

The Teaching Profession  
Reflection on Topic 1 and 2  
Western and Philippine Historical Backgrounds of Education

For nearly six years, I've felt ***frustrated and disappointed with the promise of education***. For about a year and a half after graduation, I felt so torn apart that I couldn't get a job in the field I'd studied for and wanted. I used to see my struggle as a personal failure, but studying Western and Philippine history showed me a deeper truth. I realized that **education is not always an empowering force; it has consistently been a powerful tool for social stratification**, a reality I saw reflected in history and then in my own life.

Studying the evolution of education—from ancient communal knowledge to its modern institutionalization—has revealed this *recurring pattern*. In medieval Europe and under Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines, education was a *privilege of the elite*, a mark of exclusivity and power. Even the American colonizers' policy of democratizing education, while seemingly fair, simply created a *new kind of social ladder*. They set up a free, public system that taught English, making language skills a new way to measure a person's intelligence and social standing. But even with this free system, many families couldn't afford to send their children to school because of the other costs involved. So, being "educated" became a way to rank people, while a lack of schooling created a lasting stigma. This history lesson hit me hard when I thought about my own life. Right after graduation, the diploma I worked so hard for didn't get me a career. I was disillusioned to see so little demand for psychology majors and to watch my classmates settle for jobs that paid just above minimum wage. This was my *firsthand lesson in stratification*. I didn't intentionally choose to become a teacher; it was a chance offered by my college chairperson. I started as a contract of service instructor at PUP, earning only ₱8,000 a month—a clear sign that my diploma hadn't put me in a better economic situation. I was grateful for the chance my chairperson gave me, and I quickly found my calling in teaching. However, it took six years, and a move to DepEd SHS, before I finally got a better salary and economic situation. The fact remains: *my degree did not lead me to this path directly*.

This new perspective is now the *guiding principle of my teaching*. I am committed to an intentional approach, one that recognizes how even well-meaning policies can reinforce social class. My goal is to **teach not just the "what" but also the "why," empowering students to think critically** and see the historical and social contexts behind the information they get. I will make my classroom a space where different kinds of knowledge—from textbooks or from their own lives—are valued equally. I want to help students see that education should be a tool for improving their lives financially and practically, for self-discovery, and for contributing meaningfully to their communities. My teaching will be a deliberate effort to **break down the same barriers** that formal education has historically created, **turning my personal frustration into a purposeful practice of true empowerment**.