conditions under which learning takes place best and most helpful at each of the three levels" — the level of "purposeful learning," of "accessory ideas," and of "concomitant" knowledge and skills.[54]

Freedom could, of course, not be unlimited, for even Kilpatrick had to admit that students' intentions and activities were not always good or useful. For this reason, he modified his ideal considerably when he came to speak of putting his concept into practice. If circumstances required, he said, the teacher must not only encourage, stimulate, and inspire but must also initiate, select, and direct. In case of doubt, she was even justified in exerting pressure to prevent transgressions of the students, and to enforce the demands of society. "Whatever is socially necessary must come," Kilpatrick insisted. "The individual must if need be yield."[55] The "wise teacher," however, need only in exceptional cases have recourse to her authority. For one thing, the subject matter essential for social survival would mostly tend to occur in the projects proposed by the students themselves; for another, the teacher through "tact" and "sympathy" could "enter greatly into students' lives" and prompt them through her "comradeship and cooperation," in most cases trouble-free and effortless, to "fruitful projects."[56] The work of the teacher, Kilpatrick added, was not made easier by project work, but more complicated. On the one hand, the teacher must, as educator and instructor, keep in the background and ideally make herself superfluous; on the other, she still has the duty to bring about "effectual learning," "orderly thinking," and "continual growth" in the classroom. Therefore, Kilpatrick could not do without teacher intervention—indeed, he had to concede that the rising demands made on the students with increasing age rendered the application of his project method more difficult. But even the high school teacher had to individualize learning rigorously in order to get the greatest possible identification of the student with his work. The course of study, Kilpatrick warned, must never "be mapped out in advance in the detail now common, since the project being the counterpart of student attitude could not be so precisely foretold."[57]

To Kilpatrick, the "project plan" meant the abolition of the "lesson plan" and the "project method" a further development of the "problem method." The problem method, whether in Dewey's version or McMurry's, was doubtless progress compared with the traditional methods of drill and learning by rote, Kilpatrick declared, but it was finally too limited and too "intellectualistic" to do justice to the two axioms of progressive education: "education is life" and "learning is doing." He wrote:

> The term problem is primarily intellectualistic in its connotation. It is the statement of an intellectual difficulty. If used exclusively it would tend to over-emphasize the intellectualistic aspect of school work. The importance – even the priority - of this may well be admitted; but again be it said our schools need to be remade so as to give more essential place to real life. And *actual life consists very much more of purposes sought in terms of physical and social embodiment than in terms of intellectual problem solving.* The thinking of our children will be far more vigorous and far better directed if it can be got in connection with the working out of plans which they have projected.[58]

The "problem" was, according to Kilpatrick, a "hindered project." What was lacking was the "social activity" of the children, and the "physical activity" beyond speaking and writing. It provided training in logical thinking, but left the child no scope for autonomous action, in this way preventing the development of its spontaneity and creativity. But Kilpatrick did not reject the problem method altogether; he explicitly drew attention to the point at which it intersected with the project method. "Every problem which is accepted for prosecution in the sense that its solution is willed becomes ex vi termini a project," he wrote. "In this sense every real problem is a project, but not every project is a problem; the 'problem method' accordingly becomes a special case – a most important one to be sure – of the 'project method.'"[59]

Kilpatrick was convinced that, with the transition from old-style cramming to project teaching, the tiresome issue of "discipline" would be disposed of once and for all, since the project method liberated the teacher from her role as disciplinarian and transferred the responsibility for discipline and order to the students. By tackling the problems of life, Kilpatrick wrote, project work generates many desirable "habits," proper "attitudes," and "modes of social behaviour"; indeed, it "just oozes moral training."[60] "Character building," rather than the transfer of knowledge, was project work's great strength and its real task. Above all, it established the "principle of democracy" in the classroom. No other method,

Kilpatrick claimed, "seems quite so well to meet the demands of a democratic society for initiative and intelligent self-direction, and unselfish cooperation to common ends and purposes."[61]

The members of the committee reacted benevolently to Kilpatrick's address. Yet they raised objections to his definition of the project method, as it ran counter to the traditional usage in education. After the meeting, Kilpatrick noted in his diary: "All seemed to be impressed with my paper. There was virtually no discussion of the merits of my position. […] There was [however] a good deal of discussion of the term 'project.' We agreed tentatively to accept it, but look further."[62] A modified summary of the paper was presented by Kilpatrick in February 1918 at the congress of the Department of Superintendence in Atlantic City, and subsequently printed in the Proceedings of the National Education Association under the heading "The Problem-Project Attack in Organization, Subject-Matter, and Teaching."[63]

THE PROJECT AS A "GENERAL" AND "SUBJECTIVE" METHOD

During the following decade, between 1917 and 1927, Kilpatrick published four books and about thirty papers, mainly on project teaching. Apart from the essay "The Project Method" (1918), two treatises should be highlighted: his main work on project education, *Foundations of Method* (1925), and his last piece on the subject, "School Method from the Project Point of View" (1927). In these writings, Kilpatrick still advocated his child-centered concept of learning, but while he first radicalized it to arouse additional attention, he then pulled back to a comparatively moderate position to appease the criticism his concept was increasingly exposed to.

In the 1918 essay, Kilpatrick defined the "project" as "wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment." He illustrated the phrase with the well-known example of a girl sewing a dress:

> Suppose a girl makes a dress. If she did it in hearty fashion purpose to make the dress, if she planned it, if she made it herself, then I should say the instance is that of a typical project. We have a wholehearted purposeful act carried on amid social surroundings. That the dressmaking was purposeful is clear; the purpose once formed dominated each succeeding step in the process and gave unity to the whole. That the girl was wholehearted in the work was assured in the illustration. That the activity proceeded in a social environment is clear; other girls at least are to see the dress.[64]

Striking about the definition was the addition on the "social environment" in which the project was to be carried out. With this feature (presumably derived from Dewey's *Democracy and Education*),[65] Kilpatrick meant to stress the connection of project work with real life. Nevertheless, some of his examples, such as reading a book or listening to a record, reveal that he did not find the social aspect all-important. In his following writings, Kilpatrick consequently omitted the addition, and used solely the short form "hearty purposeful activity."

In 1918, as in 1917, Kilpatrick defined the project not by an "objective" criterion such as "independence," but by a "subjective" one, i.e., "purpose." Purpose, he declared, presupposed "freedom for practice," it could not be prescribed. Yet purpose also required "practice with satisfaction," which equally could not be imposed from outside. Only if students were allowed to realize their own intentions would they acquire new knowledge and necessary skills, but above all attitudes and qualities of character that promoted living "in and for democracy." With a rhetorical power that threw aside all his inhibitions in writing, he promulgated his creed of democratic learning by projects:

> The worthy life consists of purposive activity and not mere drifting. We scorn the man who passively accepts what fate or some other chance brings to him. We admire the man who is master of his fate, who with deliberate regard for a total situation forms clear and far-reaching purposes, who plans and executes with nice care the purposes so formed. A man who habitually so regulates his life with reference to worthy social aims meets at once the demands for practical efficiency and of moral responsibility. Such a one presents the ideal of democratic citizenship.[66]

Echoing Dewey, Kilpatrick affirmed that the school was an "embryonic society" in which all members had the equal rights and duties. Thus, the class had to mutate from a compulsory unit to an autonomous group, the teacher from a "taskmaster and enemy" to a "friend and comrade," and the individual student from a powerless recipient of orders to a "citizen," permitted to decide himself what he wished to learn and do.[67]

A few years later, in *Foundations of Method*, the emphasis shifted further to the child-centered extreme. Project learning, Kilpatrick asserted, was always individual and situative, it could neither be planned nor fixed. The student should be allowed to abandon his original resolve and devote his whole energy to new endeavors. "If the purpose dies and the teacher still requires the completion of what was begun, then it becomes

a task"—merely wearisome and laborious.[68] To avoid failure and frustration, a reorientation was permissible, indeed vital and imperative. Kilpatrick no longer defined purpose as "conscious" and "goal-oriented"; on the contrary, it might be accidental, impulsive, and change with lightning speed. In order that no "felt need" should go unexploited and no "fruitful situation" ignored, Kilpatrick developed a project typology that took into account every conceivable form of external and internal action. His typology comprised four kinds; it could mean building a kite ("production project"), solving an equation ("problem project"), memorizing a poem ("learning project"), and savoring a sunset ("consumption project"). Hence all aspects of human striving—the cognitive as well as the affective, constructive, and aesthetic aspect—were integrated in one concept. Whatever the child undertook, as long as it was done with "purpose" and procured him "satisfaction," this was a project. As a result, Kilpatrick expanded the project concept excessively. Unlike his predecessors, he considered the project not a special, but a general method, and primarily not a cognitive, but an affective affair. In fact, it did not even require active behavior, nor the assiduously invoked "learning by doing." The children who put on a stage play were carrying out a project just as much as those who sat in the auditorium and enjoyed the performance.[69]

COMPROMISES TO SILENCE PRACTITIONERS

Kilpatrick did not find an easy answer to the question how his concept was to be implemented, especially since the members of the subcommittee had already criticized the "element of purpose – child purposing – as giving the central necessity."[70] In "The Project Method," and still more in *Foundations of Method*, Kilpatrick proceeded from the ideal of "natural," unconstrained learning. The children should be free to pursue the "impulses," "wishes," and "interests" that dominated their present situation in life. At the same time, Kilpatrick sought to make the ideal practicable by two measures. Firstly, he gave the teacher, as in the discussion paper of 1917, various means of intervention. In an emergency, the teacher was allowed to interfere in the basically child-dominated class activities— "dictatorially" if the students were attempting to exploit their liberty insolently; "guiding" if they wished to pursue adverse intentions; "stimulating" if they had no ideas of their own; or "helping" if they were threatened by failure.[71] The prudent teacher would "tactfully" stay in the background, however, and leave it to the students to keep order and attain the cooperation of those students who were indifferent toward the group or the matter in hand. Secondly, Kilpatrick proposed cutting down the official curriculum "radically," indeed to abolish it altogether, so that

the students had the opportunity to pattern lessons, courses, and schedules according to their own intentions. In fact, he accepted as "minimal essentials" merely that subject matter—such as "reading, writing, and a little (very little) arithmetic"[72]—which was absolutely necessary for survival in a civilized society. There was to be no set canon. If the students felt no need for it, they did not have to concern themselves with music, art, or history, or with physics, chemistry, or mathematics, not to mention French or Spanish. The systematic teaching of subjects was not provided for in Kilpatrick's situation-centered scheme of education. In his own words:

> We learn better – certainly as a rule – when we face a situation calling for the use of the thing to be learned. Other things being equal then, we shall try to teach our arithmetic as it is needed; that is in connection with situations of actual need. The effect of this will be to find arithmetic in many little pieces scattered along the path of life. These we shall teach as we meet them.[73]

At the height of his project euphoria, Kilpatrick propounded a permanent sequence of "incidental" learning. Fixed programs and procedures, he stated, were, being artificial and unnatural, only calculated to demotivate the students who were clever enough to arrange sporadically assimilated details in a "logical" order and form them into "complete entities."

Kilpatrick reduced his unbridled praise of intuition, inspiration, and improvisation because the objections of his colleagues became too powerful to not take them into account. In "School Method From the Project Point of View," a contribution to a teachers' handbook edited by his friend Milo B. Hillegas, Kilpatrick did no longer rely solely on the creativity and spontaneity of the students. He accepted curricula and lesson plans, as long as they were not laid down in advance and did not unnecessarily restrict the students' scope for action. In order to facilitate the change from the traditional cramming to project learning, Kilpatrick even allowed the teachers, albeit only temporarily, to motivate the students "artificially," to make the subject matter "interesting," and to carry out tests if needed. Thus, for a short period, he accepted that which he had hitherto furiously combated, namely using the project as "a mere method device" for the "painless" transmission of "extrinsic subject matter."[74]

Kilpatrick made these adaptations, like all previous concessions to reality, merely grudgingly. "I feel," he had confided to his diary as early as 1917, "that I am compromising sadly in order to get half-leaf that the practical people can agree to."[75] Actually, he never lost sight of his ideal.

The transition from the "normal form" of lesson teaching to the "ideal form" of project learning was not always successful, Kilpatrick freely admitted, but was—"if properly managed"—completely feasible. A "wise" teacher such as Otis Ashmore would always be able to ensure the acquisition of knowledge and skills required in future life, and at the same time establish a "democracy of childhood" in the classroom, making him as "governor," "instructor," and "controller" superfluous—indeed, to "eliminate" himself.[76]

FAILURE IN PRACTICE I: THE HORACE MANN SCHOOL EXPERIMENT IN NEW YORK

The initiative that Frank McMurry had taken in spring 1915 for the reconstruction of the curriculum was not without consequences; actually, it became the point of departure for an experiment that aroused widespread attention, and was carried out at the Horace Mann School of Teachers College over a period of five years. The managing committee included, apart from Kilpatrick and the school's principal Henry C. Pearson, the professors Milo B. Hillegas and Frederick G. Bonser.[77] Whereas Kilpatrick tried to make his child-centered project method the basis of the experiment,[78] Bonser, a confessed, though moderate, disciple of Dewey, insisted that subject matter must be determined in advance and developed in a logical sequence. After a bitter quarrel, in which Dean James D. Russell took sides against Kilpatrick, a compromise was agreed on that beginning with the school year 1916–17 out of three first-year classes two were to be taught according to McMurry's problem method, and one according to Kilpatrick's project method.[79]

The project class was excellently equipped. Instead of fixed desks, it had movable tables and chairs, and plenty of materials for individualized instruction: toys, tools, typewriters, building blocks. In addition, there were display cases containing fish, birds, minerals, and various flowers, which the children had to take turns in looking after.[80] In retrospect, Kilpatrick described the conditions for the project work as follows:

> I proposed that the class have absolutely no set curriculum: that the teacher was to be perfectly free to do what she thought wise; and that the children were to be free to think and to act. The children were not to be required to learn reading, to master prescribed arithmetic or spelling; there were to be no examinations. They were not to be marked or graded in terms of a prescribed curriculum. I laid down only one principle: "activity leading to further activity without badness."[81]

Kilpatrick's specifications were not easy to implement, since he granted students and teachers the same rights to freedom and self-determination but deprived the teacher of his traditional job to plan and organize the course of study. To see how the experiment came off, two sources are available, Kilpatrick's diary and the report of the teacher of the project class, Florence McVey.

If we give credence to the report "Specimen Activities of the First Grade," which Florence McVey, later Mrs. Meadowcroft, published in 1919 on the first half of the school year, things went ideally.[82] The children used the materials and collections just as they liked. Singly or in groups, they played with dolls, painted pictures, read stories, built boats, or made flags, swords, and cannons for a war game. Sometimes, as for reading or arithmetic, one student took on the functions of the teacher. Conflicts that arose because of noise, lack of order, or a quarrel over toys or tools were, after thorough discussions, solved by the students amicably taking a vote. If asked, the teacher gave advice, and taught the students the knowledge and skills they requested. The reason behind her reticence was that the students should think for themselves and learn by their own experience. There was no class teaching. Even the acquisition of reading and writing was voluntary; depending on circumstances, only five to fifteen of the total of twenty-five boys and girls took the chance.

During the first half of the school year 1916–1917, Kilpatrick regularly attended the project class. He thought Florence McVey an "excellent teacher," but found the conditions of learning less ideal and satisfactory than Miss McVey had depicted in her report. Several brief entries in Kilpatrick's diary hint at the—practical and emotional—limits of his motto "education through freedom"[83]:

> 18 October 1916: Miss McVey "got into a little panic," "she attempted too much yesterday."
> 31 October 1916: Miss McVey "is going back to the old ways, at least in some measure."
> 13 November 1916: Miss McVey reports "difficulties and discouragements but still believes firmly in the theory."
> 18 December 1916: "I am somewhat disappointed [with Miss McVey's teaching], but I cannot as yet say why."
> 10 January 1917: "apparently the need for teacher guidance is greater than I had previously supposed."

Subsequently, Kilpatrick's interest in the project class waned; after January 1917, only a few scattered entries refer to the experiment.

However, four comments from later school years and other project classes may be presented:

> 25 October 1917: Kilpatrick observed with some dismay "Miss McVey holding whole group in an exercise – a compromise scheme."
> 16 November 1917: Kilpatrick unintentionally went into the second class (of Miss Batchelder) and found to his horror that there he "couldn't discover a single sign of my ideas."
> 22 November 1918: Kilpatrick paid a visit to Miss Detraz, and noted worriedly: "She is trying the third grade in our plan but has not succeeded so well."
> 10 October 1919: Kilpatrick is obliged to confess to himself: "It seems that an appreciable number of 1st grade children do not learn to read."

As Kilpatrick's notes reveal, the children with Florence McVey were not always allowed to decide themselves what they wished to do. And as can be gathered from the reports of Mildred I. Batchelder (1919), M. Julia Detraz (1919), and Marie Hennes (1921), too, the teachers of the project classes held formal lessons regularly, and in class 5 almost exclusively, in order that the students should acquire the knowledge that parents and society expected from the school.[84] Kilpatrick's allusion that, despite the more or less lengthy suspension of the project plan, the learning objectives were frequently not achieved was confirmed by a study carried out by William A. McCall, Clara F. Chassell, and Leta S. Hollingworth. On the evidence of eleven tests, McCall and his collaborators wished to find out how the two experimental classes, called here the "Free Group" (project method) and the "Formal Group" (problem method), had done at the end of the second school year, on a comparative basis. In their paper "Experimental Measurements," the authors summed up the results as follows:

> So far as our tests go the evidence shows that the Formal Group has a more even growth. Where the Free Group is good it is very good. The Formal Group made greater progress in eleven of the fifteen tests, but in no test did it make extraordinary progress. This is just what we would expect. The Free Method allows concentration upon a few elements in the environment to the exclusion of other elements if the students so desire.[85]

By the time the essays on the experiment, ten in all, appeared as a book in 1922, the child-centered project work had lost its glamour. *The Curriculum of the Horace Mann School* was reprinted continuously without any concessions to Kilpatrick's approach—on the contrary, as before the "problem method" was hailed as the "best accepted educational practice."[86] When, on the top of this, teachers enthused over Bonser's new textbook *The Elementary School Curriculum* (1920), Kilpatrick's experiment at the Horace Mann School was no more than an insignificant side issue.[87]

FAILURE IN PRACTICE II: THE "KILPATRICK PROJECT SCHOOL" IN MILWAUKEE

Meanwhile, welcome news reached Kilpatrick. In the winter of 1921, Ethel M. Gardner, chair of the Milwaukee Teachers Association, invited him to give a seminar on the theory and practice of the project method. The one-week seminar was to be a great event, and so the association pulled out all the stops to make participation attractive to its members. "To study with Dr. Kilpatrick is the great goal, they [all dedicated teachers] dream of, look forward to, and strive for," declared Ethel Gardner in the MTA-Bulletin. "No teacher can afford to miss this most wonderful and unusual opportunity."[88] The city's press, too, joined in the campaign, and awakened the readers' curiosity with fantastic assertions. The *Milwaukee News* specified Kilpatrick's vision of school with these lines:

> Can you imagine –
> A school room without desks and stiff-backed seats?
> Where you don't have to sit with folded hands?
> Where you can whisper and pass notes, if you feel like it?
> Where you won't have dull things like reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic?
> No more examinations?
> Where you actually *like* to go?
> Well, that's the school of the future, according to Dr. William Heard Kilpatrick.[89]

Interest in the seminar, which took place from January 30 to February 3, 1922, in the Museum Lecture Hall, was overwhelming. It had to be divided and held in two shifts of eight hundred participants each. The final banquet ended with ovations and poetry recitations celebrating

Kilpatrick as a "mystic" and praising the project method as a "revelation." No wonder Kilpatrick went home with the "feeling of a distinct success."[90]

For the moment, the euphoria continued in Milwaukee. In 1922, the school district published a book, *Projects and Games in the Primary Grades*, in which Kilpatrick's principles of teaching and numerous examples of projects, such as "Boats," "Birds," and "The Story of Wheat," were presented.[91] The Milwaukee Teachers Association announced with aplomb that, with Kilpatrick's seminar, it had paved the way for an urgently needed "Renaissance in the educational system" of the city; and the chair, Ethel Gardner—later supported by the legendary socialist city councilor Meta Berger—sent a resolution to the school board in which she urged the school administration to set up a "Kilpatrick School" with the "project" as the foremost method of teaching.[92] The resolution was not formally passed by the school board, but accepted in essence, so that School Superintendent Milton Potter was able to inform the eponymous scholar of the happy event in September 1924. "I am pleased but embarrassed," Kilpatrick noted, possibly bearing in mind the failed experiment at the Horace Mann School.[93]

At that point, however, events began to stagnate. Despite the early excitement, in all of Milwaukee no principal was ready to take on the role of pioneer for a city-wide introduction of the "Kilpatrick Project School." This reluctance on the part of the elementary school principals may also have to do with an expertise by Edward A. Fitzpatrick of Marquette University, commissioned by the school board. In his expertise, of which Kilpatrick was sent a copy for information but which—unfortunately—he did not comment on,[94] Fitzpatrick warned against setting up an experimental school of this kind, and recommended as an alternative conducting a thorough test of the project method under scientific supervision in a few isolated classes. Of greater consequence than Fitzpatrick's warning was doubtless the fact that the support of Superintendent Potter and the school board was only half-hearted, and that rather than Kilpatrick's project plan they wished to realize the Platoon System developed by William A. Wirth in Gary, Indiana. Under these circumstances, Meta Berger and Ethel Gardner gave up their original scheme and now urged—as suggested by Fitzpatrick—the appointment of six supervisors to assist the teachers with the preparation and execution of projects. The meager result of the protracted and sometimes bitterly waged campaign was that in 1927 Potter, instead of six supervisors, appointed just one, Agnes Kelley, of whose effort and activities nothing was to become known.[95]

Why was it that the initiative, which began so promisingly, and was

supported by powerful institutions and individuals, silently fizzled out? In "The Project Method and the Stubborn Grammar of Schooling" David Levine claims that two factors above all tipped the scales: first, the "failure" of the administrative leadership "to fully understand and support the reform," and second, the "failure" of the propagandists of the project method "to develop the theory and practice of systemic change within large, complicated school systems."[96] Yet more important than the inability of the school administration and the adherents of the project to initiate the reform in a way that was carefully thought out and calculated to arouse public interest, and more important than the widespread fears of school principals of shouldering responsibility, and the familiar dislike of teachers to implement structural changes, seems to me an aspect that the assistant superintendent of Milwaukee, W. W. Theissen, brought up right at the beginning of the discussion: namely, the remoteness of the project method from the realities of teaching. In a contribution to the school board's publication *Projects and Games in the Primary Grades*, Theissen drew attention to the difficulties connected with the practical application of Kilpatrick's child-centered project approach:

> A project has been defined as a wholehearted, purposeful activity. However, such a blanket definition does not assist the teacher to distinguish between projects suitable for school use and those that are not. Under the definition above could be included any wholehearted activity from swatting an annoying fly to winning the great war. Obviously, limitations must be prescribed. It is not so much a question as to whether the *project method* shall be employed in teaching but *what projects* shall be undertaken and *under what conditions.*[97]

With this assessment, Theissen put his finger on the sore spot. The real problem that prevented the introduction of the project method in Milwaukee was not a matter of the organization and support involved, but one intrinsic to the concept itself. What could teachers, supervisors, or principals do with a scheme that demanded "education through freedom," but failed to tell them how they were to teach the children reading, writing, and arithmetic "naturally," "spontaneously," and "incidentally," not to mention all the other important knowledge and skills needed for success in college, business, and family life? For them, Kilpatrick's project method was too naive, immature, and unrealistic to be a convincing model for a major school reform.

FAILURE IN PRACTICE III: THE "PROJECT CURRICULUM" OF ELLSWORTH COLLINGS

It is not surprising that Kilpatrick did not make a fuss about the attempts to put his concept into practice in New York and Milwaukee. This was very different from the experiment carried out by his doctoral student Ellsworth Collings in Bethpage, McDonald County, Missouri.[98] Having read Collings's dissertation *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum* (1923), Kilpatrick was delighted. "He proves (in this instance) just what I have wished to believe but hardly dared to hope for," Kilpatrick wrote. "I am glad to have it for reference."[99] Conducted at a rural school from 1917 to 1921, Collings's experiment had tried to realize a "democracy of childhood." There were no required courses and no prescribed curricula; instead, the children themselves—their interests and needs, the issues and problems that concerned them personally—determined the subjects the students would study and the topics they would cover. The teacher served, if involved at all, only as an adviser and facilitator. The case that made Collings known worldwide was the "typhoid project." It ran as follows:

> One morning in October 1918, Mary and Johnnie Smith did not come to class; they had fallen ill with typhoid. The students of the second group, i.e. the fourth and fifth grades, pondered the incident and considered how typhoid was caused, spread, and combated. They ordered bulletins, interviewed neighbors, studied books. They visited the farm of the Smith family and investigated whether the drinking water was pure, the milk undiluted, the house clean, and the doors and windows screened. They made fly traps and swatters and sent a report to Mr. Smith in which they declared the fly to be the cause of Mary's and Johnnie's typhoid infection and made proposals as to how the Smith family could beat the plague simply and cheaply. "Mr. Smith carried out all their recommendations. Within four weeks he had screens to his doors and windows; had removed the manure piles from the barnyard; mowed the weeds out of his yard; and removed the hog pen. From that day on Mr. Smith has been a combater of the fly instead of a breeder, and the result was that the next fall typhoid did not appear in his home."[100]

But Collings did not merely describe how project work performed in practice; he also presented empirical data that were supposed to prove that the students at the "experimental school" attained far higher scores

on standardized tests than the students at two "control schools." The students in the experimental school were superior in reading, writing, and arithmetic; they played more games, ate more fruit, and saved more money. And, owing to their children's influence, the parents planted more flowers, read more newspapers, and attended more community meetings. "The school," Collings explained, "had changed from 'a ragged beggar' sleeping beside the road into a veritable social center active in the improvement of community life."[101] This, to Kilpatrick, was the proof that his project idea had passed the test of practice brilliantly and irrefutably. "Read and see," Kilpatrick rejoiced. "It can now no longer be said that the theory won't work. It has worked. A régime of child purposing is feasible. We can lay aside school subjects as such and succeed – succeed admirably."[102]

Where was the secret of the success? How could an enterprise that failed in the centers of progress succeed in a provincial backwater? If one pursues this question and evaluates all the available sources, the answer is as simple as it is banal: Collings' "experiment" was not an experiment at all; it was an invention. Like all the other projects at Bethpage, the "typhoid project" never took place as described. The children themselves determined neither the project's content nor its direction. Little about its design or implementation lay in their hands. There was neither a Smith family, nor were there children sick with typhoid in the class. So the visits to the Smiths' farm and the investigations carried out and proposals made are pure fiction. Contrary to what the report suggests, the typhoid project was planned in advance. The teacher prepared the lessons by studying the *Course of Study for Rural Boys and Girls* Collings had enacted for all schools in MacDonald County. She selected the subject matter and material, and gave thought to what questions she would ask, what discussions she would pursue, and what activities she would propose so that her students would effectively know at the end what typhoid is, how it occurs and spreads, and how it is to be combated. There can be no question of a "democracy of childhood" in Bethpage, and everything that Kilpatrick had written in his much-quoted introduction to *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum* as the special features of the school experiment—that the curriculum was planned "on the spot," that the teaching consisted entirely of child-centered "projects," that Collings "literally did not care whether [the students] got the conventional subject matter of the schools"[103]—none of this existed in reality.

With more than seventy tables, charts, and pictures, and its innumerable reports and minutes, the dissertation gives the impression of a well-documented piece of work. That appearance, however, is deceptive. Not only did Collings declare teacher-determined instruction as student-

centered learning, he also presented empirical data that—if they ever were collected—would never have stood up to a scientific review. Furthermore, he invented control schools, concomitant studies, and newspaper articles that existed solely in his imagination. At the time, some members of the Committee on Higher Degrees expressed doubts about the form and substance of the dissertation. Kilpatrick was highly indignant und refused to accept their objections. William Bagley, Paul Monroe, and other opponents, Kilpatrick raged, "have no grasp of the nature of the learning process," they merely "fear the upsetting of tradition." "I never saw a set of grown men so catching at straws to save themselves from thinking along a new line. I was sick at heart."[104] Collings's dissertation was finally accepted, but in the end, Kilpatrick's opponents had had the right feeling. *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum* was unreliable, implausible, unscientific, indeed, a fake. The deception remained undiscovered not least because the school experiment took place in a remote part of Missouri, far from any professional supervision, and Collings exercised all the important functions—as project designer, statistician, documentarian—without control and validation from outside. As in New York and Milwaukee, Kilpatrick's vision of "education through freedom" failed to be properly implemented or empirically supported in Bethpage, too.

KILPATRICK'S "PROJECT PROPAGANDA CLUB"

As a power-conscious person, Kilpatrick knew that he would have far greater chances of becoming famous with a platform devoted to the propagation of his project idea than if he sought his fortune all by himself. Consequently, he planned and initiated an association— "secret" to begin with—that he called the "Project Society" or "Project Propaganda Club." Kilpatrick hit on the idea as early as in the winter of 1917–18, that is, at the very time he had decided to attempt his breakthrough with the project method. It is really amazing: while he was still sitting at his desk brooding desperately over his later world-famous essay, he was already sounding out students and colleagues about what they thought about an organization dedicated to the dissemination of his project concept. Kilpatrick did of course not wish to stick his neck out too far, and appear as the founder of his own fan club. Therefore, he asked his assistant Margaret E. Noonan to arrange an initial meeting at the annual convention of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. And so, on February 27, 1918, a "picked group" of about fifty persons assembled in Atlantic City, among them Florence E. Bamberger, C. C. Certain, Charles W. Hunt, Fred M. Hunter, Margret Madden, Mary

Pennell, and C. L. Wright, to discuss Kilpatrick's "Project Society." This group of principals, school superintendents, and college professors, most of whom had studied or were still studying with Kilpatrick, expressed "a strong sentiment in favor of a society."[105] When they next convened half a year later, on July 29, 1918, Kilpatrick made the following note:

> In the evening a group of us hold a meeting in my office to discuss the organization of a project propaganda club. Present: Miss Noonan, Hunt, Hosic, Certain, Hunter, and others. After a good deal of discussion we decide on an informal relatively secret organization, not to have a specific name, dues $ 10.00, two annual meetings, with emphasis on a topic. We did seem to make more progress than at some other of our many organizations. This time we are not seeking many members, rather the contrary. What will happen this time, the future will tell.[106]

Kilpatrick's plea for creating a small, "relatively secret organization" was probably induced by a personal disappointment he had experienced in February 1915. Despite his efforts, the first and hitherto unknown venture to found a "Dewey Society" had failed miserably, because of the bumbling incompetence of those responsible.[107] Kilpatrick now made sure that the charter members of his society included persons possessed of sufficient ambition, influence, experience, and most importantly of unfaltering loyalty, to set up such an association and to manage it successfully, according to his specifications. In this respect, he was able to rely on Certain, Wright, and Noonan, but especially on James F. Hosic, a professor at the Normal School in Chicago. Hosic, who was working part-time on his PhD at Teachers College, had achieved a reputation as editor of the *English Journal* and demonstrated his organizational ability as chair of the committee for the Reorganization of English in Secondary Schools. He and Kilpatrick appear to have made an unspoken pact of mutual support. Kilpatrick was willing to back Hosic's relocation to Teachers College, and Hosic was ready to make Kilpatrick's scheme his own. Full of energy, Hosic at once went into action and ensured that, between February and September 1918, the *English Journal*, the *Chicago Schools Journal*, and the Chicago Board of Education became promoters of the project idea.

It was particularly thanks to his assertiveness that, on March 1, 1921, the once secret "Project Propaganda Club" was founded as the National Conference for the Promotion of Educational Method.[108] All important posts were occupied by Kilpatrick's friends: Wright became president, Noonan vice president, Hosic treasurer; C. C. Certain, Margret Madden,

and Mary Pennell completed the managing board. Kilpatrick himself—as well as Frank McMurry—was elected to the advisory committee.[109] The new society was active on numerous levels. It organized conferences, published circulars, founded local branches called "Project Method Societies," and from September 1921 on published a flourishing monthly, the *Journal of Educational Method*, with James Hosic as editor. Hosic, who in the meantime had attained a professorship at Teachers College, made no secret of the fact that he and his colleagues pursued above all one objective with the journal—as with the Conference—namely the popularization of Kilpatrick's project concept. "No apology is needed for devoting much attention to the project method," he wrote in the first editorial; confusion among teachers was great, and they tended to regard project work as "merely a passing shibboleth" and not as the "new and vital synthesis of modern educational ideas" that it really was.[110]

The society succeeded rapidly in gaining acceptance, not least because its two stars, Kilpatrick and Hosic, sustained their efforts. At the annual meetings of the conference, they regularly gave lectures, and in the journal continually published essays on the theory and practice of project learning, which were then reprinted in book form, as *Foundations of Method* and *Brief Guide to the Project Method*.[111] Thus, the national conference became a downright "Kilpatrick Society" and the *Journal of Educational Method*—together with the *Detroit Journal of Education,* founded by C. C. Certain—an effective organ of child-centered education. More than anything, the "aggressive advocacy" of these forums contributed to the fact that within a few years all American educators were intimately familiar with Kilpatrick's project idea.[112]

CRITICISM FROM WITHIN THE RANKS

The popularization of Kilpatrick's broad project approach heightened the flood of books and articles. More than ever before was written about the project method, and each author presented his own version. By now, the term "project" could refer to topics, problems, and experiments, to plays, fairs, and field trips, to "man's struggle with his environment," "the Christian way of living," and "one of the strongest forces [...] to combat Bolschewism."[113] "No one today knows what a project is," complained Daniel R. Hodgdon of the College of Technology, Newark. "We thought we knew once, but since that time every known idea and method under the sun has been called a project."[114]

The aggressive self-advertisement practised by Kilpatrick and his disciples had, in addition to increasing competition and rivalry, a second negative side. The better-known Kilpatrick's concept became, the more

thoroughly it was examined for possible flaws, faults, and blunders. The symposium "Dangers and Difficulties of the Project Method and How to Overcome them," which took place in 1921 at Teachers College under Kilpatrick's direction, elapsed amicably and with mutual consideration, since all of the speakers—William C. Bagley, Frederick G. Bonser, James F. Hosic, Roy W. Hatch, Elbert K. Fretwell—were friends or colleagues of his, who, despite in part severe differences of opinion, did not wish to expose or offend him publicly in this situation.[115] Yet elsewhere debates flared up that left nothing to be desired as to vehemence and outspokenness. The criticism came from all sides: from "conservative" educationalists, e.g., Ernest Horn, W. W. Charters, Guy M. Wilson, Rufus W. Stimson, as well as "liberal" ones, e.g., Stephen S. Colvin, William C. Ruediger, S. Chester Parker, and Carleton Washburne.[116]

However, the most trenchant criticism came from close colleagues. Boyd H. Bode, a pragmatist philosopher in Dewey's vein, reproached Kilpatrick with his project being unspecific and unhelpful. "To say that subject matter must be organized into projects is not to furnish a method any more than to instruct a commanding general to crush the enemy is a plan of campaign."[117] Harold B. Alberty took the same line as Bode, objecting that Kilpatrick's project was no teaching technique at all. "[P]urposefulness is an attitude, an ideal toward which all teaching should strive and much good may be done by emphasizing it, but it certainly does not define the project method."[118] Vivian T. Thayer, like Bode and Alberty from Ohio State University, criticized Kilpatrick's concept of child nature, pointing out: "There is little evidence to show that children differ so fundamentally from adults that they need not prepare rather consciously for experiences quite clearly in store for them."[119] John Dewey, too, spoke up and declared that such a method, leaving the children to their own resources, was attempting the "impossible." The exponents of an "education through freedom" like Kilpatrick, whom Dewey never mentioned by name, overestimated the capabilities of the child. "Any so-called 'end' or 'aim' or 'project' which the average immature person can suggest in advance," Dewey said, "is likely to be highly vague and unformed, a mere outline sketch, not a suggestion of a definite result or consequence but rather a gesture which roughly indicates a field within which activities might be carried on."[120] Kilpatrick and his followers, Dewey contended¸ applied the notion of "purpose" incorrectly.

> A genuine purpose always starts with an impulse. Obstruction of the immediate execution of an impulse converts it into a desire. Nevertheless neither impulse nor desire is itself a purpose. A purpose is an end-view. That is, it involves foresight of the

> consequences which will result from acting upon impulse. Foresight of consequences involves the operation of intelligence.[121]

Sentimentalists like Kilpatrick failed to realize that thinking was not achieved through the exercise of freedom but, on the contrary, freedom was accomplished through the exercise of thinking. The leadership provided by the teacher to promote the child's ability to think was, Dewey insisted, a precondition for expanding freedom, not a means of suppressing it. Bode drew the appropriate conclusion: "In the interests of our common undertaking it would be better to limit the term project to its original meaning of incidental learning or else to abstain for a time from talk about the project method."[122]

THE END OF A FAILED "MARRIAGE"

In the late 1920s, the criticism became so vigorous that even Kilpatrick began to think over his position and seek ways out of the dilemma. He had actually known from the start that he was breaking taboos in choosing the term "project method" for his conception of libertarian education. In 1917, Ernest Horn's objection that the method had long been firmly anchored and unambiguously defined in handwork did not spur Kilpatrick, the qualified historian, to undertake historical research, but only provoked a defiant reaction: "This [Horn's objection] did not make me give up the term," he told Ashley in 1935, "for I thought that my conception of a purposeful unit of activity had a better claim to the name than [that of manual training]."[123] Yet the introduction to his essay "The Project Method," which appeared one year later, showed how insecure and stricken he was. He spent no less than two pages of print on the justification of taking over the traditional term for his radically new approach to teaching. Kilpatrick brought forward three arguments: (1) his predecessors, here he repeated his reply to Horn, had failed to develop a plausible theory of project teaching, and therefore had no right to monopolize the concept or to decide about its application; (2) the expression "project" generally meant "plan," "scheme," or "purpose," and was therefore well suited to characterize his educational concerns; and (3) terminological questions were in any case "a matter of relatively small moment"; what was imperative was after all the content, not the term connected with it.[124]

Kilpatrick at first felt "misunderstood," "misinterpreted," and unfairly "attacked" by his critics. Their objections to his project concept were "wrong" and "wrong-headed," and initiated "to distort and destroy the movement."[125] Yet his insecurity grew. Even if he did not comment on

Dewey's scorching criticism, and only secretly admitted to himself that "certain criticisms" of Bode were "slightly" justified, the objections of his friends were obviously the decisive factors for him to take up Bode's advice and henceforth refrain from using the project term and stressing the liberty of the child too emphatically.[126] He found these concessions the easier as, with the world economic crisis, the faith in individualism declined, and with the "activity movement" of the 1930s a new movement for the reform of teaching arose, which required more structure and guidance. In *Remaking the Curriculum* (1936), *The Art and Practice of Teaching* (1937), and *Philosophy of Education* (1951), for instance, Kilpatrick substituted the slogan "we learn what we live" for "freedom for practice" and he no longer spoke of "self-directed projects," but, more cautiously, of "teacher-guided, student-pursued activities" when referring to the way of learning he favored.[127] The change from project education to activity education was a wise move to defend the position of leadership he had fought for within the progressive education movement. Above all, he had understood that he should not have employed both, neither the notion of "project" nor the notion of "method," for his educational program.

This insight is formulated in a letter written by the seventy-eight-year-old Kilpatrick on January 25, 1950, to the school and university reformer Abraham Flexner, when asked about the origin of the project method. Going far back in time, Kilpatrick described how he—dealing with the ideas of James, Dewey, and McMurry—had developed his conception of teaching and how he had discovered the project term in Woodhull's paper. Then Kilpatrick, the proud and self-confident gentleman from Georgia, made a confession to Flexner, truly surprising in its candor:

> After my idea got well going (some 50,000 or 60,000 copies of the article [of 1918] were reprinted and it was translated into Russian and German), others began to protest that I was using the term "project method" in my way and not in theirs, that I had not originated the term and so had no right to use it. Others proceeded to use the term in their own peculiar ways. Some were good though different, as J. A. Stevenson's *The Project Method of Teaching* (New York, Macmillan, 1921), but others absurd. In the end I decided I had made a mistake to marry my program to the term, and I stopped using the term as being provocative and ambiguous.[128]

In the last sentence, Kilpatrick indulged in self-criticism that could not have been more fitting and at the same time more crushing. He

confessed that in taking over the project notion in his conception of education he had committed an error. And indeed, Kilpatrick's definition of the project was "ambiguous," since it disregarded the conventions of language in designating the subjective "attitude" of the student as an objective "method" of instruction; and it was "provocative," for it ignored the traditions of the field in replacing—from a sheer wish for innovation and self-aggrandizement—the precise definition of the project as "independent constructive activity" by the vague phrase "whole-hearted purposeful activity." It was this willful break with previous practice that aroused indignation among friend and foe and for a time plunged the project idea into a profound crisis.

THE CLASSIC AS OUTSIDER

Kilpatrick ranks among the great stars of the progressive education movement. His vision of incidental learning made him the head of the movement's child-centered faction that since G. Stanley Hall's withdrawal from education had been seeking a new standard-bearer.[129] The leadership, however, did not just fall into Kilpatrick's lap; he had to work hard to achieve it. He was aided in this respect by his self-discipline, his power-consciousness, and his enterprising skill. Kilpatrick can indeed be depicted, as Ellen C. Lagemann does, as an educational "entrepreneur."[130] From his chair at the most prestigious teacher training institution in the United States, Kilpatrick marketed his product, the "project method," not only via the usual channels—lectures and seminars at home and abroad and essays and books that were translated into many foreign languages, including Arabic, Urdu, and Korean. He also used a medium not available to any other of his colleagues—not even to John Dewey—namely, an association that functioned as his own "Project Propaganda Club."

The main reason why Kilpatrick was able to become one of the best-known—and most controversial—American progressive educationalists was, however, not merely his organizational ability but rather the rhetoric and simplicity of his message. His motto was to give the children "freedom for practice," then they will make use of their intrinsic interests and as if without effort acquire valuable knowledge, experience, and attitudes; and the problems that rendered traditional teaching so arduous and aggravating would disappear almost automatically: indifference, indolence, and want of discipline. Although he tried to resolve all doubt, with Kilpatrick the freedom for the student became a magic formula, and the learning by projects a panacea.

Despite his initial fears of failure, Kilpatrick was proud of his

achievement. "What Algebra did for arithmetic number," he confided to Lawrence Ashley in a rare attack of arrogance, "my conception of purposeful activity did for education method."[131] With this reminder that he, like Gauss, was among the great thinkers of humankind, Kilpatrick wished to establish himself as an "innovator." Yet Kilpatrick overlooked two things: his concept was not really original, since by confining the teacher primarily to "negative education," he simply followed Rousseau; and his concept was not really useful, since by reducing education to "wholehearted purposeful activity," he emphasized the "psychological" (the interests of the child), but neglected the "sociological" (demands of the society) and the "logical" (systematic arrangement of subject matter) as indispensable elements of successful teaching.[132] In his attempt to be an originator and trailblazer, Kilpatrick failed all along the line. By placing spontaneous, self-determined learning at the center of his theory of education, he made the—necessary—exception the—dominant—rule, without considering the fact that students in general do not possess enough knowledge, ability, or intrinsic motivation to select learning matter competently, arrange it systematically, and pursue it vigorously.

There is no doubt that Kilpatrick's contemporaries were spellbound by his inspiring rhetoric. His lectures and seminars at Teachers College were attended by thirty-five thousand students; sixty-one thousand copies of *Foundations of Method* and sixty-five thousand of "The Project Method" were sold.[133] Countless teachers, supervisors, school administrators, and university professors welcomed his rebellion against compulsion and formalism. They were convinced, and rightly so, that Kilpatrick—shoulder to shoulder with Dewey and other representatives of progressive education—was making an important contribution to school reform when he campaigned for open education, flexible curricula, and learning in vital situations. However, the surveys, objections, and failures make it abundantly clear that he was ultimately unable to convince his contemporaries and win them over to his conception of education.[134] In particular, the project as a situation- and child-centered method seemed to them beyond the pale for various reasons: (1) it was *faulty* because it accepted as valid only the momentary interests and needs of the children, and claimed that high intrinsic motivation would inevitably lead to a high increase in learning; (2) it was *futile* because it offered no practical solutions for the everyday business of the teacher pertaining to subject matter, classroom management, and achievement control; (3) it was *counterproductive* because it propagated a concept of freedom which enhanced the development of selfish and individualistic attitudes rather than the—intended—advancement of democratic and social virtues; and (4) it was *annoying* because it flew under false colors, being a "philosophy

of education" while pretending to be a "method of teaching," promising help, advice, and guidance. Kilpatrick's slogans "freedom for practice" and "practice with satisfaction" were of no use at the school front.[135] Involuntarily, they provided the opponents of change and innovation with excellent targets and strong arguments to bring the project method, progressive education, and educational science into discredit.[136]

Kilpatrick's project concept as presented here is not in accord with the mainstream. The conventional wisdom succinctly formulated by Hermann Röhrs: "There is, certainly, a pre-history and a post-history, but substantially they do not go beyond the concept developed by Kilpatrick in his studies"[137] ignores three centuries of development—indeed, it turns history upside down. Kilpatrick is not the classic of the project method, but rather the classical outsider. He fascinated many people, but converted few. His ideas were discussed everywhere, though not because they were generally accepted, but because they were generally rejected. They determined neither the theory nor the practice of project work. What the historians call a climax was a crisis, and what they consider an epoch was an episode. They overestimate Kilpatrick's influence in the project movement, and they underestimate his talent as an organizer and promoter. Seldom have historians of education been such uncritical victims of agitation and propaganda than the historians of the project method.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. Kilpatrick Diaries, 13 April 1918 (William Heard Kilpatrick Collection, Special Collections, Gottesman Libraries, Teachers College, Columbia University). Cf. Samuel Tenenbaum, *William Heard Kilpatrick: Trail Blazer in Education* (New York: Harper, 1951), 88f., 207f.
2. Kilpatrick Diaries, 12 April 1918.
3. Kilpatrick Diaries, 31 May 1918.
4. Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York: Knopf, 1961), 216f.
5. S. Chester Parker, "Project Teaching: Pupils Planning Practical Activities," *Elementary School Journal* 22 (January-February 1922): 335–45, 427–40; Charles A. Bennett, "Some Thoughts Concerning Industrial Education," *Industrial Education Magazine* 29 (October 1927): 117-21; William H. Burton, *The Nature and Direction of Learning* (New York: Appleton, 1935); Calvin M. Woodward, *The Manual Training School, Comprising a Full*

Statement of Its Aims, Methods, and Results (Boston: Heath, 1887); Charles H. Ham, *Manual Training: The Solution of Social and Industrial Problems* (New York: Harper 1886); C. Hanford Henderson, "The Philosophy of Manual Training," *Popular Science Monthly* 53 (June 1898): 322–39; Charles R. Richards, "The Function of Hand Work in the School," *Teachers College Record* 1 (November 1900): 249–59.

6. See, for instance, Robert H. Beck, "Kilpatrick's Critique of Montessori's Method and Theory," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 1 (November 1961): 153–62; Philip H. Phenix, "Religion in the Thought of Kilpatrick," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 1 (November 1961): 212–20; Donald D. Chipman, "Young Kilpatrick and the Progressive Idea," *History of Education Quarterly* 17 (Winter 1977): 407–15; Ronald K. Goodenow, "The Southern Progressive Educator on Race and Pluralism: The Case of William Heard Kilpatrick," *History of Education Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1981): 147–70; Donald D. Chipman and Carl B. McDonald, "The Cold War in the Classroom: Kilpatrick's Student Years at Mercer," *Teachers College Record* 83 (1982): 459—65; John A. Beineke, "A Progressive at the Pinnacle: William Heard Kilpatrick's Final Years at Teachers College Columbia University," *Educational Theory* 39 (Spring 1989): 139–49; J. Wesley Null, *Disciplined Progressive Educator: The Life and Career of William Chandler Bagley* (New York: Lang, 2003), 163ff., 243ff.

7. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School*; Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1953* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986); Daniel Tanner and Laurel N. Tanner, *History of the School Curriculum* (New York: Macmillan, 1990); Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Battles of Failed School Reforms* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000). See also John L. Childs, *American Pragmatism and Education: An Interpretation and Criticism* (New York: Holt, 1956); I. B. Berkson, *The Ideal and the Community: A Philosophy of Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958); Leonard J. Waks, "The Project Method in Postindustrial Education," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 29 (July-August 1997): 391–406.

8. Milton H. Bleeke, "The Project: From a Device for Teaching to a Principle of Curriculum" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1968); notable also: George G. Swimmer, "A Comparison of the Intellectual Development of John Dewey and William H. Kilpatrick with Implications for Differences in Their Educational Theories" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1957); less worthwhile: Janice A. Mooney-Frank, "William Heard Kilpatrick, Progressive Educator, Curriculum Innovator, and Social Philosopher: The Impact of his Project Method on Today's Innovations" (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 2000).

9. See also two interviews that provide a survey of his life: Kilpatrick Transcripts of Tapes (William Heard Kilpatrick Papers, Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, about 1950) and "The Reminiscences of William Heard Kilpatrick" (Oral History Research Office, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, 1965).

10. For the history in general, see Michael Knoll, "The Project Method: Its Origin and International Influence," in *Progressive Education Across the Continents. A Handbook*, ed. Hermann Röhrs and Volker Lenhart (New York: Lang, 1995), 307–18; for the pre-Kilpatrick development see idem, *Dewey, Kilpatrick und „progressive" Erziehung: Kritische Studien zur Projektpädagogik* (Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt, 2011), chap. 1; for the project pedagogy in Germany, Hans Jürgen Apel and Michael Knoll, *Aus Projekten lernen. Grundlegung und Anregungen* (München: Oldenbourg, 2001).

11. Woodward, *The Manual Training School,* 49f., 148.

12. Charles R. Richards, "Department of Manual Training, Teachers College, New York," *Sloyd Bulletin* no. 2 (March 1899): 11 (italics added).

13. Rufus W. Stimson, "The Vocational Agriculture School," *The Eleventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1912),

22–53; John F. Woodhull, *The Teaching of Science* (New York: Macmillan, 1918), 197ff.

14. Arthur C. Monahan and Charles H.Lane, "Agricultural Education," *Report of the US-Commissioner of Education* (1916), 237; Joseph C. Park and Charles L. Harlan, "Some Facts Concerning Manual Arts and Home-Making Subjects in 156 Cities," *Bulletin of the US–Bureau of Education* no. 32 (1916): 19.

15. Registration book of William Heard Kilpatrick, Columbia University in the City of New York, Faculty of Teachers College, 1907–1910 (Kilpatrick Papers, Mercer University).

16. Kilpatrick Diaries, 1 January 1917. Cf. Tenenbaum, *William Heard Kilpatrick*, 85ff.

17. Kilpatrick Diaries, 24 November 1915, 6 August 1915.

18. Kilpatrick Diaries, 1 January 1915.

19. William H. Kilpatrick, "Two Halves of One Life," handwritten autobiographical notes (Kilpatrick Papers, Mercer University).

20. Dewey, John: "Interest and Effort in Education" [1913], *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), vol. 7: 190, see also 183, 185.

21. William H. Kilpatrick, "Dewey's Doctrine of Interest," *Proceedings of the North Carolina Teachers Assembly* (1913): 128–31.

22. Kilpatrick Diaries, 9.10.1914; Edward L. Thorndike, *Educational Psychology. Vol. 2: The Psychology of Learning* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1913), 51, 53.

23. William H. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method: Informal Talks on Teaching* (New York: Macmillan, 1925), 52.

24. John Dewey, "Reasoning in Early Childhood" [1914], *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), vol. 7, 369–76; Patty S. Hill, "Introduction: Experimental Studies in Kindergarten Theory and Practice," *Teachers College Record* 15 (January 1914): 1–9.

25. Luella A. Palmer, "Principles Underlying the Organization of Kindergarten Materials," *Teachers College Record* 15 (January 1914): 55f. Cf. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method, 52.* That Kilpatrick was to stretch the notion of method beyond the traditional boundaries may be traced to considerations of his doctoral advisor Paul Monroe, who had defined "method" as a "point of view," combining all the factors—such as the contents, subjects, and materials of teaching, the "interests, activities, and possessions" of the child—that generated a "method effect." Paul Monroe, *A Brief Course in the History of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 408; cf. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method, 100, 346.*

26. Kilpatrick Diaries, 30 June 1914, 8 July 1914, 25 October 1914, with commentary of 22 October 1948.

27. Kilpatrick Diaries, 13 July 1914, 5 August 1914, 6 August 1914, 13 August 1914, 29 October 1914, with commentary of 22 October 1948.

28. Letter from Kilpatrick to Lawrence F. Ashley, 15 July 1935. There are two further letters extant in which Kilpatrick described the development and spread of his project concept: letter to S. W. Ivanoff, 21 February 1946, and letter to Abraham Flexner, 25 January 1950 (Kilpatrick Papers, Mercer University).

29. John F. Woodhull, "Science Teaching by Projects," *School Science and Mathematics* 15 (March 1915): 225–32; Kilpatrick Diaries, 1 April 1916 and p. 310; Geoge D. Hofe, "The Project Method and Its Origin," *Teachers College Record* 67 (February 1966): 371–73; William H. Kilpatrick, "Project Teaching," *General Science Quarterly* 1 (January 1917): 67–72.

30. Kilpatrick Diaries, 11 May 1915.

31. William C. Bagley, *School Discipline* (New York: Macmillan, 1914), 81f.

32. Kilpatrick Diaries, 12 May 1915.

33. Frank M. McMurry, "Principles Underlying the Making of School Curricula," *Teachers College Record* 16 (September 1915): 309.

34. McMurry, "Principles Underlying the Making of School Curricula," 311.

35. *First Circular of Information, New York College for the Training of Teachers* (1888–1889), *Outline of Course of Study for the Horace Mann Kindergarten and Elementary School* (1902), *The Curriculum of Horace Mann Elementary School* (1913), *The Curriculum and Courses of Study of the Speyer School* (1900), *The Speyer School Curriculum* (1913), all published by Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

36. Frank M. McMurry, *Elementary School Standards: Instruction, Course of Study, Supervision* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book, 1914); Frederick G. Bonser, "Modifications Within Public or General School Programs to Meet Industrial Needs," *Teachers College Record* 12 (September 1911): 221–39; Pearson, *The Curriculum of the Horace Mann Elementary School*; Henry Suzzallo, "Editor's Introduction," Percival R. Cole, *Industrial Education in the Elementary School* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), vii–xiv; Ernest Horn, "Stenographic Reports of Lessons in Industrial Arts," *Teachers College Record* 16 (November 1915): 478–94.

37. Kilpatrick Diaries, 12 May 1915.

38. McMurry, "Principles Underlying the Making of School Curricula," 307.

39. Kilpatrick Diaries, 6 August 1915.

40. See Kilpatrick's subsequently added preface to "How Shall We View Method? The Place of the 'Problem Method' in a Theory of Education. Do We Need a More Inclusive Conception?" (Kilpatrick Papers, Mercer University).

41. Letter from Kilpatrick to Ashley, 15 July 1935.

42. William H. Kilpatrick, "The Problem-Project Method," Akron, Ohio, 6 November 1915, handwritten manuscript, three pages (Kilpatrick Papers, Mercer University).

43. John Dewey, "The School and Society" [1900], *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), vol. 1, 131.

44. Kilpatrick Diaries, 6 November 1915.

45. Kilpatrick Diaries, 1916, p. 310, 1917, p. 287, 1918, p. 301.

46. William H. Kilpatrick, "The Problem-Project Attack in Organization, Subject Matter, and Teaching," *Proceedings of the National Education Association* (1918): 528–31. Some of the committee members had already commented on the project method before the meeting. See Horn "Stenographic Reports of Lessons in Industrial Arts"; Harold B. Wilson and Guy M. Wilson, *The Motivation of School Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916); W. W. Charters, "Systematic Topics, Multi-Problems, and Projects," *Journal of the Illinois State Teachers Association* (1917): 109–14. A year after the meeting Bobbitt dealt with Woodhull's science project. See Franklin Bobbitt, *The Curriculum* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918), 30–33.

47. Kilpatrick Diaries, 28 February 1917.

48. Kilpatrick's preface to: "How Shall We View Method?"

49. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 1.

50. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 10.

51. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 15.

52. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 14f. Cf. Woodhull, "Science Teaching by Projects," 229.

53. Kilpatrick elaborated his "doctrine of freedom" in *The Montessori System Examined* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914): 17ff.

54. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 14, 12.

55. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 23.

56. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 25f.

57. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 22.

58. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 17. The passage indicates that it is not far-fetched to connect Kilpatrick with "anti-intellectualism." Cf. John A. Beineke, "The Charge

of Anti-Intellectualism in Teacher Education: Historical Roots and Current Controversies," *Teacher Education Quarterly* 16 (1989): S. 21–31; Ravitch, *Left Back*, 89ff.

59. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 15.

60. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 26.

61. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We View Method," 29.

62. Kilpatrick Diaries, 28 April 1917.

63. Kilpatrick, "The Problem-Project Attack in Organization, Subject Matter, and Teaching," 528–31. A further outcome of the subcommittee's endeavors were *New Materials of Instruction. The Nineteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I.,* and *New Materials of Instruction. The Twentytieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I.* (Bloomington, IL: Public School Publishing 1921, 1922).

64. William H Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," *Teachers College Record* 19 (September 1918): 321.

65. John Dewey, "Democracy and Education" [1916], *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), vol. 9, 202–14.

66. Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," 322.

67. Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," 327, 329.

68. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 348.

69. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 346ff.

70. Kilpatrick Diaries, 8 December 1917.

71. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 130, 216.

72. William H. Kilpatrick, "How Shall We Select the Subject Matter of the Elementary School Curriculum," *Proceedings of the National Education Association* (1924): 908; similarly Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 366.

73. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 359, 357.

74. William H. Kilpatrick, "School Method from the Project Point of View," in *The Classroom Teacher,* ed. Milo B. Hillegas (Chicago: Classroom Teacher, 1927), 229.

75. Kilpatrick Diaries, 8 December 1917.

76. Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," 330.

77. A general survey of the experiment is to be found in Henry C. Pearson and Charles W. Hunt, "Horace Mann Studies in Elementary Education – Introduction," *Teachers College Record* 20 (March 1919): 97–99; Mooney-Frank; *William Heard Kilpatrick*, 108–19, 129–39.

78. Kilpatrick, William H., "The Theories Underlying the Experiment," *Teachers College Record* 20 (March 1919): S. 99–106.

79. Kilpatrick Diaries, 11 February 1916, 3 March 1916, 13 April 1917, 2 May 1917, 25 October 1917.

80. Agnes Burke, "First Grade Materials and Stimuli," *Teachers College Record* 20 (March 1919): 118–25.

81. Tenenbaum, *William Heard Kilpatrick*, p. 226.

82. Florence M. Meadowcroft, "Specimen Activities of the First Grade," *Teachers College Record* 20 (March 1919): 17.

83. The term "education through freedom" is taken from William A. McCall, Clara F. Chassell and Leta S. Hollingworth, "Experimental Measurements," *Teachers College Record* 20 (May 1919): 218.

84. Mildred I. Batchelder, "Materials and Activities in the Second Grade," *Teachers College Record* 20 (May 1919): 205-10; M. Julia Detraz, "Materials and Activities in the Third Grade," *Teachers College Record* 20 (May 1919): 210–18; Marie Hennes, "Project Teaching in an Advanced Fifth Grade," *Teachers College Record* 22 (March 1921): 137–48.

85. McCall, Chassell, and Hollingworth, "Experimental Measurement," 226.

86. Henry C. Pearson, "Introduction," *Curriculum of Horace Man Elementary School* (New

York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1917), 1.

87. In retrospect, the experiment appeared to Kilpatrick, contrary to McCall's investigations and his own diary entries, more successful than it actually was. See Tenenbaum, *William Heard Kilpatrick*, 225–28.

88. Quoted in David Levine, "The Project Method and the Stubborn Grammar of Schooling: A Milwaukee Story," *Journal of Educational Foundations* 15 (Winter 2001): 12.

89. Milwaukee News, February 1922, quoted in Scrapbook of William Heard Kilpatrick vol. 3, 1922–23, p. 71 (Kilpatrick Papers, Teachers College).

90. Levine, "The Project Method and the Stubborn Grammar of Schooling," 12f.; Kilpatrick Diaries, 3 February 1922.

91. Milwaukee Public Schools, *Projects and Games in the Primary Grades* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Schools, 1922).

92. Action proposed by Teachers Organization in Milwaukee to Board of Education, 1923; Action proposed by Director Meta Berger to Board of Education, 1924, quoted in Kilpatrick Scrapbook, vol. 3, p. 39, vol. 4, p. 23 and 63.

93. Kilpatrick Diaries, 8 September 1924, 11 September 1924.

94. Kilpatrick Diaries, 13 January 1925. The term "Kilpatrick Project School" is used here.

95. Levine, "The Project Method and the Stubborn Grammar of Schooling," 14f.

96. Levine, "The Project Method and the Stubborn Grammar of Schooling," 16.

97. W. W. Theisen, "Standards for Judging School Projects," *Projects and Games in the Primary Grades,* 15.

98. For the following, see Michael Knoll, "Faking a Dissertation: Ellsworth Collings, William H. Kilpatrick, and the 'Project Curriculum,'" *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 28 (March 1996): 193–222.

99. Kilpatrick Diaries, 13 July 1922, 21 December 1923.

100. Ellsworth Collings, *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), 64.

101. Collings, *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum,* 280.

102. William H. Kilpatrick, "Introduction," in Collings, *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum*, xxiii.

103. Kilpatrick, "Introduction," xixf.

104. Kilpatrick Diaries, 20 November 1922.

105. Kilpatrick Diaries, 27 February 1918.

106. Kilpatrick Diaries, 29 July 1918.

107. Kilpatrick Diaries, 24 February 1915. The entry runs: "Met with the 'Dewey society' to be and discussed constitution, etc. They took my advice on practically every point, adopted a modest course, called it a 'club,' etc." Hitherto, historians have assumed that the first endeavors to establish a John Dewey Society took place in 1934. See Daniel Tanner, *Crusade for Democracy: Progressive Education at the Crossroads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

108. Kilpatrick Diaries, 8 August 1918. On Hosic and his relations with Kilpatrick, see in particular Bleeke, "The Project. From a Device for Teaching to a Principle of Curriculum," 116–60.

109. "As Reported," *Journal of Educational Method* 1 (September 1921): 37f.

110. James F. Hosic, "Editorially Speaking," *Journal of Educational Method* 1 (September 1921): 2.

111. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*; James F. Hosic and Sara E. Chase, *Brief Guide to the Project Method* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book, 1924).

112. The term "aggressive advocacy" is used in Walter S. Monroe, *Teaching-Learning*

Theory and Teacher Education, 1890-1950 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952), 65, 81.

113. James L. Stockton, *Project Work in Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1920), 128; Frances R. Edwards, "The Place of the Project Method in Religious Education," *Journal of Educational Method* 1 (December 1921): 139; Emma B. Grant, "The Power of the Project," *Primary Education* 28 (1920): 212. For Charles A. McMurry who—with *Teaching by Projects: A Basis for Purposeful Study* (New York: Macmillan, 1920)—wrote a popular book rejecting Kilpatrick's project concept see Knoll, *Dewey, Kilpatrick und "progressive" Erziehung*, chap. 2 and appendix 4.

114. Daniel R. Hodgdon, "The Psychological and Pedagogical Basis of General Science," *School Science and Mathematics* 19 (July 1923): 321.

115. The papers are, except for Fretwell's, printed under the heading "Dangers and Difficulties of the Project Method and How to Overcome Them" in *Teachers College Record* 22 (September 1921): 283–321. Cf. Kilpatrick Diaries, 19 March 1921.

116. Ernest Horn, "Criteria for Judging the Project Method," *Educational Review* 63 (February 1922): 93–101; W. W. Charters, "The Limitations of the Project," *Journal of the National Education Association* 11 (January 1922): 17–19; Guy M. Wilson, "Discussion of Dr. Kilpatrick's Paper on the Project Method," *Studies in Education, Educational Monographs No. 11* (Baltimore: Society of College Teachers of Education, 1922), 58–62; Guy M. Wilson, "Teaching Levels, Teaching Technique, and the Project," *Journal of Educational Method* 2 (April-May 1923): 323–29, 385–93; Rufus W. Stimson, "Vocational Agricultural Education: Gains and Tendencies," *Vocational Education Magazine* 1 (October 1922), S. 92–96; Stephen S. Colvin, "The Source of Educational Objectives," *School and Society* 17 (May 1923): 505–13; William C. Ruediger, "Project Tangentials," *Educational Review* 65 (April 1923): 243–46; S. Chester Parker, "Project Teaching: Pupils Planning Practical Activities," *Elementary School Journal* 22 (January-February 1922): 335–45, 427–40; Carleton Washburne, "The Limitations of the Project Method," *Proceedings of the National Education Association* (1928): 187–88.

117. Boyd H. Bode, *Modern Educational Theories* (New York: Macmillan 1927), 140. See also Knoll, *Dewey, Kilpatrick und "progressive" Erziehung*, chap. 2.

118. Harold B. Alberty, *A Study of the Project Method in Education* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1927), 78.

119. Vivian T. Thayer, *The Passing of the Recitation* (Boston: Heath, 1928), 269.

120. John Dewey, "Individuality and Experience" [1926], *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925–1953* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981), vol. 2, 58f., 59f.

121. John Dewey, "Experience and Education" [1938], *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925–1953* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), vol. 13, 43. For Dewey's project concept see Knoll, *Dewey, Kilpatrick und "progressive" Erziehung*, chap. 3.

122. Bode, *Modern Educational Theories*, 165. It is interesting to note that just a year earlier Bode had published a review of Kilpatrick's *Foundations of Method* in *Educational Administration and Supervision* 12 (1926): 137–38, in which he recommended the book "strongly and unreservedly." For other reviews see *English Journal* 14 (September 1925): 574–75 (W. Wilbur Hatfield); *School Review* 33 (December 1925): 797–98 (Carter V. Good); *Elementary School Journal* 26 (January 1926): 390–91 (F. Dean McClusky); *Childhood Education* 2 (April 1926): 405–6 (Lucile E. Allard); *American Journal of Nursing* 27 (January 1927): 77–78 (Susie A. Watson).

123. Letter from Kilpatrick to Ashley, 15 July 1935.

124. Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," 320f. Similarly Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, 104f., 344f.

125. Kilpatrick-Diaries, 26 February 1921, 24 December 1921, 1 January 1922, 28 February 1922.

126. Kilpatrick Diaries, 5 February 1929. Kilpatrick commented on Alberty's critical *Study of the Project Method*: "I am much interested to see how facts can lie. I do not doubt Alberty's facts, but his discourses [?] and conclusions are, I am satisfied, quite false." A quarter of a century later, Alberty regarded Kilpatrick's project method favorably. See Harold B. Alberty, *Reorganizing the High School Curriculum* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 268ff.

127. William H. Kilpatrick, *Remaking the Curriculum* (New York: Newson, 1936); idem, *The Art and Practice of Teaching* (New York: Scott, 1937); idem, *Philosophy of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1951). An exception is William H. Kilpatrick, "The Project Method and the Psychology of Learning," *The School* 31 (November 1942): 184–89.

128. Letter from Kilpatrick to Flexner, 25 January 1950; for a reprint and interpretation see Michael Knoll, "'A Marriage on the Rocks': An Unknown Letter by William Heard Kilpatrick about his Project Method," Eric-online document 511129 (2010-08-04).

129. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum*, 160.

130. Ellen C. Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Educational Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 238.

131. Letter from Kilpatrick to Ashley, 15 July 1935.

132. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 24.

133. Tenenbaum, *William Heard Kilpatrick*, 185, 209.

134. For empirical evidence about the dissemination of the project method and Kilpatrick's position in the project movement, see Knoll, *Dewey, Kilpatrick und "progressive" Erziehung*, appendices 2 and 4.

135. For more or less critical evaluations of Kilpatrick's project concept, see Ernest E. Bayles, *Democratic Educational Theory* (New York: Harper, 1960), 240ff.; Charles J. Brauner, *American Educational Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 255ff.; Ernest E. Bayles and Bruce L. Hood, *Growth of American Educational Thought and Practice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 225ff.; Philip W. Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Holt, Rinehard & Winston, 1968), 109ff.; Arthur Zilversmit, *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 13ff.

136. Likewise Lagemann, *An Elusive Science,* 239; Craig Kridel and Robert V. Bullough, *Stories of the Eight-Year Study: Reexamining Secondary Education in America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 30.

137. Hermann Röhrs, *Die progressive Erziehungsbewegung: Verlauf und Auswirkung der Reformpädagogik in den USA* (Hannover: Schroedel, 1977), 109.

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