RETEXTURING THE WORLD AND THE WORLD: LITERACY AND CONTRADICTION IN THE TEXTS OF PAULO FREIRE

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April, 1991

A Thesis submitted to the University of Warwick, Department of Education, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
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The completing of a major piece of research causes to re­
echo Eliot's whistful sigh: "To make an end is to make a
beginning. The end is where we start from." It is a
cliché, but perhaps true because of that, that one is now
in a position, having done all the work, to start where one
wished one could have started so long ago.

The fact, however, that this particular work is now
completed is due, in very large part, to the help and
support of many people, of whose attention and involvement
I have always been conscious. When I say to myself, with
satisfaction, "This study is all my own work", it is they
who will smile, for they will know deeply that, without
them, the work would never have been realised.

They have all contributed generously with their knowledge,
wisdom, criticism and support. Among the many, I would
wish to extend my thanks to the following:

to Shirley Brice-Heath, at Stamford University, California,
who supplied me with copies of her
valuable research work on literacy;

to Antonio Paundez, at the World Council of Churches,
Geneva, who gave me transcripts of
Freire's lectures and publications;

to my colleagues and friends at the Institut Universitaire
de Technologie, Tours, who have
supported with indulgence and good
humour the writing of this "thèse".

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and
appreciation to:

Keith Hoskin, at the University of Warwick, who has so
generously given of his own insightful
learning and whose counsel has always been
valuable, not least because he offered a
model of pedagogy infused with two great
virtues - tenacity and enthusiasm.

My gratitude to Sally, cannot be expressed in words.
Simply, I dedicate this text to her, my wife, and midwife
both to most of the encouragement needed to sustain this
study and to many of the corrections needed to improve it.
ABSTRACT

Most studies of Freire concentrate on his method and techniques. This present work seeks to go beneath the obvious practice of Literacy teaching, to analyse the construction of his pedagogy and to explore the contradictions posed both by Freire's life (bio-texts) and by his work (grapho-texts).

The study therefore proposes the most detailed Biography of Freire which is yet currently available, identifying the main stages of his career and exploring the development of his educational philosophy.

Following a brief review of his Method, there is a detailed presentation of the Sources and Influences which lie behind Freire's pedagogy, which reveal his comprehensive eclecticism but which also place him firmly within the classical tradition of European education. This section reveals for the first time some of the key taproots of Freirean philosophy.

This textual archaeology and genealogy is also used to construct an analysis of this philosophy through a detailed examination of the concepts of Dialogue and Conscientisation, trying to reconcile the fundamental disjunction which appears between Freire's rhetoric and his practice.

That "Dialogic Education" may be a contradiction in terms is further explored through a unique examination of the Teaching Material which Freire used in his programme. The fundamental contradiction is exposed: that Literacy, which means "learning to read" can never achieve its ideals of Dialogue.

The study is itself structured on the Freirean Methodology of Coding and Decoding. In ends by placing Freire's pedagogy within the wider context (con-text) of the recent Literacy debate, confronting the nature of Literacy itself, the construction of Power and Knowledge through Writing and the further contradiction contained in the idea of "Functional Literacy". The conclusion is that Literacy is its own multi-faceted Pharmakon: of its essence, Literacy is an agent of Control and an agent of Change.

The strength of the study is in its detail and in its extensive bibliographic research. It concludes that Freire's attempt to retexture Literacy, to renovate the inherent contradictions of teaching and learning, is a major contribution to Pedagogy, not because it is successful but because it authentically and exhaustively Problem Posing. The "Metodo Paulo Freire" is a contradictory pedagogy, but it is also a Pedagogy of Contradiction.
NOTE ON LANGUAGE AND SEXISM

It is regrettable that so much of the vigour and commitment of those who write and teach against oppression is vitiated by sexist language. Sadly, if we construct the struggle for freedom as an engagement for "man's liberation", we may be contributing to the suppression, invisibility or powerlessness of women.

It is perhaps time to reject the outmoded, classicist language that obdurately claims that she and her are to be assumed in he and his. We can no longer inhabit a world where "men are oppressed" and where we try to educate people that a man can "liberate himself" and can achieve "his ontological vocation through his own efforts."

I have discussed this problem of sexist language in my correspondence with Professor Freire. He has indeed confirmed that it was certainly not his intention to cause offence by the apparently sexist translations of his work, and he agreed wholeheartedly that such "old forms of writing" should be avoided.

Professor Freire willingly agreed that I should retranslate his early works, avoiding sexist language and in keeping with his own efforts, since 1975, to find more acceptable linguistic expressions. This I have tried to do where I have had the original text to hand. In other cases, I have reworked, or reworded, the available translations.

Equally, I have rephrased other texts used in this study, albeit without permission. I have tended to use person or humankind, she/he and their, but I have also circumvented the linguistic problems of certain texts by using the formula of we, us, and our. The essential meaning of the texts has not been altered, but there may be a nuance of direct, personal expression which is more evident here than in the original sources.

The task of trying to create a discourse on liberating education that is anti-sexist has been difficult. It is hoped that any strain experienced by the reader because of unfamiliar linguistic forms will be tolerated in the light of my underlying intention to engage all those who wish, as Subjects, to enter an authentic and authenticating dialogue.
INTRODUCTION
Paulo Freire, educator, philosopher, political activator, has the capacity to excite and frustrate friends and critics alike. He is not, apparently, a man about whom one remains neutral.

We have to take seriously the man of whom Illich said, "He is my master and my teacher", and whom Reimer (Ohliger, 1971:7) called "the greatest living educator". Lovett (1975:15) regards his work as the most radical analysis of working class adult education, while McLaren (1986:394) places him in the "front ranks of that "dying class" of modern revolutionaries who fight for social justice and transformation", asserting that Freire's pedagogy has assumed a legendary and epoch making status.

But is that an epoch that is dying or one that is coming to birth? Is Freire O'Shaughnessy's "dreamer of dreams", an opportunistic educator who expounded a discourse which was fashionable in the late 60's and early 70's but which since has been tainted with disillusion and middle age? Was he an "earth-mover and earth-shaker" who was empowered by the same missionary endeavour and idealism which Reimer obviously shared in saying that "As an

1. Illich, I. _Yesterday I could not sleep because yesterday I wrote my name_. Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, California, undated audio-tape.
educator. Freire is mainly concerned with the educational means of freeing people from the bondage of the culture of silence." (1970:69)

This is explained, in the same epochal discourse but with more detail, by Haviland (1973):

"The direct outcome of his work in Brazil and Chile has been that various groups of oppressed people, who have lived for years in a world where they have been imprisoned by mental and physical poverty, now have a new hope, a renewed desire to live a life as full, human beings, a belief that they can affect their own destinies and a desire to become educated. He has provided them with the tools to liberate and educate themselves."

Yet is this, was this ever, really the case? In what sense can education be linked causally to the complex processes of liberation? Does education combat "mental poverty" as it does "physical poverty", even supposing that the former denotes a meaningful, social or individual deprivation?

Freire himself has recognised the difficulty. As MacKoin (1972) notes:

"For years I have been searching for an instance in which peasants have broken out of their oppression, even at a local level, but I have found none. When I asked Freire, he admitted that neither has he."

Others have proffered the more positive response that the so-called Freirean method is not primarily concerned with education but with a much greater human need, viz. the freedom of the individual and the development of a just society.
This may sound a grandiose claim, but it is one that underlies Harman’s (1971) suggestion (and he is by no means alone) that the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, for example, should not be read as a “revolutionary pedagogy” but as a “pedagogy for revolution.”

Some readers (e.g. Berger, 1975) question the validity of this distinction, pointing to the political naivety which Harman illustrates. Others blame Freire himself for the lack of clarity and for creating a magma of texts, analyses and reflections beneath the apparently solid crust of his literacy method.

It is certainly true that Freire has provoked a sustained chorus of criticism: there is the contorted manner of his writing (Knudson, 1971), his lack of human experience (Boston, 1972), his circular logic and confusing repetitiveness (Collins, 1972); he is obscurantist (O’Neill, 1978), too mystifying (Egerton, 1975), too abstract (Mackie, 1980:128), too psychological (Barndt, 1980), too utopian (Griffith, 1976); his method requires a high level of social manipulation (Jerez, 1971) and can be used equally to domesticate as to liberate (Kidd, 1982).

It is these contiguous elements of confusion, criticism, contradiction and commendation that make any study of Freire difficult. Yet we cannot allow his appeal: “Many people say I am a contradictory man, and I say I have the right to be contradictory. Let me be in peace with my
contradictions." (1979:11) This may have been a felt need on his part, but it is inconsistent with that process of conscientisation which actively encourages people to "refuse to be inactive readers and to become agents of their own learning."(1976) Dialogic education must also be dialectic education, and we have to reject the homogenisation of knowledge and seek to "problematisse", to bring into question what is given by exploiting the contradictions, by finding those contra-dicts that mean that something can be "said against" the status quo.

In refusing Freire his contradictions, however, we are not simply attempting to rationalise his system. We cannot demythologise Freire by imposing an illusion of coherence on his inconsistencies. Pedagogic or cultural exegesis is not condemned to find a coherent Freire inside the disparate texts which are available. Just as there is a danger in any intellectual biography of making earlier works anachronistic by imposition of an author's later understandings, so too there is the temptation to "read between the lines" and so find or implant the fil conducteur, that inner thread of consistency and logic.

2. This important point on adjusting the biographical lens owes much to Skinner (1969), whose caution about parochialism, that is, "misdescribing, by a process of historical foreshortening, both the sense and the intended reference of a given work" should also be noted. My insistence that a dialogic pedagogy must allow inconsistency is paralleled in Freinet's method and pedagogy. His principle of tâtonnement, trial and error, demands that the educator be able to exploit and celebrate the possibility of error. See: Clanché, F. (1989).
We may have to accept as inevitable, even desirable, that a method founded on the principles of dialogue should be exposed by the evidence of incomplete premises and even downright contradiction.

A history of ideas will take account of the fact that key terms and core principles are changed and developed with time. The exegete, in that case, can only fall back upon the internal evidence for what the author is trying to communicate. Beyond that, there is the corroborating evidence of the external text or contexts which "explain" the texts.

With Freire, this is no easy task. His sincerity is not in doubt; not even a casual reader could miss the passion and strength of his commitment. The difficulties lie rather in establishing the Freirean Corpus, i.e. an image of the man himself and the corpus or canon of his work. What do we know of Freire's life, what has he said and written, and to whom was he speaking and writing?

It is important to note that there is as yet no accredited biography of Freire. I have formed only an incomplete jig-saw picture, using pieces gleaned from his writings and interviews and from people who knew him. Although he often asserts that "any statement on education implies a statement about a person's relationship with the world", he has been less than expansive in dealing with his own biography.
Paradoxically, this strengthens the hand of Freire as auto-biographer. He has always insisted on writing his own life in his own script. The kind of popular biography that many seek, he would regard as necrophilic. As Sturrock wrote of Barthes, "A biography is a treacherous memorial because it is logical and necessarily centripetal, and that means life-denying." (Sturrock, 1974)

The centrifugal force of Freire's pedagogy flies outwards in search of dialogue and the possibility of change. He harnesses Aristotle's dictum that each person is capable of being "other" to a method that is more focused on what we can become than on what we are. Yet this does not distance him from his own lived context. On the contrary, the absence of local colour, Freire's refusal to illustrate each point by a narrative that firmly places him in the setting of North-east Brazil, actually reinforces the authenticity of his speech.

Freire can thus attempt to "write the world" without denying that he is essentially a very provincial person. He can accept Griffith (1974) who notes that Recifã, which was both the cradle and the crucible of Freire's thought, was also a long way away, geographically, culturally and politically, from the industrial and post-industrial Brazil.

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3. The point is forcefully made by Borges in his "The Argentinean Writer and Tradition" that, in the Quor'an, that Arabian book par excellence, there are no camels. When one is truly native, one can dispense with local colour. See: Labyrinths. 1987:215.
of the larger cities to the South.

He cannot accept, however, Furter's argument (1974) that he is provincial because he prefers speaking to writing. In Furter's mind there is the colonial construct of "non-provincial" that is co-terminous with the dominant cultures and class of the capital. The assumption is that the provinces are less cultured, and thereby less literate, than the capital. Freire rejects this, and although he admits that he is "more used to talking than to writing" (1975d), he values this fact in a very different way. For him, speaking, even with a provincial accent, is the prerequisite of literacy. His method demands that one learns to speak before one can write and read, not least because speaking is the essential mode of dialogue: "In the last analysis, you are recreating yourself in dialogue to a greater extent than when you are solitarily writing, seated in your office, or in a small library". (1987a)

This preference of Freire for speaking a text, rather than writing a text, is marked in the reprint of dialogues and conversations (1985), in his "talked book" with Shor (1987a), and in the further dialogues and reflections with Macedo (1987b).

This raises the technical question of the authorship and ownership of the Freirean corpus. The fact that a "book" is largely spoken, makes Barthes écrivain more a dictator, and it takes less than a Derridean twist of
language to expose the power/knowledge relationship that that evokes.

To whom, then, belongs the "author-ship", the author-ity, of his books. McLaren (1988:219) suggests that Macedo, for example, brings

"a complementary and critical voice both to the theoretical and the practical aspects of Freirean pedagogy... He helps to clarify some of Freire's positions on the pedagogical implications and applications of his work."

It is perhaps significant that Freire's early work was "authored" alone (Education as the Practice of Freedom, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and Letters to Guinea Bissau), while his later work has been "co-authored" (with Paunides post 1978, with Betto (1985b), with Shor (1987a) and with Macedo (1987b).

Is it possible now to hear the voice of Freire without listening also to his acolytes? Freire has clearly worked and re-worked the core of his ideas and publications, often through dialogue. So besides the question of authorship, there is the further problem, if we want to trace the development of his ideas, of establishing a proper chronology.

His work, which has been translated in 17 languages.

4. In 1987b:62, 114, Freire refers twice to a book which he wrote with Antonio Paunides and which answered criticism made about his work in Guinea Bissau. However, although a footnote is actually numbered in the text, no reference is given.
appears, in the main, in Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and German. Not only does that create a mixed vocabulary (for example: Educação, Educación, Education; Conscientização, Conscientización, Conscientisation; Culture Circle, Circulo de Cultura) where the apparently similar words are nuanced and do not necessarily mean the same, but it also frequently causes his work to suffer either from cross-translation (for example, does "Bewuβtseinsbildung" convey the meaning of "education for critical consciousness"?) or from repeated publication, or from both.

Some work has even been translated back into Portuguese by Freire: "My best writing on the "culture of silence" is the Portuguese edition of Education as the Practice of Freedom of which I have lost the original and so had to translate it back from the English edition." (Costigan, 1983).

One can also find, for example, an article which is a 1974 English translation of a Spanish version of a discussion originally conducted in Portuguese. Even material in the same language can appear at first glance to be two different texts but which, in the event, prove to be the same substantive material translated by different

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5. "Conscientisation and Liberation" appeared in Communio Viatorum. 1974, No.3, pp.118-122: It was produced in English in 1973 as: An Interview at the Institute of Cultural Action, Geneva, IDAC, Document 1, acknowledging that it was a transcript of a discussion in Portuguese held in the previous year.
people with differing perspectives. Finally, editorial presentation can result in noticeable differences even between two translations of major texts.

These difficulties in establishing a Freirean canon serve to provide an important caveat. It needs to be noted that the use of phrases like "Freire's philosophy" or "the Freirean method" are somewhat misleading. They should be better seen as a shorthand, a way of referring to what is a complex package of ideas and techniques the authorship of which is not always clear. On the contrary, what becomes increasingly obvious to the reader of Freire is that his words are not only his own. He is highly eclectic:

"He has reached out to the thought and experience of those in many different situations and of diverse philosophical positions: in his words, to "Sartre, Mounier, Eric Fromm and Louis Althusser, Ortega y Gasset and Mao, Martin Luther King and Che Guevara, Unamuno and Marcuse"." (Shaull, 1982:10)

The list is impressive, but again misleading. Nowhere in

6. "Notes on Humanisation and its Educational Implications" from the seminar Tomorrow Began Yesterday, Rome, November, 1970, translated from the Portuguese original by Louise Bigwood. This was retranslated by Donaldo Macedo in Freire (1985a:111-119) as "Humanistic Education".

7. The most significant example is that of the English and French versions of Pedagogy of the Oppressed. A number of paragraphs of the original Portuguese do not appear in the same place in either of the two translations. Critically, the English version sometimes includes quotations in the body of the text, where the French uses footnotes. Equally, where the English merely cites the author, the French text often provides a detailed reference with the title, date and page. A comparison of the three texts shows how the editor has become a co-author.
his writing does Freire make an explicit reference to Unamuno,8 while two of the most important influences on him, Karel Kosík9 and Lucien Febvre, are not mentioned here.

What this degree of eclecticism means is that we cannot find or study Freire without also exploring the genealogy of his ideas. He is not a pedagogic Copernicus who, alone, found a new way of looking at the universe. He is rather a syndicate of theories and insights. His particular genius lies in his ability to construct out of all these disparate ingredients a recipe that produces both a philosophy and a practice of literacy. His achievement.

8. It may not always be necessary to seek "cause and effect" in the inter-textuality of two or more authors, so that one can clearly be seen to have influenced the other. Although Unamuno, in his The Tragic Sense of Life provides a framework of ideas and understandings that greatly illumine the reasoning and culture of Freire (viz. Catholic, Aristotelian, and Manichean, where the boundaries and causes of pain and loving are often intertwined), what we find is more an affinity of ideas and interpretation than a direct influence. Perhaps what Freire found most in Unamuno was the echo of his own voice, and therefore he did not feel the need to acknowledge that by direct quotation.

9. Illustrative of the above argument is the fact that an English version of "Politische Alphabetisierung: Einführung ins Konzept einer humanisierenden Bildung" (which first appeared in the Lutherische Monatshefte in October, 1970) was available shortly after from IDAC, Geneva, under the title "The Political Literacy Process: an Introduction". Both the German and this English version refer to Kosík and to his "extraordinary book Dialectica de lo Concreto. Grijalbo, Mexico, 1967", and note that there is a German edition of this book. The translation in Freire (1985a) by Macedo is presumably from a Portuguese or Spanish draft of the article, but it does not include the detailed reference to Kosík, mentioning only a later edition of his book, and equally it fails to include extended references to Hegel and Marcuse which are in the German original.
more Newtonian than Copernican, was to analyse the gravitational pull between power and knowledge and then to assert the possibility of changing the core elements (literacy and power) in that chain reaction of teaching and control in order to create a new fusion, the process of which is dialogue (speaking the word) and the product of which is liberation (writing and righting the world).

This substantial problem is also a "problematic of substance" (McKenna, 1978:300). The establishing of the Freirean corpus involves a triple redaction: the auto-text or biotext which interlinks biographical details; the graphic-text, penned or dictated, of his books, articles and interviews; the altero-text or con-text which is supplied by his co-"writers", and particularly by other acknowledged or unacknowledged sources.

The very fabric (textus) of the Freirean corpus presents us with a complex morphology that is considerably more than Leach's (1982) "concentric ripples in a pool in which a stone has been thrown." Freire cannot truly be the subject of the premise (ibid:185) that

"the pattern of his work, which can be traced through from the early essays to Pedagogy in Process, contains a central core of beliefs or "principles". In each successive work these fundamental principles are repeatedly restated in different ways".

The Text of Freire is not neatly stratified, an onion that can be peeled away, layer by layer, to reveal the core. There is no simple, evolutionary logic that provides the infrastructure to his life and works. On the contrary,
there is the complex physiognomy of the corpus which is no less than the triple-helix of textuality, (auto-, grapho-, and altero-) outlined above.

Within this textus, difference and contradiction are as important as resemblance and consistency. Together, they constitute Foucault's "discursive regularities", the stoïsteme which is the totality of all their varying interrelationships.

"Les homogénéités (et hétérogénéités) énonciatives s'entrecroisent avec des continuités (et des changements) linguistiques, avec des identités (et des différences) logiques, sans que les unes et les autres marchent du même pas ou se commandent nécessairement." (Foucault, 1969:191) **

It is this entrecroisement which weaves Freire's discourse and which demands that the exegete engages with a "discourse analysis" in a way that is more than the simple narrative of a history of ideas. Following Foucault, it is essential that the analysis does not rest "dans le débat de la structure (confrontée à la genèse, à l'histoire, au devenir)". It must progress into "ce champ où se manifestent, se croisent, s'enchevêtrent, et se spécifient les questions de l'être humain, de la conscience, de l'origine, et du sujet" (ibid:26).

It is the interweaving of this triple text that provides the elements of this study: who is Freire, what is his pedagogy and what is his praxis. Equally, it is this

** Where it was felt that a point was best made by direct quotation, the original language has been retained in the text and a translation provided in an Appendix, p391.
textualising of Freire which exposes the warp of contradiction: for example, that an upper-class Brazilian lawyer should become the pedagogue of the oppressed masses, not just in his own country but throughout the Third and First Worlds; that his successful literacy method is based on flawed theorising; that Dialogic Education may only be a benign form of Banking Education; that this very South American approach to education is firmly within mainstream European traditions; and that, despite the contradictions and inadequacies, Freire offers a unique insight into the way Literacy presents and manages the fundamental relationship of Power and Knowledge.

With that in mind, we can apply Freire's method to Freire himself. We will first consider the polyphony of texts and contexts which make up his life, method and intellectual roots. Then we shall explore the main themes of his philosophy, before making a detailed analysis of the teaching materials which he used in his literacy programme. Finally, we shall use the framework of that analysis to consider Literacy itself and the fundamental questions about learning to read and to write which Freire so forcefully exposes.

In effect, this is to reconstruct the very process which underpins Conscientisation: encoding the essential questions in order to produce the generative words and themes; decoding to get below the surface of the given and so create a critical perception of what is really there; and action, where reflection returns upon itself in Praxis.
PART 1: THE STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION

CHAPTER 1. THE LIFE AND WORK OF FREIRE
CONSTRUCTING THE BIO-TEXT AND CONTEXTS

CHAPTER 2. THE "METODO PAULO FREIRE"
GENERATIVE WORDS AND GENERATING IDEAS

CHAPTER 3. BACKGROUNDS AND BORROWINGS
A REVIEW OF SELECTED SOURCES AND INFLUENCES
1.1 Introduction

Freire's life and work has many stages and many facets, as befits a man always in transit. He has lived through anonymity and fame in Brazil, acclamation and success in the wider world of Africa and Europe, and is now back in South America, living on remembrances rather than on new creativity.

He was born into a comfortable, middle class family the privileged position of which he slowly discovered. Until he started work as a Trade Union lawyer, his only exposure to the working and the non-working classes had been when the family suffered severe financial difficulties during the depression.

This had almost prejudiced his schooling. He could read before he went to school, taught by his father who used a method of word parsing that he himself would use to effect much later. However, poverty or hunger, or lack of ability, caused him to repeat two years of education, allowing him a delayed entry into University.

Socially back on course, Freire studied Law, in a Brazilian, but very French, University. The structure, content and presentation of the course was strongly influenced by the core group of French intellectuals who
were a major influence in the development and expansion of the universities in Brazil. It was through the resources of their libraries and teaching that Freire was introduced to the works of Althusser, Foucault, Fromm, Lévi-Strauss, Maritain, Mounier and Sartre, among others.  

This clearly suited Freire, the intellectual, but it gave him little sense of direction as he left University. He was quickly a lawyer, High-School teacher of Portuguese, and then adult educator, married but unsure whether his career options would be curtailed by family responsibility.

Looking back, one has the impression that those

10. In Brazil, although there were Institutes of Higher Education from 1888, in Medicine and Law, and a widespread growth in the 1920's of Technical Colleges and Polytechnics which were judged to be essential for economic development, the first universities were founded only in 1934 (São Paulo) and 1935 (Rio de Janeiro).

The new Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras at São Paulo was seen, academically and politically, to be the cornerstone of the University. Its first director, Teodoro Ramos, was sent to Europe to recruit an eminent cadre of professors/academics in the Social Sciences. Eight of the ten were French, and the French Government contributed to the scheme sufficient books to form the basic libraries in each of the Departments (Philosophy, Social Sciences, History, Geography and Humanities).

The academic system (examinations, degrees, doctorates) with its core but elite curriculum of Law and Social Science, through which Freire passed, was modelled on the French system.

The visiting professors, individually and collectively, had an enormous influence on intellectual life in Brazil. They included Roger Bastide, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Fernand Braudel, Lucien Febvre, Gérard Lebrun and Michel Foucault. See: Capelato and Prado (1989).
experiences between 1944 and 1959, about which little has ever been said, are almost "lost years" for Freire. In the event, a career was thrust upon him. By the genius of Fate, Freire was the right man in the right place at the right time, qualified by the rare mix of his experiences and skills, who was invited to direct the literacy programme in the North-east State.

From there, the details of his life are better known. Regional success led to national recognition as his programme expanded. As educator and government consultant, he created the base for radical reform in both the education and the electoral systems. It was this success that first led to his downfall and exile (1964), and then to his rehabilitation as an international figure. He worked first in Chile, then in Harvard (1969), and then in Geneva as Consultant to the World Council of Churches, through a period of upheaval and transition that produced his most important writings.

For some, this represented the height of his career. He was recognised world-wide, speaking at conferences and maintaining consultancies throughout the Third and the First World, a government advisor and fêted academic. He was one of the central figures of the 1970's.

This is still how Freire is most widely remembered, but he is, in fact, an exile returned. In 1981, he relinquished his role in Geneva to take up a post at the
Catholic University of São Paulo. He has returned to his two, confirmed great loves: Brazil and teaching. His present work has produced little new writing, but maybe more writing is not necessary. At the age of seventy, Freire can still point to the Pedagogy of the Oppressed and argue that it is still as valid now, although it has become a "classic text", as it was when it was first "revolutionary" and just published.

The question is: Is the Freire who returned to Brazil in 1981 the same man who left it in 1964? To answer that, and to see if there is a development in his pedagogy, we need to review his bio-text in more detail.

1.2 Early Life

Paulo Freire was born in Recife, North-east Brazil, on 19th. September, 1921. He was one of several children (Gerhardt, 1979:40) in a comfortable, middle-class but average family. 11

His parents were bourgeois and of liberal attitudes (Jerez, 1971:498). The father, Joaquin Temistocles, held an officer's post in the military police, and he tolerated.

11. Freire (1987b:31) describes what he calls "an old but average house": bedrooms, attic, hall, terrace, backyard, with the family cats, the father's dog, Joli, and grandmother's fat chickens, all surrounded by roses, jasmine and mango trees, in a street lit by gas lamps.
rather than approved of, the fact that Edeltrudis, his wife, held strongly Catholic convictions. He himself frequented a local spiritualist circle (Gerhardt, 1979:40).

Joaquín Freire was concerned that his son should have a good education. Freire (1978:132) called his father his "first teacher", remembering how he wrote words with a stick in the sand in the back yard and helped the children to make new words out of the parsed syllables. By the time he went to Eunice Vascancello's private school, Freire was already literate (1987b:32).

That early progress, however, was impeded by the severe financial reverses which the family suffered during the Great Depression, 1928-32. Freire experienced real hunger, a fact by which he explained his poor showing at school. He had to repeat a year twice, entering secondary school two years behind his age group (Collins, 1977:5). O'Neill (1973) and Jerez (1971) both report that he was considered by some of his teachers to be mentally retarded.

"We shared the hunger", says Freire (Mackie, 1980:3), "but not the class"12, a fact which Freire later recognised had enabled him to continue his schooling (Jerez, 1971:499).

12. Despite the setbacks, Freire's father maintained a semblance of respectability: "las apariencias y los símbolos que correspondían a una posición económica desahogada". He kept on the house, devoid now of non-essential furniture except for a German piano, and he continued to wear a tie. (Jerez, 1971).
When his older brothers started working, the family's position improved and Freire was able to complete successfully his high school Baccalaureate (1987a:29). He entered Recifé University to study Law and Philosophy but he also read Linguistics. It was, according to Gerhardt (1979:42), a standard route for the intellectual middle classes, and it gave Freire his first University degree.

This was the fruit of privilege which Freire later came to see as "my university training —perhaps, to be more accurate, I should say by my elitist university training" which was facilitated by his class position (1978:117).

In his detailed appraisal of Freire and of his early work, Mashayekh (1974:4) also formed the view that schooling in Recifé was a privilege enjoyed only by the minority. "That Freire's mind and future vocation was shaped by the social situation into which he was born and in which he grew into manhood seems evident. It was this schooled minority which dominated the social and economic institutions of society and enjoyed the benefits they produced. The majority lived in circumstances of grinding poverty and oppression. They were to be seen in the streets and served in the shops and homes, but were not "heard". They lived in what Freire called a "culture of silence, condemned to passivity."

Since those university days, Freire, mainly because of his education and class, has never been poor or unemployed. Yet with the security of a job, a wife and family, even with house servants (1978:10), he felt empowered to create a pedagogy of the oppressed. In what personal and cultural context was this possible?
1.3 North-east Brazil

North-east Brazil is "one enormous region of a country, as large as a continent, one of the most backward areas in the country, marked by truly appalling social conditions - 60,000 square miles of suffering." Here, in Death in the North-east, Josué de Castro (1969:viii,22) is writing passionately about the deprivation of his home region.13 In his earlier work, The Geography of Hunger (1952:76-98) he notes that the area was celebrated only for "the misery of the great majority of its inhabitants, for its periodic, natural catastrophes and for a system of land ownership which was incredibly unjust."

A comparable historical and sociological analysis, which Freire used14 and which later provided him with one of his key images of oppression - the senhor de engenho: the mill owner - is equally forcefully written in Freyre's The Masters and the Slaves.15 All the ingredients are

13. Written between October, 1962 and February, 1964, the book was published just before the coup, 1964.

14. Freire, 1987a:20. "There were some very good writers in Brasil who saved me. By reading them in my early 20's I was saved. Jose Lins do Rego and Graciliano Ramos are two of these writers; Gilberto Freyre, the great sociologist and anthropologist who writes so well was another important influence on me."

15. This first appeared, in Portuguese, Casa-grande e senzala, in 1933 but was the last of Freyre's major works to be translated into English (1976). Two other important studies had already been translated: The Mansions and the Shanties, (1963), and "The Patriarchal Basis of Brazilian Society" in The Politics of Change in Latin America ed. Haider, J.M., New York, Praeger, 1964.
there for Freire to find in his society, in his own family and in the eclectic, individual and collective Brazilian, national identity, namely, cultural invasion, social and political domination, patriarchy, power and punishment, colonisation, agrarianism and slavery. 16

Freire never explains how he was "saved" by reading Freyre or whether he recognised there the values and social patterns of his own family and upbringing. However, if he read Freyre in his study and looked through the window at that Recife with

"ses aspects vénitiens, ses magnifiques colonnades de cocotiers au long d'une mer étonnamment verte -qui vit jadis se trainer sur elle, gonflées comme des ventres de femmes enceintes, tant de nefs chargées de dépouilles orientales que les Lords du Sucre se disputaient entre eux...- Recife et Olinda qui domine, toutes églises dehors" (Febvre, 1974:13),

was he also able to see the poverty and the misery which Freyre and de Castro describe in such detail?

What was the reality at that time? As a brief indicator, we are able to compare the North-east in 1960 and in 1970 -the decade which encompasses Freire's literacy efforts in Latin America.

In their Pastoral Letter (1973) Eu Ouvi os Clamores do meu Povo (I have heard the cries of my people), the Catholic Bishops of the North-east stated that:

"Data from the 1970 census revealed that only 3.3% of

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16. For a survey of the Northeast, and a useful, brief history of modern Brazil, see: Barnard, C. (1980).
the economically active population in the North­
est earned more than 500 cruzeiros ($83 per month, and only 0.86% earned more than 1000 cruzeiros ($166). In Piauí and Maranhão, for an economically active population of 1,470,000 persons, only 955 earned more than 2000 cruzeiros ($333) per month.

"Infant mortality in the North-east as a whole is 180/1000 live births. In the capital, where medical assistance is concentrated, it is still 98/1000. In the total of all deaths, 47% occur before five years of age."

Drummond (1975), who in 1972 was attempting to develop a nutritional education programme on Freirean lines, noted the evidence of poverty as a major factor in the serious problem of malnutrition.

"Virtually all the children admitted to the São Luis hospital are undernourished, and 3/5 of them have manifest signs of kwashiorkor, including bilateral oedema."

Ten years earlier, in 1960, Tad Szule, writing in the New York Times, explicitly criticised the United States for having done so little to help the area around Recife in peacetime, despite the fact that it was the support base for a string of guided missile tracking stations in the South Atlantic for the United States Air Force.

"There are sections of the Northeast where the annual income is about $50. About 75% of the population is illiterate. The average daily intake is 1,664 calories. Life expectancy is 28 years for men and 32 for women. Half the population dies before the age of 30.

"In two villages in the State of Piauí, taken at random, not a single baby lived beyond one year."

These reports, from very differing sources, cover periods either side of the coup, yet they show very little change in the stark picture of poverty despite the fact
that many people, in Brazil and certainly in Europe, saw this period as the time of Brazil's economic miracle. Fernandes (1985) reveals the contradiction: the GNP was growing at an average 10.1% each year, moving Brazil from twenty-first to fourteenth in rank among developing countries, based on per capita GNP.

However, there was a darker side seen when the results of the 1970 census were tabulated:

"The share of the total national income of the lower 50% of the population decreased from 14.5% in 1960 to 13.9% in 1970. The lowest 10% of the population saw their share decrease from 1.3% in 1960 to 1.2% in 1970. The exclusion of the majority of wage earners from the windfall of economic growth, together with the high profits of an increasingly de-nationalised industrial sector, brought about the conditions for social movements of dissent and grass roots organisation." (ibid).

This was the context in which Freire was working in the mid 1960's: no doubt many saw his Literacy Programmes as one of those social movements of discontent. Yet, maybe Freire had only ever seen poverty from the exterior, from his "average house". The statistics dispute his

17. This contradiction is compounded by the fact that such conspicuous, economic development at this time was based on the already dramatic changes achieved in the Kubitschek period. The promised "fifty year's progress in five" was very real: between 1956 and 1961, Brazil witnessed the most extraordinary industrial expansion. Industrial production grew by 80%, the steel industry by 100%, mechanical industries by 125%, electrical and communications industries by 380% and transportation equipment industries by 600%. The effective real rate of growth was 7% per annum, approximately three times that of the rest of Latin America. (Skidmore, 1967:164, based on Celso Furtado's detailed study Diagnosis of the Brazilian Crisis, Berkley, 1965).
assessment of what was average, and illustrates his position of privilege in those early years. Although he considered himself to have been poor, he was not forced into dissent by his own experience of that poverty and hunger. He was never "of the poor" for, ultimately, he had never shared their class.

"My childhood was partly in Recife and then in Jabotão. My family left Recife in order to survive the economic crisis of the Depression in the 1930's. A great moment of my life was the experience of hunger. I needed to eat more. Because my family lost its economic status, I was not only hungry but I also had very good friends both from the middle class and from the working class. Being friends with kids from the working class, I learned the difference of classes by seeing how their language, their clothing, their whole lives expressed the totality of the class separations in society. By falling into poverty, I learned from experience what social class meant." (1987a:28)

Freire encountered the dominated classes through this discovery of his own middle-classness. There is indeed a sense in which one hears an echo of self-guilt as he became aware of himself as one of those "assimilados" who profited from colonialism and whose privileged position is reflected in those works of Fanon (1985) and Memmi (1966) which he knew so well.

At the time, however, he was uncritical of his social context and he followed what was simply the normal, educational paths appropriate to his class: "Er steht damit in der Tradition brasilianischer Intelлектueller, die das Studium der Rechtswissenschaften als "studium generale" anstrebten" (Gerhardt, 1979:42). Freire himself says:

"A critical view of my experience in Brasil requires an understanding of its context. My practice, while
social, did not belong to me. Hence my difficulty in understanding my experience ...without comprehending the historical climate where it originally took place" (1985:12).

1.4. The First Steps into Literacy

This difficulty which Freire has had in identifying and coming to terms with his past may well merit a detailed psychological analysis. However, it does perhaps explain why, at this stage, biographical details remain vague and unexplored.

Jerez (1971:499) suggests that, after University, Freire worked for several years as a Legal Assessor in the Trades Union: "trabajo durante varios anos de assessor legal de los sindicatos obreros", through which, indirectly, he became involved in education. Drummond, on the contrary, prefers to see Freire as a pedagogue and less as a lawyer. She says that (1975:4), having finished law school but after being presented with his first case and talking with the young dentist, Freire "decided he was not meant to be a lawyer. He turned to the field of education." Both she and Brown (1974) then take up the story from 1959, the date of Freire doctoral thesis Educação e Actualidade Brasileira at the University of Recifé.

Both these biographical traditions, which are part of the "Freirean mythology", gloss over the critical years of 1940 -1959. Little is known of this period in Freire's
life other than some small detail about his marriage and some generalised reflections on his increasing involvement in education.

The key may lie in the importance of Elza Maria Costa Oliveira. Freire (1987a:29) records that, "at some point between 19 and 23 years" -the vagueness is instructive-,

"I was discovering teaching as my love. Also important at this moment, in my affective life, was when I met Elza, who was my student, and then we got married. I was her private tutor. I prepared her for an exam to qualify for school principal."

In this rare autobiographical passage, Freire does not mention his law studies nor his work as a lawyer. He speaks only of himself as a High School teacher, who later became involved in adult education and through that earned some part-time hours at the University of Recife. He emphasises his early interest in the philosophy of language and his interest, at 18 or 19, in structuralism and linguistics.

He says elsewhere (1985:175) that "it was Elza who lead me to pedagogy" and he recognises that "she influenced me enormously". Yet notwithstanding the more than standard acknowledgement of authors, (1972:19):

"Here I would like to express my gratitude to Elza, my wife, and first reader, for the understanding and encouragement which she has shown my work, which belongs to her as well",

there is no misunderstanding the relationship of patriarchy which is revealed in the statement: "She was my student...I prepared her for the exam."
Elza was to bear him three daughters and two sons (Collins, 1977:6), but Freire has spoken remarkably little about his family. One son, who is a good classical guitarist, was with him in Geneva in 1976 (Freire, 1985:191) but no other reference is made to the family, to his own children or to his brothers and sisters, and no account is offered, for example, about what happened to the family after his arrest, how or if the children left Brazil with him in 1964, how they managed the separation or not as he worked in Chile, then Harvard and then in Geneva.

Freire conveys this deep uncertainty about his role as father or husband, in part cultural and in part personal, in talking about the professional relationship which he shared with his wife. Undoubtedly, he “loved to love Elza” (1985:198); Literacy: Reading the Word and the World is eloquently dedicated to her memory. Yet, although Freire talks of “later as we were teaching”...describing “that praxis which was ours in Brazil”, there is no evidence that Elza was directly involved in his work in Brazil. On the other hand, he notes (1987b:63) that “since 1976, my wife Elza and I have tried to contribute to adult education in São Tomé and Princípe”, but the ensuing discourse continues emphatically in the first person: “my practice renders me a colleague of

18. In a conversation with Macedo, (1985, p.198) Freire admits that “As a young man, I thought that living and sleeping with a woman might interrupt my intellectual life. I found that...my family did not interfere with my writing and my writing did not interfere with my love for my family.”
There is here more than a hint of the Borgesian "I", where Freire, the intellectual, recognised himself more in his books than in the reality of his daily life.

"The other one, the one called Borges, is the one things happen to... I am destined to perish, definitively, and only some instance of myself can survive in him. Little by little, I am giving everything over to him, though I am quite aware of this perverse custom of falsifying and magnifying things" (Borges, 1987:282).

So Freire, the "both of him", came to live more or less comfortably with his image as both iconoclast and mythmaker.

An objective biographer of those days might simply say that Freire was able to turn his initial interest in language and communication to his longer term, career advantage. In this way, we can then understand that he might have wanted, consciously or not, to play down the elitist education which lead him from private school to the Bar, while, on the other hand, at the height of his popularity and fame, he preferred to emphasise his pedagogical roots as a teacher and linguist. Collins, (1977) may therefore be very accurate in his summary that, at that time,

"Freire was doing more reading in education, philosophy and the sociology of education than in law, a discipline in which he claims he was only an average student. In fact it later turned out that, after passing the bar, he quickly abandoned law as a means of earning his living in order to work as a welfare official."
Freire's path from Portuguese to Literacy is, therefore, traced through his involvements with Elza. Although he may have tutored her, it was she who directed his path from "teaching privately, in order to get some money, tutoring high school students or young people working in stores who wanted to learn grammar." (1987a:27).

He starting teaching in a secondary school, working by intuition rather than by confirmed pedagogy, and gradually he became more and more involved in teaching adults (ibid:28).

This was a period of intense reading and study which justifies the much quoted references to Freire's eclecticism: (Freire, 1982:10)

"He has reached out to the thought and experience of those in many different situations and of diverse philosophical positions: to Sartre and Mounier, Eric Fromm and Louis Althusser, Ortega y Gasset and Mao, Martin Luther King and Che Guevara, Unamuno and Marcuse."

In his own words (1985:175),

"My interests were in studying the Portuguese language, and Portuguese syntax in particular, along with certain reading I did on my own in areas of linguistics, philology, and the philosophy of language, which lead me to general theories of communication."

At the same time, through Elza, Freire became involved in the Catholic Action Movement, although he never became a full-member. At that time, 1944, the Church was still a very conservative force and only gradually was it "conscientised" to the realities of poverty and oppression which it was supporting (de Kadt, 1976). Freire, could be said to have undergone a similar development. He was, and
has remained, a practising Catholic. A short period of adolescent doubts ended with his marriage to Elza, and with the pressure or support from his mother (Gerhardt, 1979).

Catholic Action, however, was not the answer for Freire. It was rather a very disheartening experience as he discovered the intransigence of the middle classes. At this point, Freire says he made a conscious choice: "We decided not to keep working with the bourgeois and instead to work with the people" (Mackie, 1980). That "we", however, sounds to have included the choice which Elza had already made before meeting Freire.

Through his close friendship with Dom Helder Camara, the Bishop of Recife, Freire became closely involved in the Comunidades Eclesiales de Base which were developing a pastoral ministry based on community groups that sought to relate their biblical study to local, social and personal issues. During the 1940's and 1950's, this movement had grown to accept the need for a clearer identification with the poor, and for a theology of liberation relevant to grass-roots community groups (Fernandes, 1985). 19 20

19. It was, however, not until much later (1972) that Freire was able to publish an objective critique of the Church: see 1972c and 1973a. A useful evaluation and explanation of Freire's humanist theology is contained in Elias (1976).

20. Behind these changes can be heard the powerful voices of Jacques Maritain and Gustavo Gutierrez whose works were well used by Freire. A useful summary of the emergence of Latin American social or liberation theology can be found in Chopp, (1986).
It was through his involvement in the Church that Freire was invited by what he called a "private industrial institute" that was, more accurately, a Trade Union Educational Project. He was appointed as Coordinator of the Adult Education Programme of the Popular Culture Movement. It allowed him, however, what he himself saw as a second chance to

"reknow what I had learned about working life. It was precisely my relationship with workers and peasants then that took me into more radical understandings of education" (1987a:29).

It was this contact with the Trades Unions that introduced him to the "Culture Circles" where his primary concern, paradoxically, was less with literacy than with post literacy: "I paid little attention to whether the participants in the Culture Circles were literate or not" (1978:116). This did, however, provide him with a key structure for his ensuing literacy programme.

These circles or groups were not however new: they had their origins in Brazil in the so called Peasant League, a Union movement of the 1930's. They had been re-activated in the 1950's in the Northeast by Francisco Julião, a radical, socialist lawyer. The movement had taken on a new vigour in the 1950's, a major catalyst in opening up "new discussions about nationalism, remission of profits, development and illiteracy" (Sanders, 1968), just at the time that Freire had been invited to respond to the major problem of illiteracy among the local workforce.
De Castro's (1969:177) own appraisal of Julião was that he had "made a tenacious effort to free the peasants from their muteness, by talking to them and by teaching them to talk."21

This "tap-root" of dialogic learning has more than anecdotal significance. Firstly it sets the scene for the educational study which Freire presented for his doctoral thesis in 1959, *Educação e Actualidade Brasileira*, although it scarcely explains his motivation for writing it.22 Why, at the age of 38, married and with a secure job, did he feel compelled to write up his ideas on adult education? Was it that he was looking to hasten the offer of the teaching post at the University which did, in fact, materialise shortly afterwards? We may never know, but it is clear that that work experience, plus the doctorate, provided the incentive for a confrère of Julião, Miguel

21. Julião's (de Castro, 1969:172) case was that:
"We wish to make it clear that having begun, some years ago, a work of agitation in the Pernambuco countryside, which later spread to the whole of the country, the only title that we wish to receive at the end of this journey, if we deserve it, is that of a simple social agitator, in the patriotic sense of someone who brings a fundamental problem before the people so that it might be frankly debated".

22. There is some confusion over this doctorate. Jerez (1971:499), who is right on other details, says that Freire was awarded a Doctorate Honoris Cause from the University because of the success of his education programme, and that it was this doctorate that enabled Freire to teach in the university. "Cuando su filosofia y sus programas educacionales le habian hecho ya famoso en gran parte de Brasil, la Universidad de Recife le otorgó el grado de Doctor Honoris Cause en Pedagogia. Desde entonces enseño filosofia de la educación en dicha universidad."
Arraes, then the Mayor of Recifé, to invite Freire to construct a literacy programme for the city council in 1961.

Arraes, according to de Castro (1969:170) had no doubts about what that programme should yield:

"He surrounded himself with a team of technical advisers, among whom there were Communists, but also Socialists, devout or nominal Catholics, and simple economists and technicians, many of whom had a horror of ideological embroilment. They all worked together to achieve a common goal - the socio-economic transformation of the State of the Northeast."

The direct, political implications of this concerted social development seems to have escaped Freire at this point. He may refer (1978:176) to "those political-pedagogical activities in which I have been engaged since my youth", but his later reflection appears more accurate (1985:179): "When I began my educational practice, I was not clear about the potential political consequences."

Thus it was not his personal, political association with Arraes and Julião that provided the driving force for what quickly became a very effective literacy programme. The simple motivation was Freire's delight in teaching. He was not one of Julião's social agitators: he was an educator, perhaps occupying that position of neutrality which later he came to condemn.

As an educator, in 1961, Freire was writing his first book: A Propósito de Uma Administração. This was
essentially an appeal for the University to become more relevant to the lives of ordinary people and to create learning that reflected the true situation in Brazil.

In this light, it has been suggested (Elías, 1972) that Freire did not promote literacy for its own sake, but saw it rather as bringing about the democratisation of culture among the rural and urban illiterates in Brazil. If this is true, then Freire's project did indeed constitute a major effort against the elitism of the university based education system. In the pilot project, some 300 workers became "literate" within 45 days (Mashayekh, 1974).

Freire's position of "in but against" the University, plus the success of his pilot project, made him the ideal candidate, academically and politically, for the post of Director of the newly created Cultural Extension Service at the University of Recifé. In post from early 1961, he had the resources to bring thousands of illiterate peasants throughout the North-east into literacy Culture Circles.

A discussion is needed later about the content of being "literate" in this way. At this stage, it will

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23. Brown (1974) seems to be alone in remembering that from October, 1962 to January, 1964 the Cultural Extension Service received considerable financial assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). A pragmatic compromise perhaps on Freire's part, or a naive acceptance of offered resources which later he would see as cultural invasion (see 1969f).
suffice to note that, whatever the pedagogic content of this first initiative, its social and media impact at a national level was such that Freire was invited, in 1963, to become the Director of a National Literacy programme.

A National Development Plan was produced which aimed to enrol some 2,000,000 people and to teach them in Culture Circles of 25 people, each circle lasting three months, at the extraordinary, direct cost of some $5 to $7 per Circle (Freire, 1970). Freire was clearly influenced by the success of the Cuban Literacy Project which had been completed a year before. Much of the organisational structure of this Brazilian National Plan, which Freire would use substantially again in Guinea Bissau, owes much to the Cuban experiment.

This was not just a simple plagiarising of the Cuban programme. It may well have been that the populist, Goulart Government (1961-1964), riding on the wave of radical reforms in agriculture, social services and labour relations, was not wanting to be compared unfavourably with Cuba, and was actually seeking a consolidating programme which could be seen as equally "modernising" and effective.

24. The Polish projectors cost $2.50 each and the film $1, hence the cost effectiveness of the programme. The fact that Freire had bought materials from Poland later aggravated charges against him that he was a communist and was undermining the national economy by "attempting to Bolshevize the country" (Freire, 1976:57).

25. For an absorbing and enthusiastic account of the Cuban Literacy Programme, see: Kozol, 1978.
as the Cuban model (Skidmore, 1967:244-256).

The forces for change in the two countries, however, were very different, and Freire found that he had unleashed some unexpected, and not altogether desired, developments.

For example (Nasr, 1974), in the State of Sergipe, the number of literate people went from 9,000 to 88,000, and in Pernambuco from 800,000 to 1,300,000. The implications both for regional and national democracy, and thereby for the ruling classes, were enormous. Under the legacy of Portuguese colonialism, only those who could read and write were eligible to vote (Gerhardt, 1989). Brazil in 1960 had a population of some 14.5 million people of whom only 15.5 million were eligible to vote (Collins, 1977). 26

Almost overnight, therefore, the whole electoral base of the country had been overturned, a fact which suggests that the motivation of the peasants was not just a simple desire for literacy. The central demand of the Trades Unions and of the Movement for Popular Culture in Recife, viz. the demand for the vote (and thereby power over further economic and industrial reform, e.g. the right of

26. Freire's estimates for 1964 were: four million school aged children lacked schools; sixteen million illiterates of fourteen years and older (1976, p.41). The contemporary situation is described in Braslavsky, C. (1988) who posits that some 38% of all children aged 7-14, some 7,553,741, are not receiving a full-time education.

37
free association and security of land tenures), had not only been acquired without bloodshed but had even been given to them by a governmental literacy campaign (Sanders, 1968).

Freire was criticised immediately, for example, in the powerful Rio de Janeiro daily, _O Gêlo_, for bringing the country to the verge of revolution. In fact the country had been on the verge of revolution throughout the Goulart presidency, but it is not surprising that Freire should have been a target of the right-wing, middle class backlash that brought about the coup in 1964.27

However, to understand that lack of surprise we need to throw a force-field of political assessment around the simple narrative of dates and events. While it is true that Freire may have been regarded as a somewhat maverick professor of an otherwise traditional university, and that he was a director of a national literacy programme, he was nonetheless marginalised geographically by working from Recife, and the scale of his success was more regional than national. According to de Kadt (1970),

"Freire's work at the time of the coup was still characterised by potential rather than actual achievements. Incitement to revolt was never Freire's objective as an educator, although

27. Skidmore (1967:254) notes Freire's association with Ação Popular and with the Basic Education Movement's (MEB) programme of mass literacy. Freire was identified as a target by "the traditional patrons of the agrarian sector who did not view with indifference the nascent mobilisation of the agrarian masses. Landowners increased their stock of arms and strengthened their opposition to the agrarian reform measures."
démocratisation was." Freire (1976:20) might agree with this assessment that the main characteristic of his programme was its potential:

"During the Brazilian transition, as the emotional climate became more intense and sectarian irrationality (especially of the right) grew stronger, there was increasing resistance to an educational programme capable of helping the people move from ingenuity to criticism."

In the event, Freire was deemed guilty by association. He was seen to have been part of that socialist/communist tomada de consciência, awakening of consciousness, which had destabilised the country.28 So Gannon (1970):

"a sure sign of the impact that conscientisation had is that the oppressive regime tried to put it down. Because it had effectively mobilised the people, it was a threat to the power structures."

Gerhardt (1989:541), who was actually working in Brazil at the time, converges on the same point, but with a much sharper critique:

"Les premières campagnes d'alphabétisation fondées sur le "système" de Freire menées dans le nord-est du Brésil (1961-1964) montrent à quel point les alphabétiseurs avaient épousé les objectifs politiques des organisateurs, c'est-à-dire du gouvernement provincial réformiste. En effet, le but de ces campagnes était manifestement d'ordre politique."

He goes on to argue that only when they saw the decreasing

28. It is difficult to reproduce in English the power of the expression tomada de consciência. As in the French prise de conscience, the verb is as important as the conscience, consciousness or awareness. Tomar and prendre have that added sense of "taking, taking seriously, taking possession of" which signifies both a conscious, responsible act and an identifiable result of some consequence.
numbers of enrolments in the programme did they begin to put the emphasis on functional literacy.

Was Freire, the enthusiastic but naive academic, simply used by the socialist coalition for their own political ends? Was he exiled because of their political downfall? Two arguments support this demythologised view.

The first is that, although Freire later came to clarify his own commitment to socialism or Christian humanism and was not in disagreement with the aims of the regional government and their objectives for the literacy campaign, he was aware of the naivety of his involvements.

"Considering my present and more pronounced experience, I am also becoming aware of this kind of mistake in some of my earlier activities and also from pedagogues who do not see the political dimensions and implications of their pedagogical practice." (Freire, 1985:169-170, my emphasis added).

In effect, Freire is admitting that he was involved as an apolitical actor in a process of education, in which he had not considered the political consequences.29

Others, however, were clear and had long been observing the consequences. Freire (1976:31) saw only with hindsight that "the country had begun to find itself. The people emerged and began to participate in the

29. After his first night working in adult literacy, he jested to Elza (1985:180), "After what I saw today, what I experienced today, possibly I will be jailed." He had, however, no understanding of why he might be jailed: "I was still not totally clear about the political nature of education. My first book reveals this lack of clarity" (ibid.).
historical process." Yet the New York Times had seen that as early as 1960 and was already warning of revolution (O'Neill, 1973). Skidmore (1967) documents the fears of the American State Department in his appendix entitled "The United States role in João Goulart's fall": he clearly felt no need to add a question mark.

Freire, whose USAID support had been stopped in January, 1964, was listed among those who were anti-American. Worse, through his associates, he was listed as being pro-communist. He was among some 10,000 government officials who were dismissed or forcibly retired.

1.6 Exile and Return

The first response of the new government, however, was the complete suspension of his political rights. He was imprisoned and interrogated, but the details again remain vague. On his release, he sought refuge in the Bolivian embassy, through whom he was able to arrange an exit visa to Bolivia. It is one of the ironies of fortune that Bolivia itself experienced a coup fifteen days after

30. Skidmore (op.cit) notes the Americans' doubt that a socialist Brazil could re-organise its foreign debts and their fear of a sharp turn to the left with some Peronist-type solution to economic and social problems. There is then the fact that the interim government of Ranieri Mazzilli was recognised by Lyndon Johnson within hours of the coup. As a result, the new, Brazilian government gained a very favourable aid package from the States, and the States gained an unequivocally pro-American ally for their foreign policy, especially in the Dominican Republic.
his arrival and he was forced to seek further refuge in Chile (Mackie, 1980).

Freire himself does not mention this passage to and then from Bolivia. His selective recall is that (1985:181)

"After those 75 days, I was taken to Rio de Janeiro for further questioning. And there I was told via the newspapers that I ought to be jailed again. My friends and family convinced me that it would be senseless for me to stay in Brazil. So I went into exile in Chile."

Jerez (1971) suggests that the choice of exile was imagined rather than real: "Setenta días más tarde le dejaron en libertad, y le "invitaron" a abandonar el país." 31

A further element which confirmed his exile, but which, because of his association with Camara, may also have contributed to his safe passage from the country, is that the Catholic Church initially supported the coup, motivated by a felt need for an anti-communist government that would protect Brazil's Christian civilisation (O'Neill, 1973; Camara, 1969). Prior to the Church's

31. Although Freire recalls the detail of his five-by-two foot cell (1985:154), there is some uncertainty about how long he was in prison. He says, "I was jailed twice before I was exiled, for a total of seventy five days" (1985:180). No-one else records the two periods of imprisonment, although Mashayekh (1974) and Mackie (1980) also count 75 days. Other biographers and commentators closer to Freire count only 70 days: Gleeson (1984), Shaull (1972), McLaren (1988) and Brown (1974). Brown, whose work was well known to Freire, is alone in recording that "Freire was under house arrest until June, imprisoned for 70 days, and finally sought refuge in Chile" (1974:25).

Freire (1987a:63) recalls that he only spent one day and a night in the small closet-cell, but was otherwise in a cell with five or six other colleagues, doctors, intellectuals, liberal professionals.
radical defence of human rights and its clear statement of opposition to government policies at Medellin, Columbia, in 1968, "the Brazilian coup d'etat was at first supported by the major part of the country's Catholic Church." (Fernandes, 1985, strongly supported by de Kadt, 1971).

In Chile, where he immediately felt he was "born again with a new consciousness of politics, education and transformation (1987a:), Freire was able to secure a post at the University of Chile, Santiago. Here he was contacted by Waldemar Cortes and invited to work as a UNESCO consultant in a literacy programme which was being proposed by the Department of Special Planning for the Education of Adults. At the time, the government of Eduardo Frei was committed to a dual programme of literacy and agrarian reform. In this way, Freire became involved with the Chilean Agrarian Reform Corporation where he then worked until 1969.

While involved in the training of extension workers, Freire was also writing creatively. In 1967, he published *Educacao como Pratica da Liberdade*, the notes of which he had begun in prison in 1964. This was followed, early in 1969, by ¿Extensión o Comunicación? These two books or extended essays (the manuscripts of which were completed in 1969). The strength of Freire's integration into Chile is perhaps illustrated by the fact that the introduction to this essay was written by Jacques Chonchol, a leading academic and economist who was later the Minister of Agriculture in Chile's Allende government.
1965 and 1968) were published in English only in 1974, four years after the publication of Pedagogy of the Oppressed.33 A chronology which explains why many English-speaking readers consider this latter work to be Freire's most important book.

Freire (1985:198) has also noted the importance of Pedagogy of the Oppressed: it was

"radical, etymologically speaking, coming from the depths of fragments of Latin American history and culture... a marriage between me and the many parts of the world knowledge I had lived and experienced where I lived, and where I worked and taught with commitment, feelings, fear, trust and courage."

We shall see later what Freire may have meant by this "world knowledge" which he claims to have had by 1968. Despite his involvement in the Literacy campaign, he was clearly not satisfied to stay in Chile. In 1969, some months before the election of the Marxist Allende government in Chile,34 he was invited to Harvard to be Visiting Professor at the Centre for Studies in Education and Development.

The challenging reactions which his views provoked at Harvard provided Freire with the impetus and encouragement

33. Pedagogy of the Oppressed was written in Portuguese and completed in 1968. It was poorly translated by Myra Bergman Ramos and the first, full English edition was published by Herder and Herder, New York in 1970.

34. It is interesting to note that, later, immediately after the successful, American-backed coup against Allende, General Pinochet declared Freire persona non grata in Chile (Mackie, 1980).
to publish two articles in the May and August editions of the Harvard Educational Review, 1970, which later were published together as *Cultural Action for Freedom*.

It was the publication of these two articles, plus the impact of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and its contribution to the movement of educational reform post 1968, that established Freire's reputation. It was this, rather than any tangible activities and quantifiable results in literacy programmes, that influenced the World Council of Churches to invite Freire in 1970 to be a consultant in their Office of Education at Geneva.

There he set up the Institute of Cultural Action through which he had the opportunity of more direct involvement in the struggles of other Third World countries, mostly in Africa. His consultancies, as well as a host of seminars and international conferences, took him to Mozambique, Peru, Angola, Tanzania, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Guinea Bissau.

This was a seminal experience, which is reflected in the *Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea Bissau*. These letters, written to educators and politicians between 1975 and 1976, show Freire moving towards a much clearer position about the power relationships between learning, conscientisation and freedom.

Ironically, at the very point at which he had moved
towards a clearer political statement about literacy and conscientisation, he found himself included, contrary to the expectations of many, in a general amnesty granted by the Figueredo government in Brazil in September, 1979. Freire, ever Brazilian, returned to Recifé in June, 1980 to work initially at the Centre for Educational Studies -Centro de Estudos em Educação - and then to take up a post as Professor of Philosophy of Education at the Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo and the public Universidade de Campinas in São Paulo.

So commenced a period of re-integration, marked by no major publications in English until The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation, in 1985. This is essentially a re-print of selected articles and interviews, although it aims to "to stimulate more discussion on current major issues in education" (p.xxvii).

The same themes re-emerge in his next publication in 1987. A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education. This is a series of dialogues with Ira Shor which have been transcribed, the "talking book" being itself a device to create a "dialogue" with the reader who can then both see and hear Freire's explanation of the development of his pedagogy.

35. Interesting, for the point of authorship versus status, is the fact that the book is commonly attributed to Freire, although the copyright actually belongs to Shor.
The same device forms the base of Freire's most recent book in English, *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World* (1987b) which concentrates less on the techniques of literacy teaching (which so marked his early works), and more restating the goals of literacy as the acquiring of the *language of possibility*. This pedagogy of liberating remembrance, to borrow Giroux sumptuous phrase, is embedded in History. It is a Literacy which is an act of knowledge but in which "it is no longer possible to have the text without the context" (1987b:43).

The contemporary Freire, teaching in a modernised Brazil, can reflect upon the changes in text and context through which his pedagogy has lived. It is not possible to live today in other than a textualised world: Literacy cannot be disinvented. But it can be re-invented. The pen, the hand of the mind, is engaged in writing (in) the society. For Freire, that writing, a new logographia as the writing of reason, is still different only in degree, from the righting of wrong.

Freire's biography has given us a bio-text of his experience and the grapho-text of his works. Both assert the possibility of a liberating pedagogy. This we must now examine by looking at the practicalities of his method.

36. The influence of his current work, through his teaching and through directing post-graduate studies, is explicit in Braslavsky (1988) and in the review by Francisco Gomes de Matos (1989) of eight recent Brazilian publications on literacy.
CHAPTER 2. THE "METHODO PAULO FREIRE". GENERATIVE WORDS AND GENERATING IDEAS.

2.1 Methodological Principles

Freire's Method (1976b:61-84), which is both a process of literacy acquisition and a process of conscientisation, is based on the simple but fundamental technique of problematising. This is the antithesis of banking education and consists of daring to interrogate what is given, bringing into question known structures, examining conventional or taken-for-granted "explanations" of reality, thus discovering and confronting contradictions.

Three existential questions underpin this pedagogy and identify the three discrete stages of the learning process which are also reflected in the structure of this thesis. First, there is a NAMING stage where one poses the question: what is the problem, what is the question under discussion? Secondly, there is a REFLECTION stage: why is this the case? How do we explain this situation? Finally, there is the ACTION stage: what can be done to change this situation? What options do we have?

It is a process-oriented pedagogy which Freire (1971a) insists is a "permanent, critical approach to reality in order to discover it and discover the myths that deceive us and help us to maintain the oppressing, dehumanising structures. It leaves nobody inactive. It implies that people take the role of agents, makers and remakers of the world".
This method was not, however, Freire's creation. It parallels a process popular in the 1960's within the Basic Ecclesiastic Communities (Comunidades Eclesiais de Base: C.E.B) in Brazil. As the basis of their social education programme, especially in the literacy campaign broadcast nationwide by the Church's Basic Education Movement (M.B.B.), they used a method known widely as See-Judge-Act: what is the case, why is it so, and what can be done about it? The method found favour, particularly within the Catholic Church, partly because it was simple and practical, and partly because it represented the secular application of the three stages of prayerful meditation as taught within the Jesuit tradition since Ignatius of Loyola.

Freire was thus using a tried and tested method, as Cartesian as it was Catholic, within a learning context which was equally well known to many people both through the CEB and through the Trades Union, namely the Culture Circles. These groups became very much associated with his Method, although the idea behind the Culture Circle is again neither new nor particularly South American. Their main purpose within the Method is that "the act of knowing is elaborated in the circulo de cultura which function as the theoretic context" (Freire, 1970b:219). They sat the

37. Brookfield (1984:5) finds the same rural-radio link in the Canadian Association of Adult Education and their Farm Forum broadcasts in the 1940's. The motto of the scheme was "Read. Listen. Discuss. Act", which he describes as an early implementation of a Freirean praxis.

49
scene for the codified theme of man-world relationships in
general, even before "the analysis of the learners' existential situations and the generative words contained
in them." 38

The rationale for these groups, the acquisition of literacy, 39 is based on two, fundamental premises:
a) that adults can learn to read with ease words with which they are already orally familiar and which are, therefore, immediately meaningful. In Freire's expression, "No-one is orally illiterate."
b) that it is possible to identify a small number of words which would contain all the phonemes of the language. Given the nature of Portuguese, which is primarily a phonetic, syllabic language, this is a more practical task than it is, for example, in English.

38. The practice of small group, community based learning is so widespread that its origins are difficult to trace. Brookfield (1984:90) traces the existence of such groups prior to their widespread use in the American labor movement of the 1920's to the Junta proposed by Franklin in 1727, the Lyceum Movement in the 1820's and the Settlements in England in the 1880's. Hall (1978) finds Workers' Circles well established in St. Petersburg in 1887, and Study Circles in Sweden effective from the turn of the century. Spies-Bong (1989) highlights the key role of the Learning Circle in Petersen's 1927 "Iena Plan".

39. Fernandes (1985) illustrates how these groups were used by the CEB for political goals. "The political consciousness-raising of the CEBs has contributed to a significant increase in the strength of popular grass roots movements. The CEBs strengthen internal democratic participation that values each human being and brings forth his or her full potential as an agent of change." The principals were Freirean, the politics were not.
Freire (1976b:49-53) describes the five stages or phases of the literacy programme.

Phase 1: Researching the vocabulary of the groups with which one is working.

In this phase, the educators visit the area and make contact with the community, recruiting co-investigators to examine all the basic needs, interests and activities of that community.

Phase 2: Selection of the generative words.

By analyzing the responses and conversations of the community, the educators develop a short list of selected words, using three criteria:

a: the phonemic value of the word: researchers had found that, in Spanish and Portuguese, only some 16-17 words were needed to represent all the syllabic variants of the language.

b: the phonetic difficulty of the word: the sequence of presentation of the words is critical. Firstly, the initial word must be trisyllabic, such that each syllable consists of one consonant and one vowel, e.g. favela = slum, tijolo = brick. Secondly, less common or more difficult words should come at the end of the sequence, e.g. the phonetically complex sounds of x, z, q, and ão should come late in the list.

c: the pragmatic tone of the word: words that name concrete and familiar objects should appear early in the sequence, while words of a more abstract, social or political values should come later.

Phase 3. The creation of the "codifications".

The selected or generative words are set into codifications, graduated according to their phonetic difficulty. Codifying is the process of creating typical situations which the group would recognise and which would serve as a basis for discussion in
the Culture Circle. From the familiar, local situations the group can widen the discussion to include regional and national problems.  

Phase 4: The elaboration of agendas.

The educators prepare a structure for the discussion groups, which should primarily be used as a guide rather than as a rigid schedule. Freire (1987b:136) notes as a major problem the need to instruct the team of coordinators, not so much in the technicalities of the scheme but in the creating of the required attitude, i.e. a willingness to enter into a dialogue.  

The period of instruction, he insists, must be followed by dialogic supervision, to avoid the temptation of anti-dialogue on the part of

40. Gerhardt (1989:541) suggests that the first codifications used in Freire's programme were overtly political, espousing the objectives of the reformist, regional government and that only later did they highlight the practical advantages of literacy, e.g. being able to read labels.

Freire has never admitted the direct politicisation of his early programmes, but later re. São Tomé he comes very close to asserting as a principle what Gerhardt offers as a criticism: "When an adult literacy campaign evolves around the syllabification of "ba-be-bi-bo-bu" instead of discussing the national reality with all its difficulties, and instead of raising the issue of the people's political participation in the reinvention of their society, it creates false discourses" (1987b:66).

41. This point is reinforced by Ewert (1981). In his experience the coordinators were often forced to adopt a parent-child relationship simply because they were considered to be there in order to solve the communities' problems. Nevertheless, Ewert is clear that "Freire concept of codifications has tremendous conceptual power for transforming perspectives and providing hope in the face of dominance" (p.32).
Phase 5: The preparation of flash cards or slides.
These are cards with the phonemic families, the syllabic elements of each of the words, which are used in the process of word recognition and word creation.

2.2 Object Lesson: TIVOLO -Brick

First, a picture, "codification", of a construction scene is shown or projected. The group could then discuss, e.g. building houses in wood or in brick, how their own houses were built, the problems of housing allocations, use of building resources, etc.

A second picture is then projected, this time with a specific focus on the bricks used in the construction, and underneath which is written TIVOLO.

In a third picture, the card or the slide just shows the single word TIVOLO. Additional cards are then shown in sequence, breaking down the syllabic variables of the word TIV-OLO. The coordinator reads out the word and the family of syllables: ti ta te ti to tu.

Then there is another card, jo je ji jo ju, and, finally, a third: lo la le li lo lu.

The three cards are combined into one "discovery
The coordinator reads the discovery card once, vertically and horizontally, and then asks the group to put together other word combinations, using the range of syllabic possibilities on the discovery card. For example:

- luta = struggle
- talo = stalk
- loja = store
- lata = tin can
- jato = jet
- tatu = armadillo
- lula = squid
- lota = lot
- lajota = flagstone.

Obviously, not all the possible combinations of syllables make actual words. In the State of Rio Grande do Norte, a group called the combinations of syllables that were actual words thinking words (palavras do pensamento), while other combinations of non-words were called dead words (palavras mortas) (Brown, 1974:30).

The group members are encouraged to go home and to return the next day with as many words as possible which they have made from the given syllables.

The group are further encouraged to write down, no matter how basic the script, the words which they have recognised orally.
2.3 Regional Word Lists

In *Education: The Practice of Freedom*, Freire includes, after the sequence of ten pictures, the list of 17 Generative Words which he used in the State of Rio.

1. *favela* = slum
2. *chuva* = rain
3. *arada* = plough
4. *terreno* = land
5. *comida* = food
6. *batuque* = African-Brazilian dancing
7. *poco* = well
8. *bicicleta* = bicycle
9. *trabalho* = work
10. *salário* = salary
11. *profissão* = profession
12. *governo* = government
13. *mangue* = swampland
14. *engenho* = sugar mill
15. *enxada* = hoe
16. *tijolo* = brick
17. *riqueza* = wealth

These words allegedly reflect his practice of negotiating the key words, the generative words of the community, and show how, from an initial trisyllabic word, the list ends with more complex phonemes. It does not easily show, however, the development recommended in Phase 2c above (p.51), that there should be a movement from concrete nouns to more abstract ideas.

A comparison with other word lists used in the programme is interesting. Brown includes four such lists in her *Literacy in 30 Hours*, but without making an analysis. The lists (see page 57) were used in literacy programmes in:-

The State of Rio, used in a rural area and in a satellite of the city of Rio de Janeiro;
List 4: this is the list quoted above by Freire.
Cajueiro Séco, a slum in Recife;  
List 1:  
Tirini, an agricultural colony near the city of Cabo;  
List 2:  
Maceio, a city on the sea coast;  
List 3.

The four lists have 15, 16, 16 and 17 words respectively.

Of the 64 words, eight are used more than once, viz.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tijolo</td>
<td>brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>máquina</td>
<td>sewing machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manque</td>
<td>swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comida</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voto</td>
<td>vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engheno</td>
<td>sugar mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrada</td>
<td>hoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trabalho</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further three ideas are expressed in two groups through the use of different words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>milho</td>
<td>flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terra</td>
<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cacimba</td>
<td>well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farinha</td>
<td>terreno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poco</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one word, tijolo/brick, appears in all four lists, while two other words, voto/vote and engenho/sugar mill appear in three of the lists (1, 2, 3, and 1, 2, 4, respectively).42

2.4 Commentary

2.4.1 Construction of the Word Lists.

Three of the lists, i.e. all except Freire's, begin with the same two words, tijolo and voto. (brick, vote). This immediately raises the question of how far the content of each list was actually constructed with the group rather

42. Manque (lists 1 and 4) illustrates the problem of decontextualising the written word. It has both an agricultural and an urban connotation: it is a swamp or marsh, but it also refers in Rio to the "red light" district of a city (Sanders, 1968).
### List 1.
From Cajueiro Sêco, a slum in Recife:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tijolo</td>
<td>brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voto</td>
<td>vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sirí</td>
<td>crab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palha</td>
<td>straw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biscate</td>
<td>odd job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cínea</td>
<td>sahes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doença</td>
<td>illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chafariz</td>
<td>fountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>máquina</td>
<td>sewing machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emprego</td>
<td>employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engenho</td>
<td>sugar mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manque</td>
<td>swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terra</td>
<td>land, soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enreda</td>
<td>hoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classe</td>
<td>class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List 2.
From Tirini, an agricultural colony in the city of Cabo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tijolo</td>
<td>brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voto</td>
<td>vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rocado</td>
<td>manioc field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abacaxi</td>
<td>pineapple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cacimba</td>
<td>well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pausa</td>
<td>raisin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feira</td>
<td>market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milho</td>
<td>corn flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maniva</td>
<td>kind of manioc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planta</td>
<td>plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>losbriga</td>
<td>roundworm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engenho</td>
<td>sugar mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guia</td>
<td>guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barracão</td>
<td>small warehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charque</td>
<td>dried meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cozinha sal</td>
<td>kitchen salt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List 3.
From Maceio, a city by the sea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tijolo</td>
<td>brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baseamento</td>
<td>wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carroça</td>
<td>cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peixe</td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jangada</td>
<td>fishing boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balança</td>
<td>scales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brasil</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>máquina</td>
<td>sewing machine</td>
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<tr>
<td>farinha</td>
<td>flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coco</td>
<td>coconut</td>
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<tr>
<td>fome</td>
<td>hunger</td>
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<tr>
<td>comida</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sindicato</td>
<td>union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trabalho</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limpeza</td>
<td>cleanliness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List 4.
From rural and urban areas in the State of Rio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>favela</td>
<td>slum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chuva</td>
<td>rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arado</td>
<td>plough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrano</td>
<td>plot of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comida</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batuque</td>
<td>popular dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poco</td>
<td>wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bicicleta</td>
<td>bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trabalho</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salário</td>
<td>salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profissâa</td>
<td>profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>governo</td>
<td>government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manque</td>
<td>swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engenho</td>
<td>sugar mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enreda</td>
<td>hoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tijolo</td>
<td>brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>riqueza</td>
<td>wealth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

than imposed or suggested by the educators. It is highly significant that TlJOLO is, in fact, the guide word which Freire uses in his explanation of his Method in Education: The Practice of Freedom, although in later explanations he used FAVELA/slum. It seems evident that the educators and their co-researchers were relying heavily on the model which they had received. There is no other, immediate answer why three groups, one in a city slum, another in a coastal town, another in an agricultural colony, should all select a brick as their key, generative word.

Again, the use of VOTO/vote seems to have been imposed. The one list (again, Freire's) that does contain key words of government, professions, and salary, does not, perhaps surprisingly, include VOTO. However, the other three lists which do have the word, do not have other words which might suggest the context or the content of the discussion around VOTO.

One conclusion is that, rather than reflecting the principles of negotiated learning and the processes of creating the generative words, the use of VOTO reflects more the interests and personalities of some of Freire's colleagues.

He himself was strongly against the use of primers or prepared texts, mainly on the grounds that they were mechanical, redolent of Banking Education and destructive of the flexibility required on the part of the educators in
the Culture Circles. He believed that the generation of words, the use of those words, the decision about which formations of syllable were actual words and what messages the words should convey, should all be jointly undertaken by the non-literate adults and the coordinators.

However, two of Freire’s colleagues in the Popular Culture Movement had written a short Primer Viver é Lutar in which, using Freire’s Method of syllabic parsing, they introduced initially just five words:

- povo = people
- voto = vote
- vida = life
- saúde = health
- pão = bread

Their first sentence reads “O voto é do povo” (The vote belongs to the people). It ends with “The North-east will only have peace when the roots of its ills have been eradicated” and “Peace grows out of justice”.

In the context of that Primer and of the large scale literacy programme which M.E.B. undertook through the Trades Unions in 1963-64, the content of lists 1-3 takes on a new focus. Tijolo was used to give an example of syllabic parsing, and voto was used to create the climate of the discussion which was overtly about oppression and liberation. The themes of the groups were about hunger, employment, food and exploitation, the senghor de engheno, and the role of the unions and the controls of the market.

The bass line provided to support the melody of this discussion is clearly that of a radical Marxist analysis.
The hint that Freire was not wholly in sympathy with this view is that, at the time of writing Education: The Practice of Freedom, he would have had these lists to hand, but he makes no reference to them, preferring instead his list from Rio even though that was not his own home area.

He may have rejected the analysis, -he had not at this stage begun to offer any economic analysis either of oppression or of the processes of liberation- but he certainly would also have argued that the success of such Primers (and there is evidence of their success43) actually illustrates the degree to which they are patronising and anti-dialogic.

Brown (1974:32) supports Freire on this point, perhaps indicating that she was aware of some degree of directing or imposing on the part of the coordinators.

"The messages are not the direct opinions of the learners. Because the ideas are those of the teachers, the book is an instrument of propaganda: in supposing what non-literate may believe, it tells them what they should believe. As long as the message is donated, it domesticates those who accept it in the uncritical acceptance of whatever teachers and writers say should be believed."

It therefore appears that despite the claims of

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43. Brown (1974) quoting an interview with Anisio Teixeira, Director of the Brazilian National Institute of Pedagogical Studies: "This book effectively teaches reading... The words, the sentences, the phrases are those that would inevitably occur to the non-literate if he himself were writing his own Primer. ...This has been realised to an unprecedented extent in the Primer for Adults." (my emphasis added).
dialogic learning, the hidden or personal agenda of the educators has had a controlling influence on the formulation of the generative words. There is a directiveness required for the presentation of this programme—a view which is supported by the analysis of the ten "situations" offered by Freire—which contradicts the principles of negotiated learning in a way which is indeed anti-dialogic. The pedagogical discipline demanded by Freire has been ignored.

Furthermore, the four lists do not illustrate the principles which Freire had outlined for each phase of the creating of a literacy programme. In Phase 1, the research of the local "vocabulary universe" has been initiated only after certain of the 16-17 words had been nominated, viz. tijolo, voto, and engheno.

Secondly, none of the lists reflect the semiotic criteria on which the Method is based (page 51). There is no logical progression from concrete words to abstract ideas (e.g. list 2), difficult phonemes are introduced earlier rather than later (e.g. lists 1 and 2), and there is no obvious differentiation of pragmatic tone (e.g. in either list 3 or list 4).

The principles enunciated by Freire appear more as a post-hoc rationalisation of a practice which had proved itself to be effective. Albeit that the practice was more a form of enlightened Banking Education, the
rationalisation is tempered with the values of dialogic teaching and negotiated learning.

The word lists may confirm the trend of previous analyses, but they do also open up new questions which underpin the pedagogy of teaching/learning literacy.

2.4.2 The Content and Use of Words

It is interesting that, in a pedagogy constructed around the idea of liberation and the fact that "no-one can liberate themselves", and which is based on the social nature of learning, not one of the lists includes words relating to personal or family relationships: there is no mention of wife/husband, children, parents or friends, no mention of family or community.

Additionally, it is significant that all the words in the four lists are all nouns. There are no verbs, propositions or adjectives. That is to say that, not only are there no words to describe relationships, but also that there are no words with which can relate one word to another.

It is as if, in learning a foreign language, one were to learn only selected nouns (e.g. the man, the pen, the table, the hat, the beer, etc.). No matter how well one might know the words, one could not converse, nor could one
read with any security what other people have written.

Freire, who himself was learning English at the time, nowhere explains the process of language acquisition through which one learns to connect the given nouns in such a way that one can construct sentences. 44

For example, a generative word list may have voto / vote and povo / people, but how does one learn to read or write: O voto é do povo

The vote is of (belongs to) the people?

44. This is all the more surprising in that his work in São Tomé in 1976 represents a considerably advanced methodology. The word lists are still there, but evidently not negotiated as before with the community. The texts are "designed to meet the objectives of the literacy campaign, namely, for the people to participate effectively as subjects in the reconstruction of the nation" (Freire, 1987b:65).

The word lists include: "school, plantation, land, product, people, health, radio," as well as "unity, discipline, work, vigilance". However, the Primer, which was published as two Popular Culture Notebooks, also includes points of grammar. Particular attention is given to hypothetical clauses and to the use of the relative pronoun que which is said to be very common in popular discourse. However, no attention is given to how pronouns and verbs are to be learnt, and no explanation is given as to how, phonologically or semiotically, pronouns and prepositions can be used as generative words.

There is no doubt that the Popular Culture Notebooks represent a more advanced literacy programme, and certainly one that is overtly, politically oriented to a degree that Freire found unacceptable in Extension and Communication. (For example: "Working with perseverance, we produce more" and "the culture Circle whose participants worked more received a congratulatory letter from the Comrade president"; (1987b:89)). It is, however, difficult to see how this approach aligns with Freire's pedagogical principles or how it is not simply a benign form of Banking Education and Cultural Invasion.
This is not simply the question as to whether one can learn a language or learn to read and write without some understanding of the Grammar of the language. It is rather a question of whether it is possible to identify a list of words which are absolutely essential, if one is to communicate in that language, either through reading or writing.

Taking, as an illustration, just the last two sentences above, one can easily see the key nouns (fig.a), the generative words, but those words by themselves (fig.b) are not sufficient to carry the meaning of the sentences.

Fig.a  This is not simply the question as to whether one can learn a language or learn to read and write without some understanding of the Grammar of the language. It is rather a question of whether it is possible to identify a list of words which are absolutely essential, if one is to communicate in that language, either through reading or writing.

summarises the fundamental processes of Freire's literacy programme, but his explanation of his Method by-passes the questions posed by fig.c. Can one actually become literate, without considering the pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions without which even oral language is impossible? The use of generative sight-words may indeed provide a base for animated and relevant discussion, but how does such discussion aid the transition to actual literacy? Is there a difference between "seeing" a word and "reading" that word?45 If the use of sight words is valid, how does Freire's actual selection of words aid the process of alphabétisation?

Otto and Stallard (1976) made a major study of the use of sight words as an aid in the teaching of reading which is relevant here. It shows that Freire's Method of selecting common, key words as a basis for reading has indeed a long pedigree, and there is evidence of word lists even from 20BC. In more recent times, the development of Look and Say teaching methods have led to the revival of such aids.

Methodologically, the technique is simple. The

45. Le Men (1985) raises a parallel point questioning the use of alphabetic learning: "voir les lettres fait obstacle à la lecture. L'alphabet n'est pas fait pour être lu mais pour être entendu et dit". She contrasts synthetic literacy, that builds up words from individual syllables which in themselves have no meaning, and analytic literacy which is based on recognition of whole words which are given meaning by the reader.
lists are created through a frequency count of words that occur in oral and written samples of children's and/or adults' communication and Otto and Stallard conclude that, by comparing a wide range of such sight words, "it is possible to identify a list of one hundred words that could be accepted as essential sight words with some confidence".

Two of their subsequent observations are also pertinent here; a) that the words that occur frequently in children's speech also tend to be frequent in adults' speech, and b) that the core words from adult writing are also the core words in children's writing.

It therefore seems reasonable to transpose this research to the question of literacy teaching, in supposing that the same essential words would be needed within any such programme.

In contrast to Freire's lists, Otto and Stallard include no nouns (see p.67). The largest number of words (32%) are basic verb forms, (be, have, see, come, go, be able, do, know, like, look, make, put, say, take, think, and want). 16% of the words are personal or possessive pronouns, and a further 16% are propositions. Essential adjectives (6%) include: big/little, new/old, good and right.

The advantage of such a list is that it creates the immediate possibility of what Freire would call the
One Hundred Essential Sight Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>down</th>
<th>it</th>
<th>out</th>
<th>three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>about</td>
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<td>little</td>
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<td>up</td>
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<td>good</td>
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<td>saw</td>
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<td>we</td>
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<td>at</td>
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<td>my</td>
<td>so</td>
<td>went</td>
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<tr>
<td>away</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>new</td>
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<td>came</td>
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<tr>
<td>come</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>old</td>
<td>there</td>
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<td>one</td>
<td>think</td>
<td>you</td>
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<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>our</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>your</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

dialogue of literacy, the language of possibility. A person who has the ability to read and write these words can be the subject of his or her own learning. Unlike Freire's lists, this essential word-list leads the learner towards the making of a statement which is, potentially, immensely personal. I can write "I am", "I think", "I have", and "I know". I can also write in relationship: "you can", "you said" or "we want", "we are".

Phonetically, this list of one hundred words, syllabically parsed according to the Freirean Method (hat, hat, hit, hot, hut; an, en in, on, un; etc.), covers most of the essential phonemes even of the English language and provides a framework for the constructing of sentences. It may, initially, be more laborious in the teaching/learning of how to read, but the fact that it demonstrably reflects essential word units would greatly facilitate the teaching/learning of how to write.

There is an almost shocking simplicity in the sight-word list that is lost in the complexity of Freire's process of literacy and conscientisation. Furthermore, his pedagogy of annunciation is contradicted by the limitations imposed on the discourse of literacy through the use of only nominal, rather than prepositional and pronominal, language.

The divergence between the two lists represents the polarising of two traditional pedagogies. In Cartesian
terms, the processes of learning through the creation of a
synthesis and a logical progression from the simple to the
complex\(^{46}\) are to be distinguished from those processes
which propose an analysis of what is complex so as to
perceive an underlying simplicity.\(^{47}\)

Traditionally, i.e. within those frameworks which
Freire would identify with Banking Education, the teaching
of reading has been incremental and synthetic, building
upon the learner's gradual development of conceptual and
linguistic capacities. The word-list of Otto and Stallard
would be an essential tool in the early stages of that
process.

Freire's Method, while initially synthetic and

46. Freire follows Descartes in seeking to name that
reality which he can assert without doubt, even if he
does not, or cannot, explain the leap from epistemology
to ontology. His literacy method is a direct
application of Descartes fundamental rules: "The second
rule was to divide each difficulty into as many parts
as possible... The third was to conduct my thoughts in
an orderly fashion, starting with what was simplest and
easiest to know, and rising little by little to the
knowledge of the most complex, even supposing an order
where there is no natural precedence among the objects
of knowledge." (Descartes, 1960:50).

47. Most Look and Say literacy methods are based on such
an analysis. Words are not constructed or made up of
syllables: they are complete semiotic figures of
reality. We do not say "what do these syllables
mean?" but "what does this word mean?".

Le Men (1985) argues that this method, even in the
fifteenth and sixteenth century, found little favour
among educationalists because it is based more on
intuition and memory rather than on logic and
repeative learning. It is not without significance
that the latter are more controllable and examinable
than the former.
syllabic, is primarily analytic, asking the learner to confront the complexities of situations from his or her daily life. They are encouraged to "name their world", and, in the strict sense of the word, to do that they need the names—the nouns. Their freedom to name is predicted upon their ability to read the world. Each codification, which is never neutral and no matter what its form (visual, auditory, tactile or audio-visual) is a discourse to be read (Freire, 1970:91).

Using Chomsky's distinction, Freire argues (1970h) that all codification has both a superficial and a deep structure. Decoding or conscientising is the process of searching beneath the obvious, the given, in order to uncover a new, previously hidden, reality.

This radical pedagogy is revolutionary only in the sense that it is a return to, or restatement of, a classical literacy teaching. In effect, Freire is demanding, through the apparent simplicity of his codified cards and single nouns, a modern but oral restatement of Comenius' complex Orbis Pictus (1640).

Like Freire, Comenius provided an introduction to literacy through alphabetic learning and through reflection on "an ordered and carefully named universe" (Cohen, 1977). Yet while he asserts, in the preface to Orbis Pictus, the need to show pupils not just the picture but the real things, what we actually look at in his book is the
The noun, or nomen exists "in the book" but it remains unusable because it is indeclinable. It is neither subject or object, because it is untouched by the contingency of language. There is no conjugation, either grammatically or semiotically, between the word on the paper and the word in reality.

What such nominalist discerning of the word cannot do, almost by definition, is to turn that process of naming into a process of action. This is the ultimate weakness of Freire's Method, for such a process of action requires the articulation or inter conjugation of verbs and the pronouns, and it is here that his lists are eloquently silent.

The singular and most important outcome of that
analysis is that Freire's Method finds itself in contradiction: it can never realise its objective of *praxis*, that process of active reflection and reflective action. The use of nominative word lists is fundamentally anti-dialogic, for it never allows the learner to personalise the processes of reading and writing. It explains Bernstein's view that the nominal forms lead to universalist perspectives, whilst the pronominal forms particularise.49

The learner then may be able to recognise the word for a brick, or a mill, or discuss the importance of the words re. employment, wages and the price of bread, but unless he or she can read and write "I can read" and "I can write" then there is a sense in which they are condemned to remain sub-literate. Only the person who can write "I can" is in a position to begin to change the world, for it is the I CAN which is the catalyst to the process of conscientising. This, in turn, breaks the bonds of the culture of silence and enables the learner, as Subject, to say I AM. *Possum ergo sum* requires only the nominative and no other nouns.

49. Bernstein (1970) reads class distinctions in a storytelling study where middle class children used 13 nouns and 6 pronouns, but where working class children used only two nouns but 14 pronouns. However, the main point is that nominal forms led to universalist statements, while pronominal forms were particular and situation specific. I infer from this latter case a process which is deeply personalising: the use of multiple pronouns effectively says "The story may not be immediately comprehensible to you, but I know exactly what it means for me".
3.1 Introduction

The History of Ideas (Begriffsgeschichte) is more than the tracing of a theme or a word in the Libraries of Thought or in the Supermarkets of Concepts. There are no easy, reach-me-down packets or book of ideas, condensed thoughts which are hermetically sealed against contamination and which are marked "untouched by human history". We cannot trace the development of an idea in the same way as a biologist traces the genetic evolution of differing species.

The fact that, diachronically, one can find the same word or idea expressed in different cultures or epochs neither ensures that there is an evolutionary and consistent development of that idea, nor that an anterior usage is an embryonic form of later discourse. Equally, differing expressions of an idea, viewed synchronically, do not necessarily point to conceptual disagreements (Friesenhahn, 1988).

In exploring the archaeology of Freire's philosophy, and practice, therefore, there is no assumption that he was linguistically or philosophically dependent on his sources. Phonic or theoretical similarity will not necessarily prove derivation (e.g. the influence of Freinet, Teilhard or
Unamuno) any more than it assumes that Freire is using a word or idea in its original sense (e.g. his interpretation of Aristotle and his relocating of that discussion within a modern construct of personality).

What we can say is that there is a correspondence between Freire and a complex web of other philosophies and pedagogies which leave a shadow across all his work. To say summarily that his thinking is eclectic is to underestimate the degree to which he borrowed directly from other sources, and the affinity which he found in other authors and therefore on which he was confidently able to rely for support. An avid reader, there is also no doubt that he was an intellectual poacher who sought out and repossessed other ideas in order to enlarge and restock his own domain.

There is a sense, however, in which Freire's library is syncretic rather than eclectic. His analysis of history and culture leans heavily on Althusser, Fanon, Lukacs, Mao, Marcuse, and Marx, as much as on Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel and Rousseau. His theology is compiled from Bonhoeffer, Gutierrez, Niebuhr and Rahner as well as from Buber, Fromm and the traditions and practices of the "Church Triumphant".

"Freire's work and study on many continents enable him to quote at will from scores of philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, political scientists, educators, revolutionaries, and theologians. It is possible, however, to identify some of the major accents in his writings and the personalities whose thought to a greater or lesser degree contributed to his philosophy" (Collins, 1977:27).
The efficacy of such syncretism means that it is not possible to unravel the diverse skeins of influence in the complex fabric (Mackie, 1980:93), the *textus* of Freire's thought. What is possible is to paint in the background, identify the ingredients which Freire has used to make his own particular recipe, and within that to concentrate on those elements which have been formative in the creation of his pedagogy.

3.2. A European Heritage?

3.2.1 The French Connection

We have already referred (Footnote 10) to the major influence on Freire's early reading of French academics, among whom was the much underrated figure of Lucien Febvre.

Febvre was one of the founders, with Marc Bloch, of the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* which imposed on a traditional approach to the teaching of History the importance of the sub-disciplines of Economic and Social History. They demanded a contextualising of History that led to the investigation of culture and ideology as the construct of historical events. History is not the chronicling of dates and epochs but rather the intersecting of "cultural moments" which according to the mentality of the time (or according to the mentality of the historian) were deemed to be significant.
Subsequently, these later cultural studies focused on the centrality of language and a "history of mentalities". This was the subject of a series of Febvre's lectures in São Paulo University where he analysed the history of conscious and unconscious forms of thought. Freire was thus provided with a stratification of consciousness and with the tool (outil) of discourse analysis with which to reconstruct consciousness. His explanation of naive / critical consciousness in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is a development of Febvre's categorisation of consciousness, and the technique of decoding in the Culture Circles is effectively a specific application of discourse analysis.

For Freire and for Febvre, words are "witnesses" of their time and history (mots-témoins). Freire played much with this idea of historicising but reversed Febvre's logical current, arguing that history was evidenced, brought into being, by the Word: critical consciousness is where a person is able to insert themselves in their own history by "naming the word/world". The Word is their Reality (mots-choses).

It is worth noticing the network which a focus on Febvre reveals. It was he who, in the second year of the *Annales*, initiated a separate section in the journal which was entitled *Les Mots et les choses*, (Words and Things), in which he wanted to create an etymological archaeology, a history of words and ideas which was an analysis of the...
socio-cultural contexts of those ideas.50

Beyond the importance of this structuring of consciousness,Febvre's other major contribution was that it was he who initiated, both through the Annales and through the University in São Paulo, the cooperation and involvement of many French intellectuals who came, some for periods of two years, other (like Roger Bastide) for many years, to teach at the University. Many of them wrote for the Annales, and for Mounier's Esprit which, from the early 1960's, was available in Brazil in Portuguese translations.

50. Les Mots et les choses was the title of Foucault book (1966) which was translated as The Order of Things. (1970). It is a study which "traces language as it has been spoken...what modalities of order have been recognised, posited, linked with space and time, in order to create the positive basis of knowledge as we find it employed in grammar and philology, in natural history and biology, in the study of wealth and political economy. Quite obviously, such an analysis does not belong to the history of ideas or of science: it is rather an enquiry whose aim is to discover of what basis knowledge and theory became possible." (1970:xxi, my emphasis added).

This critical definition of the central question of Power-Knowledge is also clear in Foucault's L'archéologie du savoir (1969), where he makes the direct link between his approach and the nouvelle histoire of Febvre. Importantly for Freire, Foucault restates the locus of the power-knowledge debate: "ces problèmes, on peut les résumer d'un mot: la mise en question du document....Le document n'est donc plus pour l'histoire cette matière inactive à travers laquelle elle essaie de reconstituer ce que les hommes on fait ou dit, ce qui est passé et dont seul un sillage demeure: elle cherche à définir dans le tissu documentaire lui-même des unités, des ensembles, des séries, des rapports. Elle est le travail et la mise en œuvre d'une matérialité documentaire (livres, textes, récits, registres, actes, édifices, institutions, règlements, techniques, objets, coutumes, etc.)." (1969:14, my emphasis added). Foucault's textualising of the world and history is the obverse of Freire's writing the world.
Among those who, collectively and individually informed Freire's thinking were Lévi-Strauss\textsuperscript{51}, Goldman\textsuperscript{52}, Barthes\textsuperscript{53}, and Althusser\textsuperscript{54}.

3.2.2 L'Education Nouvelle

In that context of French teaching and reading, Freire was introduced to more formal statements of pedagogy, particularly that which came to be known as

\textsuperscript{51} The structuralist ethnology pioneered by Lévi-Buhl found further expression in Levi-Strauss' \textit{Anthropologie structurale} (1958) which emphasized the contribution of linguistics in the social sciences. This also gave Freire the idea of culture and art which underpins his use of Picture 7 in his literacy method (q.v.). Freire knew \textit{La pensée sauvage}, 1962 and used the important distinction between the savage and the scientific mind, (naive and critical consciousness), as well as Lévi-Strauss construction of History. "History is never history, but history-for... History-for-me can make way for the objectivity of history-for-us" (p.307).

\textsuperscript{52} Freire used Goldman both in Cultural Action and Conscientisation, (in explaining the state of perceptive clarity which Goldman call "the maximum of potential consciousness" beyond "real consciousness" (1970i:471. 474), and in \textit{Pedagogy of the Oppressed}, to express the difference between "real consciousness" and "potential consciousness" (1982:85,108) and the impossibility that reality can be transformed mechanistically. The English text gives no reference: the French text quotes an English text of Goldman \textit{The Human Sciences and Philosophy}, 1969, but nuances mechanistic change by translating it "la transformation de la réalité peut s'opérer automatiquement". Freire (1985:32) again refers to Goldman's transition of consciousness, but quotes an undated, Spanish translation: \textit{Las Ciencias humanas y la filosofía}.

\textsuperscript{53} Barthes's \"Histoire et littérature: à propos de Racine" in the \textit{Annales}, Vol.15, 1960, pp.524-537. He reflects the Febvre social history of literature in criticising the view that one can read social structures homologously as one can read texts, and highlights the Freirean question of how one can write text and so "write" society.

\textsuperscript{54} See footnote 88, page 143.
l'éducation nouvelle. A number of key elements of this approach, which Freire so assimilated that acknowledgement is rare, can be found in his works, among which, most notably, are the interconnecting influences of Freinet, Decroly and Claparède.

Freire refers to Freinet as "one of the great contemporaries in education for freedom" (1970:1). In Africa he had seen a training seminar based on the teaching principles of Freinet (1978:33), and he regarded him as a "practical political pedagogue", placing him in the company of "Amilcar Cabral, Samora Machel, Fidel, Nakaranko and Nyerere" (1978:157).

Why, perhaps, Freinet caught Freire's attention was because he centred his pedagogy on literacy, on enabling the child or adult to write for themselves (Freinet, 1968) but the context of the "live-in" school which Freire visited in Guinea Bissau represents a wider contextualising of education. The central tenet of l'éducation nouvelle was that education is nothing less than life itself.

Freire arrives at the same point in his book with Frei Betto (1985b): Essa escola chamada vida (This School called Life), but the initial assertion lies embedded in French/German education of the late 1920's.

"C'est justement pour préparer à la vie que l'éducation doit être une vie. Et si l'éducation se propose d'être une préparation à la vie, sans être elle-même une vie...elle ne prépare à la vie!"
So ends Claparède's *L'éducation fonctionnelle* in 1930. Here, while it is interesting to note in passing the wider focus on "functional education" some fifteen years before the expression "functional literacy" became popular, the important idea is that the lived-in-school is also the school-in-life.55

By strange coincidence, Freinet, Decroly and Peter Petersen all met at Locarno in 1927, when Petersen published what later became known as the *Jena Plan*.56 He

55. Freire found close affinity with Claparède: in his *L'éducation fonctionnelle* (1973), he insists that education is a way of living in which the educator is an agent of social change (p.189). The function of the teacher has to be transformed to allow the school to become a place of experimentation for work, play and social relations (pp.184, 154). The teacher has to be able to learn from the pupil in a context where success is not guaranteed, but where the process of "trial and error" (tâtonnement), like dialogic education, may well result in failure.

Claparède follows Vygotsky and Dewey (both of whom Freire knew well) in his proposition that learning is created by breaking into what is accepted and unquestioned: "au fur et à mesure qu'un acte s'autommatise, il devient inconscient" (p.59). Through a process of decoding, the learner and educator can arrive at underlying needs. Learning is predicated on identifying needs, the process of which parallels Althusser's ruptural principles: "la rupture d'équilibre est le moteur de toute l'activité" (p.51).

56. See Petersen (1965) *Der Kleine Jena-Plan: einer freien allgemeinen Volkschule*. Weinheim, Julius Beltz. (First printed in 1927). A more recent résumé of the main points of the Plan, plus a synthesis of other of Petersen's writings, is to be found in Spies-Bong, G. (1989), q.v.

The occasion was the Fourth International Conference of the *New Education Fellowship* (August, 1927) whose theme was "The Meaning of Freedom in Education". Among the participants at the conference, mostly from Europe and the United States, were representatives from South America, particularly from Chile.
was proposing a Lebensgemeinschaftsschule, a school—which-is-the-living-community. Did Petersen foreshadow Freire, or did Freire apply and develop Petersen?

According to Petersen, "l'éducation est une fonction de l'existence aussi originelle et puissante que la vie elle-même. En tant que telle, elle rend possible la spiritualisation et la libération de l'homme" (Spies-Bong, 1989:91). Unmistakably here, the concept and practice of spirituality and freedom would reinforce for Freire what he would read in Maritain (1957:76):

"I know myself as subject by consciousness and reflexivity. Subjectivity is known or rather felt in virtue of a formless and diffuse knowledge which, in relation to reflective consciousness, we may call unconscious or pre-conscious knowledge."

Petersen, and with him Decroly and Freinet, aligns education with a change of consciousness, an idea that provided Freire with a further rationalisation of the quest for liberation and "hominisation" which he would find in Teilhard de Chardin. That, plus the insistence by all three pedagogues on the need for a change in the basic relationship between student and teacher, would lead Freire equally to redefine that relationship and to express the process of such change within the spirituality of an "Easter experience" (Freire, 1982:103).

In the nouvelle pédagogie, the core function of the teacher is to create the possibility of questioning (Freire's problematising), in a pedagogical situation where
each person is active and empowered to take decisions. Spies-Bong (1989:101) calls this "une pédagogie de l'enseignement" which is but the parallax image of Berthoff's description of Freire's "pedagogy of knowing" (1987:xv).

The teacher is the animator of the conversation which takes place in the Learning Circle ("Die Stammgruppe ist eine Sozialform, die sich unter Führung eines erwachsenen Erziehers planvoll gestaltet": Petersen, 1965:28). According to Spies-Bong (1989:104):

"Le cercle permettait de soulever les questions générales ou des thèmes d'actualité amenés par les enfants, des faits vécus par eux ou le résultat de leur observations.

Le fait de se retrouver en cercle doit être bienfaisant: chacun s'adresse à l'autre en tant que personne."

The fact that authentic, personal conversation is prioritised in the Circles does not diminish the centrality of the coordinator/teacher. Whatever the equality of the relationship in dialogue, there is still the need for authority and control. Petersen (1965:31) talks of the fundamental Gesetz der Gruppe, a self imposed discipline but where also "the teacher is the animator...but still remains the expert."

Freire also never resolved this ambiguity of roles. Despite his dialogic rhetoric, his practice reflects wholly the principles of Petersen and Claparède: "In the discussion, no concession should be made to violent or
disruptive oratory by participants” (Freire, 1978:116). The teacher or coordinator is responsible for the comportment of the group, and it is the former who have the power to decide for the latter what is violent or disruptive.

Plus ça change! Freire is clearly imbued with the spirit and the practice of l'éducation nouvelle. This provided him with a linguistic structure with which to articulate his own specifically Brazilian learning programme. It does also explain to a great degree why his work is based on a psycho-pedagogy rather than on functional competencies and applied apprenticeship.

What is clear, however, is that, when seen schematically, Freire, Claparède, Freinet and Petersen are all hanging their work on the same pedagogical skeleton. For example, the three essential principles of Freinet (Pomes:1989), namely, free expression, experimenting and rehearsing, and action (expression libre, tâtonnement expérimental et coopération) are themselves none other than Freire's basic method of See-Judge-Act. His frequent assertion that

"knowledge emerges only through invention and reinvention, through restless, impatient, continuing and hopeful enquiry which people pursue in the world, with the world and with each other"

is perhaps only a culturally South American translation or transposing of Petersen's equally culturally Germanic Pädagogische Tatsachenforschung, that intense and continual researching of knowledge and learning.
3.2.3 The Triptych of Personalism, Existentialism and Emancipation.

Much has been made elsewhere of the influence on Freire of Maritain's existentialism and Mounier's personalism (Collins:1977; Mackie:1980). What has been overlooked, however, is that these philosophers and writers together gave Freire not just the text, but the intellectual context in which to forge a pedagogy of liberation. Paradoxically, their main influence was to be felt not in the classroom but in the Church.

Freire came to find himself cast on the horns of the Marcusian dilemma: "One of the decisive social tasks of affirmative culture is based on the contradiction between the insufferable mutability of the bad experience and the need for happiness to make such existence bearable" (Marcuse:1968:118). As an educator, Freire found himself committed to a process of cultural affirmation: as a Catholic, he found himself neutralised by the Church's palliative theology that explained undeserved injustice today by the promise of an earned happiness later.

In the early days of Freire's literacy programme, the Church was still emotionally and theologically a long way away from the declaration of Canequilla in Peru, 1969, and from the statement in the same year made by Dom Helder Camara (Bishop of Recife) and Dom Antonio Fragosa (Bishop of Ceara) which was also signed by some 350 diocesan priests. They concluded that, faced with the obscenity of
social injustice. "the revolutionary option, which has scandalised so many, can well be the result of the purest act of conscience" (Gerassi, 1971:48).

All had been influenced by Mounier who had campaigned, particularly through Esprit, in support of the worker-priest movement, arguing that the Church should identify "authentically" with the people and that revolution was potentially the clearest expression of love.57

Authenticity was one of the key themes of the age. Mounier had come to reject the Augustinian view that freedom to be was ultimately discrete from the freedom to do. Freedom could only mean "freedom in action". Hence the title of Freire's books are deeply significant:

57. This affirmation has to be placed within the traditional teaching of the Church on social issues. On the condition of the working classes, the Papal Encyclical Rerum Noverum (May, 1891) had stated: "The transference of property from private individuals to the community is emphatically unjust" (Para 3). This argument had been used to deny land reforms in Brazil and the breaking up of the large latifundia. Forty years later, Quadragesimo Anno (1931) reaffirmed these principles and made it clear that "no catholic could subscribe even to moderate Socialism". Even as late as 1961, Mater et Magistra: New light on Social Problems (sic) was stating that "The permanent validity of the catholic church's social teaching admits of no doubt" (Para 218).

The Catholic Church was far from the position of liberal Protestantism as evidenced by Paul Tillich: "First and foremost I owe to Marx an insight into the ideological character not only of idealism but also of all systems of thought, religious and secular which serve power structures and thus prevent... a more just organisation of reality" (Tillich, 1973).
For Freire (1976b:34), this contrasts with the massified society which makes people "passive, fearful and naive." What is required is the humanisation of man which, both for Freire and for Mounier, was to be achieved through a Christian view of History, melding together "the unity of God, the unity of history and the unity of the human race" (Mounier, 1951:xv).

This was to be nothing less than a spiritual

58. While this expression clearly echoes Teilhard, it is actually a reference to Mounier's Be Not Afraid, here quoted from an English version, 1954. Earlier (p.12), Freire refers to a French edition of "Le christianisme et la notion de progrès" in La Petite Peur du XX Siècle.

It is interesting to note the re-emergence of a leit­motif which lies deep in Freire's psyche and which is reflected in a short bibliography of his references: Mounier's Be Not Afraid, Tillich's The Courage to Be, Fromm's The Fear of Freedom and To Have and to Be, and Sartre's Being and Nothingness.

59. de Kadt (1970:90ff) details Mounier's influence on the Church and on Brazilian intellectuals. Mounier stressed the importance of inter-personal relations, and brought a Christian-marxist analysis to bear on society and injustice. However, he saw change primarily as a process which concerned the individual and he made little analysis of institutions of power and oppression. Nonetheless, his demand for authenticity had to imply some measure of social change, simply because a society could not be authentic if the poor and the marginalised remained oppressed.

revolution, the first steps of which were political and economic revolution (p.117), made possibly by the here-and-nowness of each person in their own History: "I am a me-now-here, perhaps even more heavily, a me-now-here-like this-with these people-with this past" (p.127).

It is in engagement with others that we are completely free: "There is no liberty for humankind except in creating engagement: there is no engagement without creating a liberty" (p.141). Engagement refuses the consciousness of solitude because it is in relationship "towards the other, in the other, towards the world and in the world before being in itself" (p.150).

"To be human is to be a being-in-the-world" (p.159) full of "wonder and interrogation" (p.164), whose liberty comes "not from following history" (p.166) but from making history.

This admittedly selective presentation of Mounier is all that is required to reconstitute the main historico-social themes of Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Add

60. It is the whole fabric and concept of Pedagogy of the Oppressed which is rooted in Personalism, although it is easy to find particular quotations which sound like direct translations. For example, "The movement of enquiry must be directed towards humanisation - our historical vocation" (Freire, 1982:58). "Dialogue (Engagement) involves critical thinking, thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and humankind admitting no dichotomy between them" (p.64). "Intervention in reality - historical awareness itself - thus represents a step forward from emergence" (p.81).
that to Maritain's Christian existentialism and the foundation of Freire's pedagogy is almost complete.

Maritain (1957:83) restates the importance of authenticity: "To be known as object, to see oneself in the eyes of one's neighbour, is to be severed from oneself and from one's identity." For Freire, this severance from identity, resembling the non-being of Heidegger and Sartre (das nichts, les néants) is a central problem: "The struggle begins with people's recognition that they have been destroyed.... Teacher and students, co-intent on reality are both subjects" (1982:44).

As Subject, each person IS: they do not simply EXIST. So Maritain's "To exist is not and cannot be cut off from the primary concept of being, that-which-is" (1957:33) is echoed with the same import in Freire (1988:89): 61:

61. The quotation also highlights the problem of translation. The English edition of Pedagogy of the Oppressed carries the footnote "in English, the terms to live and to exist have assumed implications opposite to their etymological origins. As used here, live is the more basic term, implying only survival; exist implies a deeper involvement in the process of becoming." The footnote does not appear in the Portuguese or French editions. Exactly the same footnote had already been used in the English edition of Education: the Practice of Freedom.

The problem lies in the use of viver and exister in Portuguese, estar and ser in Spanish, sein and leben in German, the contrary use of to be and to exist in English, and the confused use of être and exister in French. There is therefore a double process of interpretation underpinning the translation of Freire into English which also operated when Freire was trying to understand, for example, Heidegger's concept of in-der-welt-Sein through an English translation.
"Unlike animals, human beings not only live but exist" (Os homens, ao contrário do animal, não somente vivem, mas existem).

As such, each person is a "being in action", an expression which, for Maritain, is an existential tautology. Potential existence is only revealed through action - potentiā dicitur ad actum (Maritain, 1957:45). Following a very Thomist view which Freire also accepted, Maritain states (1957:70,76): "Only subjects exist, with the action which emanates from them, and the relations which they bear to one another.... I know myself as Subject by consciousness and reflexivity."

Freire (1976b:146) restates that as "The prise de conscience, which is a human characteristic, results in a person's coming face to face with the world and with concrete reality, which is presented as a process of objectification."

This objectification is none other than Teilhard's Noogenesis, each person discovering themselves in their own mirror (Teilhard, 1965:201). It is a permanent process of conscientisation, of personalisation (Teilhard, 1965:192), "what Teilhard calls Humanisation, when human beings make themselves capable of revealing their active reality" (Freire, 1975e).

Consciousness is not a reflection of, but a reflection upon reality which transforms that reality.
humanising it (Freire, 1970i:454; Teilhard, 1965:183). "Consciousness takes possession of itself, not just knowing, but knowing that it knows".62

Freire here quotes directly from Teilhard, but mostly he absorbs and applies his ideas: that intelligence must overcome the encircling illusion of proximity. (Teilhard, 1965:239); that "thinking the world gives it a form of unity it would otherwise lack (Teilhard, 1965:274); that the evolution of a progressively more conscious mind is a process of complexification (Teilhard, 1965:16).63

62. Teilhard de Chardin played an important role in shaping Catholic intellectualism in the early 1960’s, particularly prior to the Vatican Council. His central tenet, as a scientist and palaeontologist, was that humankind is progressing to its goal, its Omega point, of complete socialisation (1965:334). As such, we are all in a state of becoming (p.13), incomplete human beings seeking out our own personalisation or humanisation (p.192).

A Spanish edition of his major work, El Fenómeno humano, Madrid, Taurus, was available in Brazil from 1963. It is this text which Freire quotes in Humanistic Education, (1970:m).

63. Freire to some extent demystifies Teilhard, preferring in this case to speak of encircling proximity as limit situations, “the real boundaries where all possibilities begin” (Freire 1982:71). Thinking the world is analogous both to naming the world, speaking the word to transform reality (Freire, 1970h:213) and to the process whereby “There is no longer I think but We think. The object is not the end of the act of thinking, but the mediator of communication” (Freire, 1976b:135). The process of complexification is exactly the applied technique of problematising: “If education is the relation between Subjects in the knowing process, then it must be problem posing” (Freire, 1976b:150).
3.3 A Marxist Infrastructure?

Among all the commentaries on the sources and derivations of Freire's theory and practice no attention has been given to the important influence of Karel Kosik.64

Freire seems to have been struck initially by Kosik's idea of a "concrete reality": that institutions, ideas and concepts -what he would later come to collectivise as Culture- are also a part of the reality of daily life which human beings are able to change (Freire, 1982:73). Earlier, he had argued that the adult literacy process, as an act of knowing "implies the existence of two interrelated contexts. One is the context of authentic dialogue...the second is the real, concrete context of facts, the social reality in which people exist" (Freire, 1970b:214).

In both these instances, Freire quotes from a Spanish edition of Kosik.65  The French version of Pedagogy of the

64. Kosik was a militant Czech communist and Marxist philosopher. Born in 1926, he was an active member of the Labour Movement and one of the few survivors of the Resistance during the war. He was arrested by the Gestapo and deported to a concentration camp. After the liberation, he completed his studies at Prague and later at Leningrad. He was professor of Philosophy at the University of Prague from 1962, and played an important role in the political and social debate that led to the liberalisation of the country. After the "Prague Spring" of 1968, he was dismissed from his post and from the party.

65. Dialectica de lo Concreto, Mexico, Grijalbo, 1967. The first Czech edition was also 1967.

Freire is therefore acknowledging Kosik in a way that he does not do with other authors (Fromm or Unamuno, for example), yet it is still very difficult to evaluate the importance of his contribution.

In Politische Alphabetisierung (1970L), Freire talks of our presence in the world which is always the "unity of action-reflection", and he adds the footnote: "On this, see the extraordinary book Dialéctica do lo concreto by Karel Kosik, Grijalbo, Mexico, 1967". This note, which is retained in the original typescript translation of the article into English at the World Council of Churches, Geneva, is suppressed in the most recent translation (1985a:Chapter 8). In Pedagogy in Process, Kosik is mentioned in a footnote, one of only fifteen references in the whole of the book.


67. Perhaps because Kosik is not given as a reference against which to explain this expression, the translation of this text in The Politics of Education misses Kosik's (and Freire's) point about the symbiotic nature of action and reflection. "Like our presence in the world, our consciousness transforms knowledge, acting on and thinking about what enables us to reach the stage of reflection" (1985a:100 my emphasis added) is ultimately an inadequate translation.
On the other hand, Freire never refers to Kosik by name in the text as he does with Althusser, Gramsci, Marx, Niebuhr, and Teilhard, amongst others. So why did he feel that Kosik's book was so extraordinary and how important was it as an influence on Freire?

On the basis of a textual analysis only, some tentative conclusions are possible.

Freire first read Kosik in 1967 when he was working in Chile in a political context where the pro-Marxist Allende government was seeking radical social reforms which included his national literacy campaign. The popular discourse of the day was openly and militantly Marxist in a way that had never been achieved in Brazil, even in the early 1960's. Freire, from his still deeply Catholic background, then met this powerful statement of neo-marxism which was argued as a critique, not just of Marx (although that also gave Freire a much wider bibliography of Marx and Lenin than he had previously known), but also of everyone from Aristotle, to Descartes, Hegel, Husserl, Lukacs and Wright Mills.68

68. Freire's references to C. Wright Mills date from this period and may well have come through Kosik: see Freire 1982:83 and 1985a:4. The method which Freire encouraged the field investigators to use in their collecting of generative themes, namely, registering every detail in notebooks, is a technique proposed by Wright Mills in his Sociological Imagination. This source is acknowledged by Freire in the French and Portuguese versions of the Pedagogy, but the reference both in the text and as a footnote is missing from the English version.
Freire found in Kosik key points of convergence which allowed him to use the structure of Kosik's argument in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Both works have four main chapters, which can be presented schematically:

a: Freire

Chapter 1: Justification for a pedagogy of the oppressed and explanation of the reality of oppression;

Chapter 2: Banking education v problem posing education; man as a consciously incomplete being in the process of becoming more humanised;

Chapter 3: Dialogue between people as Subjects, the social practice of freedom, and the stages of consciousness;

Chapter 4: Dialogics and antidualogics: the matrices of praxis; Being in the world and the nature of oppression, conquest and liberation.

b: Kosik

Chapter 1: Intellectual and social reproduction; the total, concrete reality;

Chapter 2: Homo oeconomicus v social banking structures; the growth of rationality, conscious or unconscious views of reality; art as history and culture;

Chapter 3: The reading of texts and the reading of the world; human beings as Subjects/Objects, in the context of work and self fulfilment;

Chapter 4: Praxis, history and freedom, the nature of humankind, consciousness and the reality of the world in History.

The correspondence between the two books is too close to be mere coincidence, and the essential point is not furthered by detailed quotation. That is not to say that Freire "copied" Kosik: but it is to argue that he so absorbed Kosik's neo-marxist position that he repossessed it as his own.
Perhaps conscious of the similarity of content and structure, Freire ceased to refer to Kosik in his writing. The influence, however, remains. Kosik provided the infrastructure for *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, giving Freire an acceptable introduction to Marxism and a critique of "classical" philosophy. This enabled Freire to rework and restate particularly his own understanding of Aristotle and Hegel. Through Kosik, admiration, annunciation, theory-practice-praxis, being-in-the-world became not the hallmarks of traditional pedagogy but the prerequisites of a new, revolutionary futurity (Freire, 1982:57).

3.4 A Classical Lecture Sequence?

In constructing his pedagogy, Freire was seeking something definitely other than what he saw negatively as Socratic intellectualism and the other-worldliness of Platonic dialogue (1970h:218). For him, pedagogy existed in the world of the concrete, in that "relationship between the theoretical context, in which representations of objective facts are analysed, and the concrete context, where these facts occur" (ibid:217).

We can hear now a double echo, firstly from Kosik, but behind that, from Aristotle. This is not at all surprising, given that Freire was in fact, initially, only secondarily involved in literacy. Within the University of Recifé in the early 1960's, his primary role was as Professor of the History and Philosophy of Education at
It was in this role that he presented a "classical" lecture sequence on the development of pedagogy which could have been entitled "From Aristotle, via Hegel to Rousseau."

It is worth looking at this in some detail because it reveals some of the structures of Freire's thinking, as well as the degree to which he first absorbed, then creatively retranslated, Aristotelian and Hegelian philosophy into his Pedagogy.

3.4.1 Aristotle

Freire, even in writing and then translating Pedagogy of the Oppressed, preferred to use doxa and logos rather than find a suitable expression in the vernacular (Freire, 1976b:110). If such words are not intended simply to mystify, then they must signify something which Freire was trying to say but he could not express in any other way. Effectively, he had made Aristotle's language his own.

What seems to have attracted Freire, initially, was the Greek preoccupation with the debate about theory and practice. Pythagoras described the theoros [θεώρ] , the spectator, as the truly free person [φίλος·οικ.] because they could stand back and see things as they actually were. According to Aristotle, that freedom does not exist without a context: it could only exist in the
world, with its own purposes, its intentionality. In other words, *theoria* (theory—which today we might call “scientific enquiry”, or which Freire might call “critical consciousness”) is a reading of the world (Metaphysics, Epsilon, 1, 1026).

This idea conjoins the notion of rigour and “seeing reality” which is evident in Freire’s understanding of conscientisation: he also would say that it exists in the world, and is not simply with the world (1982:49). It is also an understanding of reality which is not engendered by mere intellectual curiosity any more than it is created by practical necessity; rather it arises from a sense of wonder and an awareness of one’s own ignorance. (Metaphysics, Book Alpha, 2.)

This awareness or theory is the prerequisite of true knowledge. In talking about doxa [δόξα]—the alienating knowledge, and logos [λόγος]—true knowledge, Freire says “Knowledge begins with the awareness of knowing little...and knowing that they know little, people are prepared to know more” (1976b:117). Earlier, he had argued for “an education that would lead people to take a new stance [like the spectator] to their problems, one oriented towards research [??]. An education of “I wonder” instead of merely “I do”. “(ibid:36).

Problem centred or problem-posing education, central to the Freirean methodology, is pure Aristotle. In the
Nichomachean Ethics. Aristotle categorises his whole philosophy as ἁγιασμός ἀγαθοῦ ποίημα - a philosophy concerned with the problems of humankind (Ethics: 10.9. 1181).

"Merely doing", (Freire's activism, 1982:60), the phrase used to contrast with "admiring" is also Aristotelian. He frequently contrasts doing with action. Essentially, doing only fulfils itself, is an end unto itself, acting upon objects: once it has stopped, it has no value. Praxis, on the other hand, is realised through the effect it has on others: it may not even exist without others - it is fundamentally exoteric, other-seeking, dialogic. It is that "productive quality exercised in combination with true reason - logos" (Ethics, 6.4. 1140).

In the light of Freire's argument about oppression, banking education and the people who have been marginalised, Aristotle is heard to say that "life is praxis not doing". Mere doing is the function of a slave (Politics, 7.2. 1325 and 1.2. 1254).

What distinguishes human beings from slaves (the oppressed) and animals, is that human beings can create, can act for a purpose. This is because humankind has a logos that has its own intentionality - calculation with deliberation (Ethics, 6.1. 1139). This intentionality,
which is the essence of consciousness (Freire, 1982:52) is how Freire explains that knowing is the task of Subjects, viz. those who are free, not slaves, not oppressed (1976b:99). He quotes the person from São Paulo who said "I want to learn to read and to write so I can change the world", adding his own observation that that person was someone "for whom to know quite correctly means to intervene in his reality" (ibid:50).

This purposeful action in the world, praxis (πραξις), cannot exist without theory (θεωρία), because it is only together that they constitute knowledge. Theory and practice, therefore, are not polarities but rather are two dimensions of human existence that can be distinguished but not separated.69

Freire (1982:Ch.2) speaks powerfully of reflective action and active reflection (19). In this "classical" dialectic, he explains the same concept of admiring, the ability to gain distance from an object, to objectify the "not-I". For him it is a "dialectic operation which characterises human beings, differentiating them from

69. That this is valid interpretation of the "classical tradition" is further evidenced in Adam Smith's organic or symbiotic articulating of theory-practice, thought-action, in his teaching of English at Edinburgh, 1748-1751. Albeit that his pedagogy sharply reflected his approach to laissez-faire economics, he regarded education as "neither a luxury nor a charity, but a necessary organic process of development without which humanity could not advance in its pursuit of the perfection of Nature and the improvement of the social order." (Court, 1985).
animals" (1970h: 215). For Aristotle, it is the essential requirement of knowledge, and a product of that role taken by the spectator [spectator], which creates an "engagement with reality" (Ethics Book 6). Freire agrees but nuances or reinterprets the idea by translating it as "a commitment to", or "conversion to" reality (1982: Chapter 1).

Later Freire (1970h: 218) presents a condensed summary of the Ethics, Book 6, perhaps echoing the use of this passage in a lecture:

"For dialogue to be a method of true knowledge, the knowing subjects must approach reality scientifically in order to seek the dialectical connections which explain the form of reality. Thus to know is not to remember something previously known and now forgotten. Nor can doxa be overcome by logos, apart from the dialectical relationship of people with their world, apart from people's reflective action upon the world."

What Freire (1982: 71) calls the "dialectic operation which most characterises human beings, differentiating them from animals" is almost a direct translation of Aristotle's what animals alone of the animals have logos (Politics, 1.1, 125). What is meant here by logos, however, was not primarily our rationality or our cognitive abilities. Logos, above all, means the ability to express oneself in speech: it is to speak, to name one's world. To have logos, and the rights to speak the word/the world that go with that, is to be truly human.

For Aristotle, to be human is to be a political
being, 

It is against this background that we must hear Freire insisting that dialogue (the creating and using of authentic logos) is a human (political) encounter, mediated by the world, in order to name the world (1982:61).

Dialogue is, therefore, an existential necessity, providing the means for achieving critical awareness. That is why the process of conscientisation is also a process of humanisation: "as human beings, as beings of praxis, to transform the world is to humanise it" (1970i: 455).

That is also why the literacy process has "to relate speaking the word to transforming reality, and to each person's role in this transformation. At its most basic, "learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity for us to discover what speaking the word really means: a human act implying reflection and action." (1970h:213).

Finally, Freire insists that the process of conscientisation is never complete. For him, the uncovering of social reality and the discovery of the person in that reality "is not something to be grasped as something which is, but as something which is becoming, in the making" (1975a:14).

This takes us to the essence of the challenge of Aristotle. In talking of the freedom of the individual and
of what it means to be rationally human, he describes humankind as "capable of being other", having a capacity to see and make things, including themselves, other than what they are now (Metaphysics, Book Theta, 5.).

Aristotle recognises "potency limiting" factors of experience: "the question of what it is to be human is one thing; actually being human is another" (Analyt. Posterior 2.6, 9261). On the one hand, this is a way of recognising that we can only be human in this world. On the other hand, it is a way of emphasising that we need to look at the concrete history of being human, i.e. we must consider ourselves as historical beings in what Freire would call our "limit situations" (1982:71).

Pedagogy of the Oppressed could almost be retitled "a pedagogy in limit situations". Stated in that way, it is, in the full sense of the word, fundamentally Aristotelian.

As far as Freire's literacy programme is concerned, two final points are worth noting. Firstly, Aristotle also considered that words themselves might be a guide to help us understand the nature of things. In the Metaphysics, Book Delta, he collected instances of usages of common, key words, effectively compiling a lexicon of generative words.

Secondly, he was aware of the pedagogic potential of
alphabetising the language: in talking of causality and the four most evident types of causes, he refers to matter, fire and earth, the parts of the whole and the elements in the case of syllables: 

(Metaphysics, Book Delta, 12.19).

That reality can be dissected in a way wholly comparable with the dissecting of a word into syllables is an insight that lies at the root of Freirean pedagogy. It is almost as if Freire read into, or read out of, Aristotle's alchemy of learning his own psycho-pedagogy. Thus he is able to assert, with Aristotle, that to think correctly, to have logos, is to be able to construct and reconstruct one's world.

3.4.2 Hegel

History has both an epistemological and metaphysical perspective. It concerns itself both with that body of knowledge of past human actions (the nature and possibility of historical truth) and with that part of the theory of reality which is concerned with meaning and the purpose of history as it was and is being made.

In presenting his sequence of lectures, Freire found the framework of the dialectic analysis of History which so marked Education: the Practice of Freedom and Pedagogy of the Oppressed in the lectures on the Philosophy of History which Hegel delivered in 1822-23.
For Hegel, History was not to be ascertained simply as so much fact, but as the reasons why the facts happened as they did. It is primarily the unfolding of the story of the development of freedom, the twin magnetic poles of which, attracting and repelling, were the development of the idea of the State and the role of the Individual within the State. With that gravitational pull, History does not seek to parade the past, any more than it can try to predict the future: it aims instead to present the Now of this moment.70

In this Now, this present moment, as Freire says (1976b:3), "through reaching back to Yesterday, coming upon Tomorrow through recognising Today", human freedom for any individual is the same as their consciousness of their freedom. One cannot be free unless one is conscious of being free. To study the development of freedom is, therefore, to study the development of consciousness.

This is a restatement of the Aristotelian logos, but Hegel insists that what is important in human activity is not the actions of people seen simply as events, but the

70. Freire would find this web of ideas congenial. Hegel had taken the focus on the present moment from Schiller (as he took the idea of the world realising itself in self-consciousness from Schelling, and the stages of consciousness from Fichte) and from that tap-root of history-which-explains-contemporaneity proposed in Vico's Scienza Nuova.

It was from the same root (Vico's "Verum et factum convertentur") that Marx developed the theme which was so important to Freire, namely, that human beings make their own history.
thought or consciousness of which the actions are outward expressions. It is logos, critical awareness, which is the mainspring of History. "The whole process of reality is a teleological movement towards the actualisation of self-thinking logos" (Copleston, 1965:208).\footnote{Hegel in summarising his view of History in the preface to his Philosophy of Right as: "What is rational is real and what is real is rational" exposes the Freirean dilemma. If what is rational is logos (correct thinking or reason), then logos, correct thinking is the means of making rational, (that is, humanising). For Freire, this means that only what accords with critical awareness can be accepted as authentically human. What is dehumanising and what is the product of naïve consciousness cannot be tolerated.}

For Hegel (1892:103), the thought processes which underpin this actualisation or conscientisation are logical. Because they evolve dialectically, History itself is inherently dialectical: thesis provokes antithesis, and the ensuing conflict or contradiction between them is resolved in synthesis, leading to a new thesis.

This gave Freire a disciplined mode of thinking which protected him to some limited degree from the otherwise circular Manicheism to which he was prone. "People, because they are aware of themselves and thus of the world - because they are conscious beings - exist in a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and their own freedom" (Freire, 1982:71).

In other words, people become aware of their freedom.
through the stages of consciousness by which they recognise "their not being free" (the limit situations), but they also recognise that these are not "given", they are not immutable. Accordingly they are able to intervene in those selfsame limit situations and create the possibility of them being otherwise:

"Neither does the discovery by the oppressed that they exist in dialectical relationship as antithesis to the oppressor who could not exist without them (See Hegel’s Phenomenology of Mind) in itself constitute liberation. The oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enrols them in the struggle to free themselves" (Freire, 1982:26).

The key influence here is Hegel’s Phenomenology, where he describes three phases or stages of consciousness. There is an historical or historicised progression from consciousness of the “object” (Bewuβtsein) to that of consciousness of the “self” (Selbstbewuβtsein) and finally to that of consciousness of reason (Vernunft) which is the actualisation of logos.


The strong inference is that Freire read Hegel’s Phenomenology via Kosik who makes the interesting link between Rousseau, Hegel and Marx and notes that “Si la Phénoménologie de l’esprit est le voyage d’une conscience naturelle qui accède à la science authentique (= Freira’s "correct thinking")...afin qu’ayant une pleine conscience d’elle-même, elle puisse atteindre à la connaissance de ce qu’elle est en soi” (Kosik, 1988:118).
This final stage, which Hegel identifies as the synthesis of objectivity and subjectivity, surpasses the stoic or unhappy consciousness (das unglückliche Bewußtsein) or what Freire (1976b:18) calls the passive, intransitive consciousness. Interestingly, the image given in explanation by Hegel is that of the master and slave, an image used extensively by Freire.73

For Hegel, while the consciousness of self demands the recognition of the self-hood of others, the master of the slave "by not recognising the slave as a real person, deprives himself of that recognition of his own freedom which he originally demanded" (Hegel, 1931: Part3; Freire, 1982:25). It is in this sense that Freire came to see the relationship of master/slave, oppressor/oppressed, and even teacher/learner, as dehumanising, because it is a denial of selfhood.

Humanisation, or the process of conscientisation, towards critical awareness can then be restated as a Hegelian progression which parallels or explains the Freirean transition from passive consciousness to critical consciousness and thence to liberation: "Reason/critical

73. This is Freire's underlying model of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed (1982:16, 26, 46). Confirmation of Freire's possible encounter with Hegel's Phenomenology in 1967 is that Education: The Practice of Freedom, which was written early in 1967, also contains the important image of master-slave. Here, however, the theme is taken from Gilberto Freyre's detailed, historical study (1963) The Mansion and the Shanties (see Freire, 1976b:25) and not from Hegel's intellectualising.
awareness is brought about by the move from unreflective life, in which human beings simply follow customs and traditions of their community, to the form of culture in which individuals are estranged from the unreflective background and pass judgment on it....It takes a form of a community of free persons embodying the general will as a living unity" (Copleston, 1965:226).

3.5 Conclusion

The disciplines which make possible a History of Ideas are primarily those of the Archaeologist and the Genealogist. However, the fertile terrain of such Begriffsgeschichte is not, in the first instance, verbal or conceptual, but rather textual. As illustrated in the above arguments, the first decoding of Freire requires a Redaktionsgeschichte, a critical analysis of how he has used and fashioned a whole library of texts into his own writings and lectures.

This does not diminish Freire nor deny the originality of the fusion of ideas which are particularly his. However, it does expose those complex stratifications of philosophy and pedagogy which lie beneath the surface of his work. This enlarged textuality provides the reader with a lens that is both convex and concave. The latter brings into focus Freire's specifically South American profile, educated and educating as he was in a provincial University in North-east Brazil.
The former provides a much wider perspective which situates Freire firmly within the mainstream of European intellectualism, denying, by such a pedigree, that the pedagogy which he engendered is in any way novel, quaint or transient.

It is with this twin focus that we can now consider Freire's philosophy and practice.
PART 2: THE QUESTIONING OF THE STATEMENT

CHAPTER 4. EDUCATION AND LIBERATION: THE MEANS AND ENDS OF DIALOGUE AND CONSCIENTISATION

CHAPTER 5. GENERATING LITERACY
DECODING FREIRE'S TEN LEARNING SITUATIONS
4.1 The Path into the Maze

Intellectual explorations do well to start with a map on which they might find fixed compass points of definitions and identifiable references as landmarks. With Freire, this is simply not possible. He has a tendency to talk about and to describe, rather than to analyse and to define. He prefers to explore around, rather than go straight to the point.

Freire's technique is more to present the obvious by revealing the opposite, even at the risk of proposing definitions or assertions that are essentially circular. He rejoices in polarising: oppressed-oppressor, theory-practice, dialogic-banking, teacher-taught, authenticity-alienation; the list is considerable. Yet what may be an heuristic device of value often becomes a strategy to deceive, for it is not always clear whether Freire poses these dichotomies as hypotheses or as descriptors of reality.

It is therefore essential that he be allowed to speak for himself, to explain the complex components and structures of his system. This is not to remove the contradictions from his work, to render it spuriously coherent. On the contrary, it is to clarify the nature of such contradiction which is inherent in the very subject of
literacy, given that pedagogy, power and knowledge are themselves fundamentally contradictory.

Contradiction, however, does not justify confusion, and it is that, at least to the degree that it is avoidable, which we may want to eradicate from Freire’s work. For example, the catholicity of Freire's culture encourages him to make the Anselmian leap from ideal to real; that what is deemed to be the best, is taken to be the truth. So he has no difficulty in arguing that, inter alia, because ideally Education is a means of humanisation and liberation, such humanisation and freedom are the actual outcomes of dialogic education.

This global logic does not facilitate the analysis of the macro systems of class, dominance and oppression, nor the micro systems of individuals learning, working, living through their daily lives. By constantly changing or explaining one pole by the other, Freire blurs the discussion at the point were the clarity at the extremes does not match people's lived experience at the "in-between". So he has difficulty in assessing the role of the dialogic teacher who has to work in the formal, Banking Education system, or the social schizophrenia of the middle class "oppressors" who equally feel themselves to be oppressed by the situation in which they find themselves.

These are the key problems which this chapter will explore before identifying the essential contradiction...
which lies at the heart of Freirean pedagogy: that the
discourse within which the pedagogy is expressed is
dislocated from the realities of its practice.
Ultimately, the force of such contradiction is that Freire
can legitimately only lay claim to a pedagogy which is
different in degree, but not in kind, from the repressive
and oppressive system which he repudiates.

4.2 Toward an Interpretative Methodology

"Reflection", says Freire (1973b:6), "is only
legitimate when it sends us back to the concrete context
where it seeks to clarify the facts." That is why he was
so committed to the deconstructive methodology Codification
and Decodification which are the strategies by which he
seeks to conscientise and to achieve that praxis which is
based on naming, reflecting and acting.

It is, therefore, wholly appropriate to attempt to
place Freire in his own intellectual, political and social
context, allowing him to speak for himself, to "name his
own world." This demands, on the part of the reader/investigator, an ability to go beyond philosophical
voyeurism in search of a holistic archaeology to discover
the personality and pedagogy of Freire, with all his
complexities and contradictions.

In that sense, this study which is a creative
deconstruction of Freirean literacy is self-consciously
immersed in his methods. In seeking to dissect the trinitarian axis of power – literacy – knowledge in order to reconstruct the singular nature of his praxis, we are creating more than that Begriffsgeschichte which is a linear, genealogical tracing of ideas or incidents that can be used to make respectable a personal or intellectual biography.

Conventionally, a "history of ideas" tries to understand (verstehen) its Subject/subject by identifying with the person and their way of thinking, to come inside that person and so explain their view of the world. However, this essentially emic perspective provides only a lens that either magnifies or reduces the subject. This distortion, as Brookfield (1984:6) indicates, arises because the study of learning and pedagogy does not yield easily, if at all, to the discipline or methodology of

74. A useful explanation of verstehen as an epistemological problem at the heart of sociological enquiry is contained in Hitzler and Keller, 1989.

Rabinowitz (1977) has explored differences in critical ideologies through an examination not of the authored text (which seeks to identify the author's intentions) but of the audiences implicit or explicit in the text. He distinguishes four such audiences: the actual, the hypothetical, the narrative, and the ideal narrative.

His main point is that one can enter the mind of the author by exposing the audience for whom that author was writing. It is a provocative study underpinned by a verstehen ideology of historical criticism, viz. that one can understand history through entering the thought-world of its actors.

The tension between this traditional approach to historical criticism and a more phenomenological style is explored well in Whiteside's clarification of Merleau-Ponty's debate with Raymond Aron, (1986).
scientific research. One cannot evaluate an educational theory by "defining the problem, formulating a hypothesis, testing that hypothesis and then reaching some conclusion, notwithstanding the objectivity and detachment on the part of the investigator, and the clarity and precision of his or her arguments."

What is therefore needed as a methodology is the prism of an etic analysis which will ensure a more objective view of the subject by exposing its component parts but without destroying its integrality.

This fundamentally holistic rather than diagnostically segmentalist approach again has the advantage of distinguishing, rather than separating, the

75. The emic and etic analysis does not create two standpoints which are dichotomic, but rather two elements which compose a stereographic picture. Nonetheless, this study has emphasised the construction of an etic perspective. Inter alia, this enables me to engage in a cross-cultural analysis, given that I am not of the same age, culture or language background as Freire.

An etic analysis allows me to view Freire from the outside, thus finding his relevance to me and to education in a non-Third World, non-South American environment. Thirdly, it helps me to deal with contradiction and inconsistency, whereas an emic view would seek the functional integrality of all the elements, biographic, intellectual and historical.

Finally, an etic formulation provides a legitimate entrée into the hyper-complexity of Freire's thinking and practice. It does so because it can accept that this is not an exhaustive study of the total Freire but rather a partial (in both senses), empathetic but critical re-writing of an extra-ordinary pedagogy.

For the definition and application of the emic/etic distinction, see: Headland (1990) and Hymes (1964).
elements of Freire's life, his philosophy and his pedagogy within the context in which he was working. Archaeologically, we can go back through the strata of biographical events (bio-texts) and pick through the layers of meaning in his writing (grapho-texts).

This historical, cultural and linguistic enquiry through translation or transiting is not without problems, among which not least is the question of the validity of the actual process of translation.

On the one hand, there is the implicit hypothesis that a direct translation from one language to another conveys the totality of meaning and nuance of the original. We assume that we can have a clear understanding even of such apparently simple Freirian words as "oppression", "teach" or "learn". Yet language is socially constructed. Although other languages may have equivalent words (e.g. teacher, illiterate, oppressor), the words themselves do not necessarily carry the social connotation or usage which they have or had in Brazil. This does not, however, create the impasse of cultural specificity that argues

76. As with so many of the ideas and concepts provoked by Freire, the notion of translation bears the ambiguity or bipolarity of a pharmakon: while it is both a physical movement from one place to another and an intellectual relocation in another language, it is also a traduction, i.e. a distortion, detraction and defamation of the person or the thought. The etymological exchange between the root words of tradere and traducere also fuel the dialectic between, for example, tradition: what is handed down, and treason: what is delivered up, betrayed.
that, because one cannot find an immediate or direct translation of a particular word or phrase, there can be no possible correspondence of ideas between or across the two languages or cultures. What it does create is the need to view both cultures/languages holistically.

This more than academic question exposes one key theme of Freire - our ability to find the right word, to "name our world", to find the word that can be spoken. The core limit situation of what can be expressed between two people or between two cultures is verbal, not ideological or epistemological. Freire's literacy method, which is a speaking of the word with meaning, leads us to create a grammatocentric ecology which includes bio-text, context and grapho-text, and which is sensitive, culturally, politically, epistemologically and linguistically to the dangers of theoretical imposition and academic invasion.

77. Hoskin (1985) analyses this naive approach of the translator who seeks a word-for-word accuracy even when the complexity of such a process renders such a goal unachievable. I draw from his analysis an important caution that the principle of verbum de verbo, which arose within the new, alphabetic copying cultures and which has been modified by extending the field of comprehension (sensum de sensu), is not primarily a principle of semiotics. It is based rather on an imagined point of perspective, a meta-semiotic which transposes words (of which the ASCII codes that reduce many computer languages to a mathematical and interchangeable norm are a good example), but which conceals the fact that translation is also necessarily a process of interpretation.
4.3 Dialogue and Conscientisation

The very usage of the words Dialogue and Conscientisation immediately challenges this objective, for it is as easy to assume that we have experienced the realities of Dialogue as it is bequeath to Conscientisation a gnostic importance.

The two ideas are so closely associated with Freire, and with the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, that they explain both his frequent marginalisation and his cultic status. The development of this association, however, is difficult to date-mark. Freire (1979:11) claims not to have used the word Conscientisation since the early 1970's: "I stopped using this word because the word was so corrupted in Latin America and in the States.. It does not mean that I reject the process which the word means." Nonetheless, he has never yielded to the pressure (1985a:185) to find an appropriate English translation that represents his first understanding of Conscientização.78

Freire claims that his use of the word has been consistent. Conscientisation is a process of developing consciousness, but consciousness that is understood to have

78. Freire has never claimed to be the author of the idea. It is now clear that the word conscientização emerged from a discussion group within the Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies. It was popularised particularly by Dom Helder Camara, the Bishop of Recife, at a time in the mid-sixties when the Catholic Church was increasingly involved in the Movimento de Educação de Base (M.E.B.), successfully using radio learning and the national media, for its literacy campaign.
"Objectivity is created by consciousness, as if, somehow, we could transform reality through speech alone, through convictions. I cannot transform the world inside my consciousness."

Merely thinking that one is free, or even asserting that one is free, does not achieve "freedom." Freire frequently had to combat that allegation, and he was adamant that he had never said that speech, literacy or education could bring about social transformation.

However, he does claim the converse, viz. that radical social transformation, revolution in itself, is an educational process.

"It is naive to continue to insist that by education we can transform reality." (1975d:3)

"Education rather reproduces the dynamism which characterizes the historical-social process. It is an acting of knowing and a means of action for transforming the reality which is to be known." (1972b:180-181).

The question remains: How does Freire break into this cycle of causality? On the one hand, he is asserting that education is a means of transforming reality, by which he means "the social reality." On the other hand, he also insists that the education system, or at least "radical change in the educational system" is contingent upon the radical transformation of society. This begs the question of how that radical, societal change is created, particularly as he seeks to prevent us from considering the educational option: "I have insisted on the impossibility of considering the educational system as an instrument of
social transformation." (1976a:78)

How then are we to consider the educational system: is it not therefore an instrument of social control? Freire will certainly want to argue that it is, that "banking education" lies at the heart of oppression, yet it seems that he fails to undertake any serious analysis of the questions which underpin the debate about power and knowledge, teaching and learning, schooling and society. It may almost be that we have to confront the possibility that "liberating education" i.e. that Dialogue which leads to/results in Conscientisation is a contradiction in terms 79. To do that, we shall need to examine carefully Freire's intentions and his claims for Dialogue and Conscientisation.

Freire's initial goal, as stated in Education: the Practice of Freedom (1976b:43) was "a literacy programme which could be an introduction to the democratisation of culture". It is in this light that the dialogic theme of Pedagogy of the Oppressed should be interpreted -viz. that the naming and transforming of the world which is the

79. This latent contradiction is exploited in Berger (1975) in his critique of Conscientisation as "consciousness raising". This is a "project of higher class individuals directed at a lower class population who are in need of enlightenment. Put differently, the concept allocates different levels to "them" and to "us", and it assigns to "us" the task of raising "them" to the higher level." (p.34) For Berger, "a better term would be conversion, and anyone claiming to raise the consciousness of other people should be seen as a missionary." (p.35)
The need for a dialogic form of education arises directly from the unequivocal statement that "Education is not Neutral".

"Education cannot be neutral because it is always an action either for the domestication of people or for their liberation." (1985a:99)

This dichotomy - the distinction between education as an instrument of domination and education as an instrument of liberation - is the very starting point of the how of conscientização, that process in which "we take the role of agents, makers and remakers of our world" in "a permanent, critical approach to reality in order to discover it and discover the myths that deceive us and help us maintain the oppressing, dehumanising structures." (1971a:24)

The next questions leap off the page: what are those myths, what are those dehumanising structures? There we are thrown onto the horns of a dilemma that recurs throughout any analysis of Freire. Do we work with him, within the terms by which he has defined the debate, or do we reject his way of articulating the debate and so refute his argument with a polite nego et consequens?
The problem lies not just in the rhetoric but in the deep Manicheism which underpins Freire's thought. Constantly we are forced back onto the schism of reality, into a world which comprises teachers and the taught, the oppressed and the oppressors, the light and the dark, the necrophilic and the biophilic, the subjects and the objects, the liberators and the liberated.

This polarising is a useful heuristic device that can induce clarity. The problem arises where the device is allowed to create the reality, where this world of bi-polarity becomes the only known reality. It induces an overall simplicity that actually impedes the way in which we give meaning to experience.

Freire relies heavily on this device, but the clarity of his argument allows us to see accurately only at the poles of the inter-arching continua which he has constructed: it allows little light into the central canopy of everyday life where most people live.

80. The bi-polar presentation of reality is also a key device in Kelly's construct theory. So Bannister and Fransella (1977:172-173): "A person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs." "Each construct discriminates between two poles, one at each end of its dichotomy".

Kelly's bi-polarity is essentially verbal rather than ontological, even though he uses that verbal construction to describe reality. He inhabits a world of hypothetical opposites. (See: Kelly, 1955; Bannister and Mair, 1968).

For Freire, these opposites are given existence through his Catholic Manicheism which imposes, effectively, an ontological imperative.
Is it possible that Freire has rationalised a world of false dichotomies? Is it the case that Education, to take but one of the constructs, is not simply either about liberation or about domination but rather about both?  

For Freire, "every educational practice involves a concept of the world and of what it is to be human", and he starkly contrasts two forms of such practice: Banking or Digestive Education and Dialogic or Liberating Education. (1982:Chapt 4 and 2).

Freire's description of the former is well known and highlights the emphasis on transferring knowledge, on the passivity of the learner, on the distance of the teacher from the learner, on the selective rather than the global perception of reality and on the alienation created personally and culturally for the learner who is regarded as a "deposit" or "object".

The temptation is that, in order to combat banking education, we simply accept Freire's Manicheism and try to identify the elements which counter balance that form of

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81. Berthoff, in her introduction to Reading the Word and the World, (p.xix) actually avoids this question by positing a triadic rather than a dual construction in Freire's thought. For example, she suggests that he juxtaposes the traditional, liberal and prophetic church, or a consciousness that is naive, astute or critical. While this cannot be denied in the text, I would argue that Freire is only concerned with the transiting from one extreme/pole to the other and that his "middle terms" serve primarily as rhetorical pointers to the preferred direction.
education. In doing so, we arrive logically at the concept of "education for freedom", but without questioning whether, ontologically, this new, proposed pole can actually exist.

However, for Freire this is more than a step of logic. He claims that the ingredients of a counter-education can be identified, if posited on an act of knowing which is fused from two inter-related experiences. First, there is the creation of an authentic Dialogue between the learners and the educators as equally knowing subjects, and secondly, there is the awareness of the real, concrete context of facts, i.e. of the social reality in which we are living (1970j:214).

This again begs the question: whose reality constitutes the real, concrete context of our experience? Freire does not explain his own understanding of epistemology or ontology, yet those perspectives are fundamental to his argument. In an interesting lapse in The People Speak Their Word, he rhetorically asks: "What do we mean by challenging you to think correctly?", but he answers his own question by explaining only the word challenge. The definition of correctly is stated but is not for question: "To think correctly means to try to discover and understand what is found to be hidden away in things and in facts that we observe and analyse..." (1987b:87) This act of knowing then becomes "a truly gnosiological situation" which enables the learner to
"truly enter into the problem" and thus to "make his or her own History." (1976b:145ff).  

But what does this mean in practice? In what way can a teacher and learner engage in a discourse or in a relationship which is not oppressive?

The directness of this question makes it all the more significant that it is here that Freire is at his most mystical and abstruse. Authentic Dialogue, he says, requires the resolution of the teacher/learner dichotomy. In part this will come about as the learners achieve their own consciousness, but primarily it will be brought about by the "Master Experience" or "Class Suicide" on the part of the teacher.

"...the educator for liberation has to die as the unilateral educator of the educatees, in order to be born again as the educator/educatees of the educatees/educators.

A educator is a person who has to live in the deep significance of Easter." (1970L:9)

This experience, Freire argues, brings about a different kind of learning, or at least the potential for a different

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82. Freire draws little distinction between epistemology and ontology. For him, the Cartesian cogito ergo sum becomes cognosco ergo sum, and he aligns himself with a classical Piagetian psychology which views cognitive development as personal development. (Freire, 1979, is entitled: To Know and To Be.) In this way, he focuses his view of reality through the lens of education. He can ascribe to the "education system" which constructs social reality an "epistemological cycle" which comprises gnosiological, logical and historical knowledge. He often speaks as if the system and the cycle were mutually interchangeable. Compare Freire 1976b and 1990.
kind of learning, because it can become "an act of knowing and a means of action for transforming the reality which is to be known." (1972b:180) The essential factor of this form of learning is that it is problem posing, not concerned with simplistic questions to be found only within the given. It is about the "problematising of human beings and the world, not the problematisation of human beings isolated from the world, nor the world isolated from human beings." (1976b:152)

Freire thus makes the relationship of an individual with the world the pivotal link in the process of Conscientisation, but misses the other cardinal point which is the articulating (in both senses of the word) of the act of knowing and the means of action for transforming the reality of what is known.

4.4 Praxis

The result is that, for Freire, it is the locating or annunciating of knowledge-education within history, rather than the articulation or denunciation of knowledge-power, which creates the possibility of praxis. Perhaps "historical praxis" is itself a tautology, yet it is not immediately evident how Freire wishes the idea to be understood.

At one level, Freire might deny any underlying tension between the Christian and Marxist elements which
converge in his use of the word "praxis", and in that he may well be both a product of, and a mirror of, the ambivalent response of the Catholic Church in Latin America to Marxism. 83

Marxism received a grudging baptism of ecclesial approval: Freire (Mackie, 1980:126) was able to say "God led me to the people and the people led me to Marx", but as a confirmation of his orthodoxy he later asserts "when I met Marx, I continued to meet Christ on the corners of the street - by meeting the people." This then allowed Freire to resort to the political and economic descriptors of Marxism to describe the need for Dialogue, liberating education and a counter-oppressive society. It gave him the advantage of a linguistic and phenomenological currency that had a known value and immediacy for many people of the "oppressed world".

Freire, however, was never converted to Marxist, revolutionary politics. When he makes his appeal for the creation of those conditions which will combat oppression, 83

83. The Church's failure to distinguish Marxism from Atheistic Communism has vitiated this debate which was only gradually opened up by South American theologians and intellectuals who needed, more and more, an alternative paradigm with which to analyse society, to reconstruct a valid, historical and sociological perspective, and to explore new political options. Chopp (1986:16) offers a useful resumé which does not diminish the felt risk and threat to the Church in those first steps into the Christian-Marxist dialogue: "Marxism is as much a general attitude emphasising the historical and transformative nature of all actions and reflection as it is a specific political structure or set of philosophical assumptions."
his core argument is couched not in the language of Marxism but in the biblical terms of love, faith, hope and humility (1982:62). As with his idealizing of revolutionary leadership, or his view that Conscientisation is primarily a process of "humanisation" and that Dialogue itself is the fulfilment of one's "ontological vocation", the language of the Christian faith is more than the mere clothes for dressing and presentation: they are actually the skeleton or underpinnings of his philosophy and social analysis.

At this stage, we have to note that the accommodation of Marxism and Catholicism does not create a marriage of ideas out of which praxis is born. On the contrary, Freire's redefinition of the term creates a further tension or polarity for it is based on an assumed, non-marxist, dichotomy between theory and practice, reflection and action.

Freire is clear in stating that praxis can be defined as the action and reflection of people upon their world in order to transform it. He pillories those who are merely busy - activists who are bent on expending their energies for the cause, unthinking followers, doers. Yet the theorists, those who hide in the ivoried towers of policy-making, educational administration or political rhetoric do not escape. What is actually required, according to Freire, is active reflection and reflective action. "The role of reflection is to react to the action and to reveal its objectives, its means and its efficacy" (1976b:110).
Reflection, in that sense is coterminous with "correct thinking":

"Finally, true Dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking-thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and people admitting of no dichotomy between them-thinking which perceived reality as process and transformation, rather than as a static entity-thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved." (1982:64)

As such, praxis may be easier to proclaim than to achieve. Clearly, it comprises three elements which have common valencies: "thought", "reality" and "perception". These adhere together to form that web of ideas spun by Freire around the deceptively simple concept of process. If reality is a process, Conscientisation is a process, humanisation is a process, Dialogue itself is a process, then we need to pause to question the nature of this process or these processes. What are they a process of?

With praxis providing the linkage between ontology and epistemology, one immediate answer is that they are all processes of the Practice of Education. We could even complete the circle and add to that the idea which Freire used as the title of one of his key, early books Education: The Practice of Freedom. It is almost as if the core ideas of process, praxis and practice might be mutually interchangeable. Within Freire's writing and lectures over the past twenty years, there has been this constant scoring of the three ideas to construct subtle variations on the theme.
How then is the practice of education or the practice of freedom to be construed? What is it a practice of?

Carr (1987) raises this very point in an interesting and pertinent analysis of the confusion that arises when practice is defined or understood on a continuum opposed to theory: (1987:164)

"On this view, practice is everything that theory is not. Theory is concerned with universal, context-free generalisations; practice with particular, context-dependent instance. Theory deals with abstract ideas; practice with concrete realities. Theorising is largely immune from the pressures of time; practice is responsive to the contingent demands of everyday life. Solutions to theoretical problems are found in knowing something; practical problems can only be solved by doing something."

This is a dichotomy which, on these terms, Carr and Freire reject. One cannot simply dissect out the principles of education from the practice of teaching/learning. What is required is not the separation of theory and practice but the ability to distinguish between them.

"This is the specific task of philosophical reflection. When this is done, what perhaps did not previously appear as the theory of action, is now revealed as such. If there is no dichotomy between theory and practice, reflection on our actions reveals the theory - without which the action or practice is not a true one." (1976b:110)

Essentially, Freire is wanting to assert the distinction between theory and practice because, as in the argument above, he wishes to contrast the nature of the dialogic person who is Subject (who sees the theory behind the reality) and the person who, without Dialogue, is
oppressed as Object (who has only a naive consciousness of reality).

It is this further, all-embracing bipolarity, nonetheless, which serves to protect Freire from the critical debate which concerns the nature of this person. Whether I am conscientised or not, who is the me who is learner or teacher? If I name my world, to use only one of the generative statements of his philosophy, who is the I?

Following Carr's useful definition of an educational practice as "an ethical activity undertaken in pursuit of educationally worthwhile ends" (1987:166) we can look again at both the process of Dialogue and locate the I and the We of those who construct the Dialogue.

4.5 Dialogue and Transformation

Freire argues that the truly revolutionary project, enabled by the process of Dialogue and mediated by the outcomes of Conscientisation, creates a "process in which the people assume the role of subject in the precarious adventure of transforming and recreating the world" (1970:486). By "people", he means those who address themselves as "I" or "We", not in some nominative sense of the grammarian, but as Subjects. The word has a flavour of independence, status, and integrity, reflecting the preferred value system by which he consistently asserts
that Conscientisation, engendered by Dialogue, is the means of transforming Objects into Subjects, the Oppressed into the Liberated.84

The rhetoric is clear, but how it is to be realised is not. The fact is that “transforming” and “recreating” are primarily value judgments. How is transformation achieved?

It is at this point that Freire remains mystical and enigmatic. We would say that the purpose of problem-posing education, that dialogic education which he also describes as “revolutionary futurity”, is to create a critical awareness of the present, i.e. that reality were “I am” and “We are” (1982:57). We have to re-educate ourselves to an understanding that rejects the assumption “that we are merely in the world, not with the world and with others.”85

84. An interesting grammaticocentric and culturo-centric comment, illustrative of the problems of translating this debate across cultures and across languages. The point is further made in Kristeva (1981:133) “...qu’aujourd’hui encore le terme de sujet est absent de la terminologie arabe.”

It may be that the whole construction of the debate is a product of post-Aristotelian literacy which defines a singular nominative and accusative. Hindu cultures, for example, prefer the social construct of personality to a western prioritising of the individual Ego.

85. Although Freire knew Heidegger’s Sein und Zeit, he does not exploit the concept of in der welt sein which would have clarified the social and temporal, and therefore historical, construct of our existence. Instead, Freire is still confined by his vision of that other-worldliness offered by Christianity, and by the believers compromise between being “in the world but not of it.”
that we are spectators and not re-creators" (1982:47). It is this possession of a social consciousness, of being-in-relationship, that identifies us as social and political beings.

Freire describes the new consciousness which is brought about by Dialogue in various ways, but most notably he speaks of the "unmasking of reality" or as the identifying of "limit situations".

"Conscientisation...implies the critical insertion of the person into the demythologised reality. It is first of all the effort to enlighten people about the obstacles preventing them from a clear perception of reality." (1970i:30)

Demythologised reality presupposes a regard that is biophilic - a further bi-polarity which Freire took from Fromm. "Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in ivory-towered isolation, but only in communication" (1982:58). Because of the very processes through which it has evolved, new learning, which is now also correct and authentic thinking, does not leave the learner isolated:

"The thinking subject cannot think alone. There is no longer an I think but we think... This co-participation of the subjects in the act of thinking is communication." (1976b:135)

The logic here is seductive, suggesting that five premises accumulatively provide the infrastructure of a pedagogy of the oppressed: namely,

a) The individual deprived of Dialogue is oppressed.

b) Dialogue is the Process and Practice of liberation.
c) The individual engaged in Dialogue is liberated.
d) Dialogue, by definition, requires more than one person.
e) More than one person can be called a Society.

Given these premises, it must therefore be the case that
the Process and Practice of Dialogue liberates Society.

There is an interplay here of ideas and structures
some of which relate to the individual and some to the
society in which such individuals might find themselves.
It is, as it were, a deliberate fusing of micro and macro
perspectives. The difficulty lies in trying to make sense
of what this fusion produces.

At one level, Freire is construing society in an
almost scholastic sense, as something which is an entity
in itself, an ens a se. Starting from the premise that
"People, among the uncompleted beings, are the only
ones which develop. As historical, autobiographical
beings for themselves, their transformation (development) occurs in their own existential time,
ever outside it".

Freire then creates the new hypothesis: "If we consider
society as a being...". He then goes on to state:

"It is obvious that only a society which is a "being
for itself" can develop. It is essential not to
confuse modernisation with development. In order to
determine whether or not a society is developing, one
must go beyond criteria based on indices of per
capita income. The basic, elementary criterion is
whether or not the society is a "being for itself.""
(1982:130)

By now we can anticipate the dualism embedded in
Freire's thought. By contrast to the developing society,
that being for itself, there is the metropolitan society which cannot develop because it is alienated. The political, economic and cultural decision-making power is located outside the society, in the invader society. By extension, it follows that the metropolitan society is an oppressed society: it is "massified", dehumanised and alienated (1976b:112).

So how is such a society, "being for itself" to be recognised? What are its economic structures, how is it administered, who within the society has power and responsibility? What is the relationship between the individual (that micro perspective which exposes questions of personal independence and liberty, self-development, and personal individuality) and the society itself (the macro perspectives which questions "the common good", the role of the state, those duties and responsibilities which make demands on the individual)? Nowhere does Freire confront these questions, a failing which considerably encourages his critics to question the relevance of his theorising.

All that we really know of Freire's utopian society is that it bears the hallmark of Dialogue. In Cultural Action for Freedom, he refines further the content of Dialogue: it is about the processes of annunciation and denunciation.

"A utopian pedagogy of denunciation and annunciation such as ours will have to be an act of knowing the denounced reality at the level of alphabetisation and post-alphabetisation, which are in each case cultural action." (1970h:221)
It is thus tempting to see cultural action as social action, as one way of bridging the gap between the micro/personal and the macro/societal. What we do see, however, is that the process of Dialogue, manifested as the literacy/post-literacy process, is essentially an act of knowing:

"Conscientisation occurs simultaneously with the literacy or post-literacy process. It must be so. In our educational method, the word is not something static or disconnected from people's existential experience, but a dimension of their thought-language about the world." (1970h:222)

Freire is here using the means of Dialogue, the WORD, and the process of thought-language in a very specific way in order to "reflect critically on the process of reading and writing itself, and on the profound significance of language." (1970h:212)

"Insofar as language is impossible without thought, and language and thought are impossible without the world to which they refer, the human word is more than mere vocabulary, it is word-and-action.

Learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity for people to know what speaking the word really means: a human act implying reflection and action. As such it is a primordial right and not just the privilege of the few. Speaking the word is not a true act if it is not at the same time associated with the right of self-expression and world expression, of creating and re-creating, of deciding and choosing and ultimately of participating in society's historical process."

The fact or the claim that learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity to speak the word clearly allows for the possibility that this is not necessarily the case. Indeed, Freire admits that for some "even if they can occasionally read and write because they were "taught" in humanitarian - but not humanist - literacy campaigns, they
are nevertheless alienated from the power responsible for their silence" (ibid).

We are left with a caricature of what it may mean to be both oppressed and literate. Like the illiterate, the oppressed literate does not know that "human actions as such are transforming, creative and re-creative". It is not their actions which are different but the fact that they do not know that their actions are different. There is the exterior silence of oppression and the interior silence imposed by the absence of critical perception.

The conclusion therefore is that there seems to be no ontological imperative that necessarily correlates literacy with transforming knowledge. At best, the wish can be expressed that, through

"calling forth the critical reflection of both the learners and educators, the literacy process must [may] relate speaking the word to transforming reality, and to each person's role in this transformation" (ibid).

What is significant is not the actual learning to read and write but rather that relationship between the word, reality and the ways in which the latter is transformed by the former.

4.6 Critical Consciousness

This is the tension that underlies authentic Dialogue: as the word is not static, neither is the outcome of Conscientisation.
"It is important that the Conscientisation process, the uncovering of social reality, be grasped not as something which is, but as something which is becoming, as something which is in the making.

"Conscientisation cannot stop at the stage of revelation of reality. It is authentic when the practice of revealing reality constitutes a dynamic and dialogical unity which the practice of transforming reality" (1975e:15).

What then is the causal connection between "revealing reality" and actually "transforming that reality". What is the content of "our ontological vocation" which Freire recognises as Teilhard's "humanisation"? (1982:20)

Freire (1970m:4) does not help his cause by his enigmatic explanation that this process of humanisation is "the individual and instantaneous leap from instinct to thought". However, elsewhere, he does identify a sequence through which the individual consciousness could or must develop. It is a process which he called the "archaeology of consciousness", in contrast to the "archaeology of irrationality" -the myth pursuing, falsification of consciousness which is the hallmark of domesticating education (1970n:16).

In outline, Freire sees the excavating or evolution of critical consciousness as a move away from a state of either naive consciousness or even magical consciousness. The former, naive consciousness perceives causality as a static, given fact, and is thus deceived in its view of the changing world. The latter, magical consciousness, apprehends change but attributes to it powers beyond human
control, and is thus released from responsibility for it.

In rejecting both these perspectives of the world and of change as less than human, Freire argues that only "critical consciousness" perceives the true causality of the world and the human potential to direct and influence that change (1976b:44).

Later, in the Cultural Action for Freedom, Freire speaks of the stages of "intransitive awareness", "naive-transitive awareness" and, finally, of "critical-transitive awareness". In his view, these three stages correlate to those development stages experienced within a society which is closed, which then undergoes splitting and which then has to choose between becoming massified or actually achieving critical consciousness (1970a:457-467).

Again, we are faced with the tension or confusion of what happens to the individual and what happens to society. A closed society has, "as one of its structural components, the silence of the masses.... When this closed society then begins to crack, silence is no longer seen as an unalterable given"(1970a:462). What is not clear is whether this breaking of the silence, or splitting of the society, is the cause of Conscientisation and critical awareness, or whether it is the product of it. Freire is content to talk of the "awakening consciousness on the part of the masses", but he does not explain how this process is experienced by the individual. Unless some causative
connection or correlation can be found between the mind changes which occur at the level of the individual and the social changes which occur at the level of the masses, then there must be the likelihood that the fundamental premises of Freire's argument are flawed.

His rebuttal of this charge lies in his claim that the connection is actually made through the process and function of education, that is Dialogic Education, for he is absolutely clear that the *sine qua non* of that process is that education presupposes, by its very nature a political intention (1980:1).

"The pedagogy of the oppressed (is) a pedagogy which must be forged with, not for, the oppressed (be they individuals or whole peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come liberation." (1982:25)

Yet even if this is the intention of the educator, Freire is also clear that "a radical transformation of the educational system is contingent upon the radical transformation of society." (1976a:68)

It is important, therefore, to consider how society itself contributes to Dialogue and Conscientisation and how the inherent dualism re. the role of education is resolved. If the role of oppressive, banking education is functional, serving the interests of the elite, then Freire (1976a:70) seems to be in a very weak position in insisting "on the impossibility -which is evident to me - of considering the
educational system as an instrument of social transformation", but offering the consolation that "I do not, however, deny the use of making serious efforts within this system."

If there is a coherence to Freire's view at this point, it would be found in the understanding that education is not a system or element outwith society. On the contrary, it is one of the primary elements without which we cannot have an understanding of society.

Freire follows Jaspers in asserting that Dialogue constitutes the essence of societal structure and societal change:

"Dialogue is the only way, not only in the vital questions of political order, but in all the expressions of our being. Only by virtue of faith, however, does Dialogue have power and meaning: by faith in humankind and in their possibilities, by faith that I can only become truly myself when other people also become themselves." (1976b:43)

So the core construct of Freirean Dialogue is revealed: against the matrix that Dialogue is "loving, humble, hopeful, trusting and critical", it expresses his ontological view of humankind. More simply put, Freire is arguing that, without Dialogue, one cannot be human. In a very real sense, Dialogue precedes Monologue.

Dialogic Conscientisation, which we can now understand in Tomas Atencio's phrase "awareness and respondability" (Marrero, 1971), cannot be authentic unless it elicits a creative and liberating response. Since his
experience in Africa, Freire has been consistent in saying that this, ultimately, implies the "political organisation of the oppressed to take and achieve power" (1975c:16). This effort will be realised through "communication and cooperation, unity and organisation that give witness to the fact that the struggle is a common task, and cultural action" (1982:135-148).

It is interesting that Freire has long since preferred to talk of "cultural action" rather than of "education". His first main text was Education: the Practice of Freedom, but his Harvard papers were entitled Cultural Action for Freedom. More recently, through personal correspondence, he has indicated his own preference that that should be properly understood as "Cultural Action for Liberating".

What then is the relationship between cultural action, dialogic education and liberation?

The choice of words here is important: education is preferred to action, liberation to revolution, because Freire has openly denied that his pedagogical methods had as their goal or objective the bringing about of revolution.86 However, he has always insisted that the

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86. This is an assertion which has evaded many of Freire's critics and followers alike. Ewert (1981:32) is perhaps typical of many: "Unlike many of his colleagues, Freire has explicitly addressed the problem of exploitative social structures: his educative strategy amounts to a call for revolution".
processes which he advocated, especially that of Dialogue, would be, in some sense, liberating.

This (dis)connection of literacy, literacy education and development, and revolution is highly significant not least because it exposes a development of Freire’s thought. In comparison with his early work, his later writing, influenced particularly by his reading Fanon and then Cabral, indicate a reinterpretation of his ideas of Dialogue and Conscientisation from what might be seen as his initial, “naive” position.

Frantz Fanon appears passim in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed where his presence is acknowledged, although he was far more instrumental in the formulating of the argument in Cultural Action for Freedom where he is not acknowledged. His shocking, violent book, Les Damnés de la Terre Freire knew well, yet he never seems to have been tempted to use either Fanon’s illustrative case-studies or the passion of his expression.87

The main significance of Fanon, in this context, is that he proposed an overtly revolutionary model which Freire did not use, despite the obvious parallels between the experiences of colonialism in Brazil and Algeria. Of

87. It was, however, from Fanon, that Freire took the idea of the metropolitan and dependent society, the colonists’ “mission land”, the closed society that had no authentic voice, and the personality schism whereby the “alienated” find themselves both oppressed and oppressors. (see: Fanon, 1985).
course, Freire never intended writing a primer of cultural revolution, but why could he not have used Fanon to apply his theory of Dialogue to concrete situations?

Despite his insistence on the historicising of theory, it seems that Freire could not challenge the icon created by his rhetoric. To have placed his theory under the lens of anti-colonial, anti-oppressive practice would have created that ruptural principle (Althusser, 1969:99) which would have taken pedagogy beyond Freire's control and would have forced him into a directly revolutionary and political statement.88

At that time, Freire was unable to resolve that contradiction, perhaps because, in the final analysis, he was being forced to a level of critical awareness about himself and his own role as one of the assimilados. What Freire's treatment of Fanon suggests to me is that, in this "literacy phase", he wrote Cultural Action for Freedom as

88. References to Althusser are scarce within Freire's writings, although he is named as one of the major influences on his thinking (1982:10). In fact, the only references quoted all relate to Althusser's *For Marx* (of which Freire had a copy in French), and to his ideas on *superstructure* and *overdetermination*. Freire was able to accept Althusser's *structure* as a means of distinguishing economic, political and ideological practices, but he clearly could not follow his *problematique* — that theory and practice cannot be considered in some kind of conceptual isolation — through to the creating of that ruptural unity which would have made revolution forcefully self-determining and realisable. His selective reading or acceptance of Althusser highlights his fragile linking of theory and practice into (revolutionary) praxis.
the intellectual outsider.

4.7 Conscientisation and Action

From a period of the mid-1970s, however, symbolised most clearly by the publication of Pedagogy in Process in 1978, there is a change in the definition and interpretation of these terms which is quite evident.89

The mood and the language has changed. "For me, education for liberation implies the political organisation of the oppressed to achieve power" (1975c:16) "Revolution in itself is an educational task.... Educators are also politicians" (1979:4) "The question is not only to replace a certain social class by another one as regards the power over the means of production, but above all it is also a question of changing the whole approach towards production" (1974c:3).

Dialogue and Conscientisation are now being explained

89. Pedagogy in Process is the first instalment of a record and review of Freire's work in Guinea Bissau in 1975-76. He had gone there from the World Council of Churches, following an invitation to assist the new government in the reconstruction of an education programme. Guinea had achieved its independence in September, 1973, after years of violent struggle. In preparing their visit, Freire speaks of how they had tried to "deepen their ability to understand the national reality and increase their knowledge about the liberation struggle, the experiments carried out by the PAIGC in the older liberated zones", and how they had begun "to read everything we could find, especially the works of Amilcar Cabral" (1978:9).
in terms that are clearly more radical and more Marxian. Across this watershed lies the influence of Amilcar Cabral and Freire's experience in Guinea Bissau.

Cabral was undoubtedly the pivotal figure in the liberation movement in Guinea. He was assassinated by the Portuguese early in 1973, but his extensive writings have formed a primer both for African development and for the anti-colonial struggle worldwide.90

According to de Andrade (1980), Cabral was both a theoretician and a man of action, a revolutionary leader of outstanding ability who was "indefatigably in pursuit of reality by revealing the deep roots, the fundamental causes, so often blurred by the tumult of revolutionary action". His was a radical practice and pedagogy which seems to have provoked a change of focus, a new mind-shift, a different conscientising of Freire.

It was from Cabral (from a widely reported speech in Havana, January, 1966) that Freire took the notion of "class suicide" where "the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie must be capable of committing suicide as a class, to be restored to life in the condition of the revolutionary worker completely identified with the deepest aspirations of the people to which they belong" (Cabral, 1980:136).

90. Freire quotes from a French edition of his works, Unité et Lutte, published in 1975, although a Portuguese text had also been available since 1974.
Cabral (1980:83,44) also identified the "vegetable silence" to which the oppressed were subjected and to which they subject themselves. He insisted on the need to "acquire consciousness of reality" through which the oppressed would achieve the potential to transform that reality.

This consciousness reveals, without a sense of shock but as an obvious response to imperialism, that "the normal road to national liberation is armed struggle" (1980:134). The very nature of national liberation demands not just the Conscientisation of the people (it is the oppressor who calls them the "masses") but the violent eradication of that principal characteristic, common to every kind of imperialist domination, viz.

"...the denial of the historical process of the dominated people by means of the violent usurpation of the freedom of the process of development of the productive forces.

The mode of production, whose contradictions are made manifest with more or less intensity through class struggle, is the principal factor in the history of the human whole" (Cabral, 1980:141).

What then was Freire's response to this kind of argument which was able to consider control of the means of production through violence as the key means of collective liberation? In my view, it altered his rationale for literacy training, enabled him to be more explicitly political, and engaged him in issues that previously he had circumvented.
In illustrating those points, it is also interesting to note Kozol's reaction to the Pedagogy in Process. He emphasises the point that Freire’s revolutionary posture is "unevasive". There is a "revolutionary passion" in which Freire has extended his vision and his consciousness of pedagogic struggle (Freire, 1978:2).

Kozol did not indicate how this vision has been extended, but I would suggest that there are three important points to be noted that impinge on our understanding of Dialogue and Conscientisation: the changed status of Conscientisation, the role of dialogic learning, and the relation of both of these to issues of the class struggle and control of the means of production.

Conscientisation is no longer a process of becoming aware of the oppressor and of understanding the means by which oppression is sustained. Nor is it the eradicating of the exterior, physical oppression which makes a person free. Freire has moved beyond that formula (which Cultural Action for Freedom may well represent) to insist that "being conscious is not a slogan but a radical form of being, of being human" (1978:24). It is more creative than recuperative. Reflecting Camara's view, (1969:33), that "the days of colonialism or oppression may be over, but internal colonialism still remains", Freire sees the need for a more directive form of Conscientisation, one which concerns itself with re-conversion, re-africanisation.
Paradoxically, this shift into radicalism implies less political action and more cultural invasion than Freire's naive stance. Conscientisation has become more a psychotherapy, a "detoxifying" (to borrow Brookfield's power-aware phrase, 1986:151) that places the radix of the problem within the person of the oppressed. It re-echoes loudly the overt, political education-for-action of Moses Coady and his "mobilisation and attitudinisation" (Armstrong, 1977).

The force-field of Conscientisation, or in Bakhtin's term "the speech zone" of Dialogue (1981:427), clearly centres over the learner/oppressed person. The process of Conscientisation has become a process of changing the conceptual horizon of the victim. Dialogue has become the polyphony, or cacophony, of the authoritative discourse of the educator which is competing with the internally persuasive discourse of the learner (Bakhtin 1981:342ff)91.

91. According to Bakhtin, human coming-to-consciousness is the struggle between these two types of discourse: an attempt to assimilate more Words (ideas, statements, namings) into one's own world-view, and to free oneself from that authoritative discourse of the other person which previously held sway.

His idea of the "conceptual horizon", which in Russian is "the circle of one's vision", suggests also those rings of concentric circles which are not pushed out from the learner/subject centrifugally but are driven inwards, centripetally, by external powers, crushing the person/object.

By the savage inversion of images, a person who appears to be "marginalised" has actually been "centralised" -reduced to the minimum core necessary for them to stay alive. To be oppressed is to exist, but not to be.
This does not align with Freire's insight into oppression. If, in this analysis, each person is to be responsible for their own liberation, then they are equally responsible for their own domination. Yet that contradicts the lived experience of gnosiological, historical and cultural oppression. The matrix of power-knowledge has to be constructed around the society and not around the individual.

Consequently, although the initial logic of his language brings us to this micro-level, psychotherapeutic focus of Conscientisation, Freire turns steadfastly towards a macro-restatement, towards Conscientisation as it effects the system of education and society.

In choosing to disregard the individual, Freire is redefining the terrain of Conscientisation. In this new zone of development, the educator is now a militant whose actions have to be coherent with an overt, political and revolutionary stance (1978:12) of which Literacy is only one element in a range of social developments (1978:25):

"If literacy efforts are to achieve their primary objective, that of contributing to national reconstruction effectively, then it would be necessary to establish a dynamic relationship between them and all other forms of social intervention in any way related to or dependent upon literacy".

Literacy is not about personal development but about national development: the concomitant process of dialogic learning has "to be seen within the context of literacy, post literacy and production and the total plan for society" (1978:10).
It is this total plan for society that is important, and this for three reasons.

First, Freire, while talking about Dialogue and Conscientisation, has moved away from a "revolutionary pedagogy and its role in society" (e.g. Pedagogy of the Oppressed) to talk about "a revolutionary society and its use of creative literacy" (1978:11). The raison d'être of his literacy programme is not now the primary need to read and write but the demands of national reconstruction. He is close to Camara's stated priorities (1969:20):

"more important than the rudiments of education is the task of putting people on their feet, of opening their eyes and making them aware".

Secondly, the boundaries of what constitutes a literacy campaign have widened, even replaced by a Basic Education Programme that encompasses health education, agricultural development, and management training needed to support the growth of cooperatives (1978:31).

Finally, Pedagogy in Process, posited on the contribution of Conscientisation to the national liberating process and on the extended content of dialogic learning, is now able to address the previously unconsidered issues of class and the control of the means of production.

At this point, we have arrived at the broadest possible statement of Education as Cultural Action which redefines the means of that action (Dialogue) and its goals.
Dialogue is now a process within which "the unity of theory and practice establishes the unity between education and productive activity as a dimension of the concrete order" (1978:21). In the emerging society, the role of education is to "create the fundamental background necessary for the full participation of every citizen in the development of the new society" (1978:42), but the formulation of this programme of Basic Instruction must be considered in its relationship to the means of production (1978:56). By 1979, Freire could even say "We have to forget the concept of adult literacy itself. I think the only way is to increase our political clarity and also our commitment to the oppressed class" (1979:4).

4.8 Class Consciousness

There seems to be little difference between this education in the national interest and the investment in education described by Bowles and Gintis. At best, Freire seems to have rendered benign a form of Banking Education which is now oriented towards economic and political liberation, and not just towards cultural autonomy. Does this mean that Conscientisation through Dialogue is now seen as a strategy of the class struggle? Is Freire suggesting, for example, that Marx' working class is the same as his oppressed class?

Regrettably among the most conspicuous failures in
Praire is the absence of a clear definition of the "oppressed/oppressor" (Stanley, 1972) and the lack of clarity about what constitutes "Class". This omission is important firstly because the analysis of "class" would allow us to look at both the causes and the consequences of oppression or liberation (which exposes the way in which inequality is conceptualised). Secondly, we need to distinguish the dialogue which takes place between individuals, and the dialogue which takes place between oppressors and oppressed, i.e. inter- and intra- groups.

Freire (1982:31-33) assumes as incontestable the generalisation that "any situation in which A objectively exploits B or hinders their pursuit of self affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression". Oppression is essentially about preventing a person from being more fully human: by definition, therefore, the peasants, the

92. Even with his experiences in Guinea Bissau, Freire was not condemned, in what Olin Wright calls "Sociology's one independent variable" (Wright, 1979), to follow a Marxist analysis of class.

This "chameleon" concept blends into virtually every sociological tradition: it can distinguish categories of people occupying common positions within status hierarchies (Parsons), conflict groups determined by their position within power structures (Lenski), economic groups with common life chances (Weber), or groups with common locations within the social organisation of production (Marx).

Whatever the traditions, class is a relative concept: it can only be analysed in relational terms, even where the terms themselves are defined against judgments about power and the use of knowledge. What is common to all such traditions is that, behind differential access to power and to knowledge, there will almost certainly be a differential access to Literacy.
illiterates, the colonised and the poor are all oppressed.

This description of the oppressed class or classes does not clarify the notion of class itself. One can only assert that, here, Freire remains confused. He says of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed that it was "rooted in concrete situations and describes the reactions of workers (peasant or urban) and of members of the middle class whom I have observed directly or indirectly during the course of my educative work" (1982:16).

However, it is not clear whether the distinction between the workers and the middle class is meant as an illustration of the oppressed and the oppressors.

In his later writing, there is no greater clarity. He says (1985a:192) that "in the contradiction of the dominant and the dominated, there is a cultural and class conflict". He does attempt to clarify what he means by culture, but he does not expound on the meaning of class. If he is intending to interpret class as culture, then there are important implications for the processes of Dialogue and Conscientisation.

Using Bourdieu's definition of culture as that common code which "enables all those possessing that code to attach the same meaning to the same words, the same type of behaviour and the same works and, conversely, to express the same meaningful intention through the same words, behaviour patterns and works...". (1971:190), it becomes possible that, in breaking into the Culture of Silence, i.e. the culture of the oppressed, with the
intention of conscientising, the educator actually becomes engaged in a process of de-culturation through the creation of radical change. The process, nominally created through the objectives of literacy for the individual, actually calls for changes of behaviour, interaction and language at a social level. Conscientisation then becomes a means of radical change because it is led by those who have power, i.e. the power to teach. But what of its objectives? In whose interests does the process work?

Freire clearly wishes it to be in the interests of the oppressed, but for that to be anything other than wishful thinking there must be some convincing evidence. It will not suffice to say that the dangers implicit in this perception of the power of Conscientisation are, or ought to be, counterbalanced by the creativity of the Dialogue which engages not just individuals but the whole "cultural community". Before we can accept that cultural action for freedom is the same as class action for freedom, we need to know what are the characteristics of this class, what are its interests and its struggles, what is its class strategy for survival, and who are its class opponents.

In my view, there is no substantial answer to these questions as yet from Freire. He uses the language of

93. It is perhaps ironic that the best examination of this inherent weakness of Freire's later practice and the most eloquent rationale for Literacy Education is to be found in his early theoretical work Extension or Communication, 1969.
class, class solidarity, even class suicide, but the word class is almost wholly denoted as a cultural phenomenon.

The force of the criticism is that it creates a major dislocation between Freire's writing and his practice: it denies his own emphasis on praxis. From his grapho-texts, there is evidence that he knew and understood the "early Marx": he shares with Marx an epistemology that focuses on the issues of being human, on consciousness and alienation, on culture and nature. It is indeed a selective reading of Marx which does not follow the development of his thinking to encompass the issue of class and its economic base.

Added to that, from Freire's bio-text, from his practice, especially in Guinea Bissau, it is immediately obvious that his development of schools and cooperatives was an educational initiative overtly intended to restructure the means of production. Effectively, each literacy unit became a new, economic unit, creating its own local economy and independence while contributing to the overall structure-plan of national development. Thus we find a Freire who is a long way from the writer of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed:

"Freire is convinced that literacy work has more relevance when related to the introduction of new

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94. Interesting to note that this was the Marx with whom the Catholic Church has felt comfortable. Freire himself refers to Marx, quoting mostly from the Theses on Feuerbach, The Paris Manuscripts, and On The Holy Family.
production techniques and the need in increase the community's ability to take charge of its own development by providing its own basic services” (Bee, 1980:48).

Nothing here distinguishes Freire from an educator in the Banking System which, equally, is centred on social development. One cannot disguise the fact that Banking Education has successfully taught sufficient numbers of people to read and write in order to maintain a viable base of both production and services. Is it possible that Dialogic Education, as much as Banking Education which it opposes, is itself actually the means within society by which people learn to oppress and to be oppressed?

If the oppressed are to be seen as a class, and clearly that is Freire's view, then more thought must be given to that analysis and to how education is the prime creator of class consciousness. Freire cannot simply assert that "every approach to the oppressed by the elites, as a class" forces the oppressed "to see themselves in contradiction with the oppressors" (1982:103,122). The construction and definition of oppression is critical, because that will in turn define the action which results from someone becoming critically conscious of their oppression.

4.9 *Conscientisation and Change*

The question of what kind of action ensues through
the processes of Dialogue and Conscientisation is as critical for the educator as it is for the oppressed. What is the product which is offered as the goal of the processes of education/liberation?

Rivera (1972:55) also places the psycho-personal elements of Freire's method before the socio-political outcomes: "Freire was one of those educators who deliberately set out to bring about self-perpetuated changes prior to behavioral changes. He suggests a useful distinction between changers, who occupy themselves with issues of perception, beliefs and attitudes, and change-agents, who are concerned primarily with events, with practical issues. The interesting point of his argument is that, paradoxically, it is the former who are more successful in bringing about social change.95

It is the stance of non-acceptance that underpins the

95. The rationale of this argument is as follows. Rivera compares Conscientisation as the focusing of experience (a process of clarifying what had been perceived only vaguely before) with Conscientisation which is a "mind shift" (a process not of clarifying but of seeing for the first time what was not seen before.) By analogy, but one which Freire himself adopted to describe his role as educator, it is like getting a new prescription for glasses or getting glasses for the first time.

According to Rivera, those who experience adjusted or revitalised perceptions tend to seek within the status quo for their self-actualisation: i.e. society should be x because I see clearly that x is better than y.

Those who become aware, for example of injustice or oppression, as for the first time, tend to strive to change the existing structures: i.e. society should be z because I now see that it is not z.
notion of mind-shifting or problematising. Herein lies, at least in theory, the strength of Freire's method in that it eliminates an individual's "reality gap", enabling them to name the forces which shape and control their lives (in the first instance) but motivating them beyond that to understand experimentally how to act upon the causes and processes that activate those forces.96

In that light, Dialogue and Conscientisation can be seen as psycho-social processes that contains within them a potential extension into socio-political processes.

Such a view of Conscientisation is essentially Utopian. an idea on which Freire relies a great deal. The concept itself is much misunderstood, and Freire further compounds this by playing on the very ambiguity of the word which should rather be read in its strict sense. According to Furter (1974), the essential meaning of utopian, (Fr. utopique, and Port. utopico) is "the refusal to accept the status quo. contestation, re-appraisal, a demand for the potential and the better rather than the given and the mediocre".

96. This transition from the micro to the macro I would also infer in Dunn's (1971) description of the process as "paradigm shifting", in which an individual experiences the redefining of their total boundary systems and a recreating of their own self image. Inevitably, that must include the validating or rejection of the individual's cultural base, which includes the common codes of accepted behaviour and those "master patterns" which Bourdieu argues have been previously assimilated.
By definition, therefore, utopian education implies change which is then realised when,

"people stop believing in what once may have been true and has now become false, when they withdraw support from institutions which may once have served them but no longer do, when they refuse to submit to terms which may once have been fair but no longer are. Such changes are a product of true education". (Reimer, 1971:96)

Freire falls between two fictions here. Firstly, he enters the fiction or hypothesis that there is something called Truth, and that there is a Reality which those properly conscientised can perceive. He is clearly in danger of creating a form of Social Gnosticism.

Secondly, as it is stated here, utopian education, even with its related educational practices, does not cement the gap between such practice and revolutionary action. However effective a mind-shift it may create at the level of the individual, however wide the impact of its social repercussions, it is not, as an idea, sufficiently self-explanatory as a causal element of revolutionary action.

Literacy education, of which Conscientisation is the process and Dialogue the means, does not have of itself sufficient effect to control or define the kind of change implicit in any understanding of revolutionary action. This is because, from its conception, it does not have the potential to fuse theory and practice into that ruptural unity of contexts, currents and circumstances which give
revolutionary action its force and potential. (Althusser, 1969).

Freire would probably concur with this point: "in that it constitutes a superstructure, education functions as an instrument to maintain the infrastructure in which it is generated" (1972b:175).

The difficulty lies in judging the nature of that "maintenance" and the processes by which it is expressed. Conscientisation, given that it is based on Dialogue, has to be a process that is at best consensus, and at least convergence seeking. It is fulfilled in the reflective action necessary between people who create together. It is therefore at the obverse of those strategies which are based on a conflict mode of change through confrontation. The disparity between the two modes is revealed in the expectation that one can enter into an authentic, human dialogue with one's oppressors and, at the same time, engage in revolutionary action against them.

4.10 Conclusion

The resolution of this dilemma, without which the concepts of Dialogue and Conscientisation cannot be realised in praxis, requires the constructing of some theoretical framework against which to plot the position of education (which must be anti-Antidialogic and at least convergent) and that of revolutionary action (which, for it
to remain authentic, must be divergent but also anti-
Antidialogic). Such a framework suggests a continuum of
attitudes from revolution to reform, maintenance to
conservation, where the first value or mode is conflict
oriented and where the second, alternative value or mode is
consensus oriented.

We need to find a route through the maze which Freire
has created by his descriptions of the product of literacy
education in the first mode, while claiming that the
processes by which that is achieved should be in the second
mode. In order to do this, but without distorting the
problem, we can revert to the Freirean technique of
exposing elements of contradiction.

We find that there are two inter-related but distinct
continua:

a: that which represents the forces in society which
define the content and the scope of education, the
contrast between the learning agenda as set by the
educational institution (that system of education
which, for Freire, is the Banking System) and the
agenda required by the learner in a non-banking
system (that process and product of learning which
arises from Dialogue;

thus:

institutional [IA] __________ learner's [LA] agenda
agenda

b: that which represents the tension or conflicting
positions inherent between an educator who is a
banker/teacher and an educator who is committed to
dialogic learning;

thus, using Freire's language:

the teacher / [TB] __________ the teacher [TL]
banker learner

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The potential of any form of education to be capable of revolutionary action at the macro level or even of conscientising at the micro level has to be seen within the context, not just of attitudinal or philosophical variables, but of the contradictions implicit within the interplay of these two continua.

What these continua expose is a previously covert dynamic of those causal elements which both describe and define the locus of possible change and revolutionary action. In each quadrant of the intersecting continua lies very differing understanding of change, and thereby differing processes and outcomes of Dialogue and Conscientisation, viz.

This simply restates the fundamental contradiction implicit in his work. The language of his philosophy, hinged around a Dialogue that creates liberation for the learner, clearly reflects a radical pedagogy. It focuses on the engagement of the learner and prioritises his or her
agenda, dialogically animated by an educator who is both teacher/learner and learner/teacher.

However, the practice of his method, while it would aspire to praxis, i.e. reflection and action, is so severely constrained by the social realities within which education takes place that it almost wholly occurs near to the IA pole of that contextual continuum. But that is also the terminus ad quem of Conscientisation, the target which an anti-oppression (liberating) pedagogy has to confront, not least because the IA pole, the system of education, also enfolds the source of domination. The degree to which action can follow upon reflection will depend on the kind of educator is involved in the process. Given either a dialogic TL or an anti-dialogic TB teacher, the outcomes will veer either towards either conservatism or reformism.

Prior to that, however, the outcomes of Dialogue are also directed by the educator. The terminus a quo of Dialogue is firmly at LA, (in the jargon, one "starts where the learners are at"), but the consequences of the goals of Dialogue being fulfilled or denied by the educator will be very different. In the end, the learner will either be liberated and able to "name their world", or he or she will be domesticated, sentenced (even by the sentence of Banking Literacy) to remain in silence.

As such, neither Dialogue nor Conscientisation create
revolution or radical change in themselves. At best, they can be seen as prerequisites for radical change. They are the Derridean supplément of change, the first movers or arche-change. They are also, like Literacy of which they are the trace, a double-headed pharmakon, the cancer and cura of Power-Knowledge.

In summary, it appears that Freirean Dialogue is not, and could never be, revolutionary, although there is a sense in which it could be "revolutionable", in the sense of "actionable", i.e. it may provide the grounds for revolutionary action, should the need and the circumstances arise.

Conscientisation is then, in its turn, the process which creates the possibility that such need and circumstances could arise and could be met, i.e. it is a process which achieves its goal (its product) to the degree that it creates that level of awareness and respondability which can authentically sustain a revolutionable conscience.

Perhaps the great genius of Freire was to conceal the enormous complexity of such a pedagogy within the apparently simple technique of an alphabetic learning method. It is that which we must now consider in detail.
5.1 Introduction

Cynthia Brown's explanation of the processes of "Literacy in 30 Hours"97 was clearly written with theacknowledgement and support of Freire himself. Although the article was based "primarily on Paulo Freire's
Education for Critical Consciousness (Seabury, 1973)", the pictures which she uses are mostly not those printed in
that edition. Education for Critical Consciousness offers a later version of the series of the pictures drawn by
Vincente de Abreu. The original pictures, commissioned from Freire's friend, the well known Brazilian artist,
Francisco Brennand, had been confiscated by the Authorities in 1964. Brown had copied and printed for the first time,
with Freire's permission, eight of the first series of pictures from slides still in his possession and had added
two [pictures 5 and 8] from the published series.

Given that degree of cooperation and involvement on the part of Freire, it can therefore safely be assumed that
Brown's presentation of the literacy process reflects Freire's own thinking and is an accurate record of his
manner and approach as well as a summary of the content of the actual teaching sessions.

97. To avoid constant repetition of references to the same text, all references in this section, unless otherwise
indicated, will be taken to be from either Freire (1976b:62-84) or Brown (1974:25-32).
In anticipation of one of the conclusions of my analysis here, I would want to draw attention to the unselfconscious and unapologetically directive style of both Brown and Freire which seems, at first glance, to be so much at odds with Freire's stated position about non-directive learning. The apparent contradiction arises from the fact that, although the pictures were created to provoke a discussion that would lead to the "generating" of key words, there is no illusion here on the part of either writer that the facilitator or educator should allow a free-ranging or open-ended debate. Both Freire and Brown have an agenda to work from:

"This sequence of 10 pictures is tightly analysed and structured. The first picture [Figure 1] is carefully designed to elicit an initial distinction between culture and nature, while succeeding pictures are sequenced to draw out various subtleties of the distinction, namely: the difference between man and other animals being man's culture-making and communicating capacities [Figures 2-5]; nature transformed into culture by man's work [Figures 3,6,7]; communication as culture [Figures 2,8]; and patterns of behaviour and traditions as culture [Figure 9]. The final picture [Figure 10] challenges the group to analyse its own behaviour - the most distinctive capacity of people".

Within the structure of the pictures,98 therefore, Figure 10 is intended as a summary of the overall debate, a

98. In the following analysis, I have used both sets of pictures, comparing them when appropriate but endeavouring to make a composite of the various elements of which they are illustrations. Pages 168 and 169 are the scenes from Brown's article and mostly depict Freire's original pictures: further reference to these will be as Version 1 or V1. The single, enlarged pictures are from Vincente de Abreu's version in Education for Critical Consciousness: further reference to these will be as Version 2 or V2.
recapitulation, while Figure 1 serves the purpose of agenda setting. It is this process of initiation into, and mastery of, literacy which we must now consider in detail.

The Sequence of 16 Situations

1. Man in the World and with The World, Nature and Culture
2. Dialogue Mediated by Nature
3. Unlettered Hunter
4. Lettered Hunter (Lettered Culture)
5. The Hunter and the Cat
6. Man Transforms the Material of Nature by His Work
7. A Vase, the Product of Man's Work Upon the Material of Nature
8. Poetry
9. Patterns of Behaviour
10. A Culture Circle in Action - Synthesis of the Previous Discussions

99. I have, as in the above quotation, suspended for the moment my practice of modifying texts which indicate an overt level of sexism. The use of language here, textually and visually, which relates to the processes of literacy is itself informative; both Freire and Brown exhibit a use of language (e.g. man's culture-making, his house, his clothes, his tools) which has a significance beyond the obvious explanation that, in its time and culture, such language was considered not only acceptable but normative.
A BOMBA
A TERRÍVEL BOMBA ATÔMICA
E A RADIAÇÃO ATÔMICA
SIGNIFICAM TERROR,
RUINA E CALAMIDADE

SE ACABAREM COM AS MEDIAS
E TUDO RICARES UNIDOS
O NOSSO MUNDO DE HOJE
NÃO SERIA DESTRUÍDO
5.2 First Situation: Man in the World and with The World. Nature and Culture

1. The Situation (Page 168, figure 1)

Brown describes this as "a familiar image from which a non-literate from North-eastern Brazil can use his knowledge to distinguish between nature and culture."

All the Version 1 situations are painted without perspective, but with considerably more embellishment than those in Version 2. In V1, in the foreground, there is a picture of an obviously healthy farmer/peasant. At one side, there is a basket in which he has perhaps been collecting the fruit of his labours; on the other side, a plump pig is truffelling. The farmer/peasant, bare-chested and bare-footed, poses with a mattock in one hand and an open book in the other. In the wider frame, there is a very stylised tree and four birds on the wing. In the background, there is a small house and a structured, cemented well from which water can be drawn by means of the handle and spindle.

Version 2 (page 179) has some important variations, most critically in the background. There is a picture of a woman leading a child by the hand back to the house. She is walking perhaps from the well towards the house which now has a more solid construction and e.g. a tiled roof. The well itself is evidently both wider and deeper than that in V1, with a bricked header and a longer rope.
This abundance of water may account for the overall, more prosperous feel of V2: while the farmer/peasant is still barefoot, he is no longer bare-chested. Although the pig has disappeared, the mattock remains, perhaps to suggest that the property is still too small, or the people too poor, to have a plough.

2. Application

Freire argues that, through the discussion of this situation, the participants arrive at the distinction between two worlds: that of nature and that of culture. They are meant to perceive "the normal situation of man as a being in the world and with the world, as a creative and re-creative being who, through work, constantly alters reality".

The coordinator leads the discussion by asking "Who made the well?" "Why did he do it?" "With what materials?" The intention is to contrast the answers to those questions with the response to the apparently less ambiguous enquiry: "Who made the tree?" This leads to an extended discussion, with an almost Thomist simplicity, re. "Who made the pig, the birds, the hoe, the book?"

Brown suggests that the discussion moves to the conclusion that people use natural materials to change their situation, to create culture. Freire explains that this insight emerges through the clarifying of two basic
concepts: that of necessity and that of work. Clearly these are not new concepts to the group of non-literates: Brown says the discussion gives them the words to name and clarify what they already know. Even if what they describe is a subsistence way of living, "at the end of the discussion, participants are conscious of being cultured".

There is, however, an additional overlay which is suggested by Freire but not mentioned by Brown. Freire initially describes this first situation as "man as a being of relationships", and he returns to this point at the end of his brief summary.

"From this point, one discusses with the group, in obviously simple but critically objective terms, the relations among men, which unlike those discussed previously cannot be either for domination or transformation, because they are relation among Subjects."

3. Commentary

One the surface, this is indeed an image familiar to a non-literate person in North-east Brazil. The singular and intended novelty in the picture is the presence of the book. The picture has to be viewed in the context of the fact that, in 1960, in the capital of the northeast region, Recife, there were some 80,000 children aged seven to fourteen who did not attend school; adult illiteracy was estimated at 60-70%. It was, therefore, "abnormal" to be literate.
The stark impact of the picture, and why Freire could use it to such good effect, is that it not only describes the daily reality of the peasant/farmer in Recife, but it also prescribes the importance of the book, giving it an almost totemic significance. It symbolises something that is different, and not just that a non-literate peasant can now read. It is clearly intended to suggest that the book is as central and as useful to the life of the peasant and his family as is the mattock, or the well or the house. The individual who is subject cannot live without the book. This is the agenda that is set for the literacy programme. Freire obviously intended that the book should be a symbol of a new relationship between men and men and between men and the world, a relationship which, he says, is not marked by domination or transformation.

We shall have to consider that formal agenda later. What is interesting here, however, is the hidden agenda of this picture, i.e. the means by which Freire achieves the discussion he requires.

He says that the participants "arrive" at the distinction, e.g. between nature and culture. More honestly, Brown says "...the coordinator leads the discussion into the distinction between nature and culture." Whatever the professed distinctions between the learner/teacher and the teacher/learner, the reality of the situation here requires a deft use of manipulation to achieve the objectives of the session.
In the first place, some key questions have to be avoided. The answers to the simple questions re. who made the well, the pig, the hoe, the house, the book, etc., are flavoured with the piosity of two illusions.

The first illusion, or act of faith, is that there is some deity, some God who is Lord and Father of all mankind who "made" the natural world, all things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small. So, in the pictures, the birds and the trees, the pig and the earth, the water in the well are all part of Nature.

When Nature is altered by Work, i.e. through the use of natural materials to change their situation, men create Culture. This leads to the second illusion: that men, or rather, that this particular man has created his own culture.

There is, of course, an alternative sequence of responses to Freire's questions:

Who made the well? The Landlord paid men to brick and cement the header;
Who made the length of rope? I traded a pig for it;
Who made the hoe? I bought it in the market;
Who made the clothes? A cotton manufacturer in the South;
Who made the book? The Missionary.

Those fairly obvious responses are in fact removed from the discussion by means of the second illusion, viz.
the illusion of the enlightened peasant (enlightened except that he cannot read) who has the skills and resources to make everything for himself. He bears the imprint of thrift, practicality and ingenuity. His culture, even at this primary level of subsistence, is self-made. It is the culture of a man who is subject, who "relating to the world, made the latter the object of his knowledge. By work, he submitted the world to a process of transformation".

This is a very positive, Freire might say hopeful, picture of the peasant/farmer. However, this second illusion precludes an equally important discussion of work itself, whether the peasant/farmer is working for himself or for someone else, whether he and his family actually eat what they grow or whether he has to sell it in the marketplace. It also avoids the need to reflect on how he is controlled or even dominated by the marketplace where he might have to buy all his tools, the grain he needs and the clothes he wears, and where he will not always get a just price for his pig.

166. The enlightened peasant is the model of the ideal student for, by definition, their enlightenment means that they already know what it is that they are supposed to know. This is what Hoskin calls "pedagogic bad faith" - a delightfully acerbic insight that exposes the peasant, the "one who already knows" as the image of the teacher, i.e. the one who really already knows. The assessment of who is enlightened can only be made by the teacher, just as, in this sequence of pictures, the assessment of who is sufficiently literate is made by the already literate coordinators.
Freire will want to get to a discussion of domination and oppression in due course, but it is clearly his intention not to do so through this route. It is not that he cannot or will not challenge the illusion of the self-sufficient, autonomous farmer/peasant. It is rather that, in the context in which he was working, and even for him personally, there was a taboo surrounding any discussion of the first illusion, viz. the presence of a caring God.

To achieve their stated aims, educators using this first picture have to direct the discussion: in this they are strongly aided by the degree of "mind-guarding" that is created by the first illusion. Even in the pursuit of objective, critical consciousness, the existence of the deity cannot be questioned. This is not on the grounds of some theological a priori, but rather because a tactful silence on this matter is needed to preclude the even more revolutionable questions: why did God make some people poor and some people rich? If God is looking after the birds of the air and the flowers of the field, why is he not looking after me? One might even reflect on whether or not it is part of that natural order of things that there are rich and poor, hunters and hunted, oppressors and oppressed?

However valuable or enlightening, such a discussion would misdirect the potential learning of the group members. The picture was not intended for that and the coordinators/educators would have to ensure that the
It was clearly Freire's intention that this picture should rather set the agenda for a discussion on social relationships. Nonetheless, he begins to explore that theme not by stressing the social nature of relationships but by stressing the "Subject" nature of the relator. Men are Subjects: that assertion cries out so clearly in Freire's use of this picture that his particular interpretation of that needs some further exploration here.

In whatever way they might have articulated their own understanding of being in the world, it is unlikely that oppressed, illiterate peasants in the Culture Circles would describe themselves as Subjects who transform their world by their work. Their lived experience within what Freire describes as the "Culture of Silence" denies that kind of self-expression. Brown might wish to suggest that, by the end of the discussion, participants are conscious of being cultured, but she seems to have missed the whole raison d'être of the exercise, viz. that the people who participate in the Culture Circles have had their culture imposed on them. They are, almost by definition, not Subjects: they could even be surprised or shocked at Freire's insistence to the contrary.

How can this dilemma be resolved? How did Freire intend that this dilemma or contradiction should be resolved?
The answer for him, and therefore for all other parties, teacher and student or coordinator and peasant, lies in the totemic status of the book. It is the book and all that it symbolises that makes the difference. A comparison between the two pictures on pages 179 and 180 loudly proclaims Freire's real intent.

The picture actually has no value unless it leads directly to a discussion that is centred not on the presence of God but on the presence of the book. The discussion has got to explain the book: not just "Who made it?", but "What is it for?" and "What does it say?"

The argument, directed by Freire or his coordinator, is that the person who can answer those questions is someone who can read the book. That in itself is significant, but not significant enough. The discussion will have failed unless it moves beyond even that notable discovery and raises the possibility that that same person could also write the book and, maybe, could even make the book. Freire will want to reject the notion that reading is a passive activity. He will insist that being literate goes beyond being a quiescent reader: it requires the person to become an active writer, and thereby to become a maker of their own world, their own history.

In this way, the Book reveals its totemic significance: it stands as an analogy for the reading and the writing and the making of history, that self-determined
engagement of the person in and with their world. It represents a person's relationship with the world as a Subject, a "being-in-the world" in the fullest Heideggerian sense of in-der-welt-sein.

This is the agenda set for the analysis of the subsequent pictures, creating a process which engenders certain words which can be not only spoken but now also read. If such words can be read, then they can be written. Such is the simple logic of the literacy campaign: what we have to see is the degree to which these learning/teaching objectives can be sustained and achieved through the use of the other pictures.

5.3 Second Situation: Dialogue Mediated by Nature

1. The Situation (Page 168, figure 2)

In VI, figure two shows a man and a woman in the centre of the picture, and around them are a number of animals. The man seems to be planting a tree, while the woman is gesturing to something which she may have found in the book which she is holding.

The pictures of the animals, drawn in a very stylised form, show a horse, an ox and a turkey on one side, while on the other side there is a leopard, a lamb and a goat. Underneath the people and the animals, there is a line indicating water in which there are fish and a turtle.
Version 2 (page 183) is more direct. This time the couple are standing under the tree: the man has nothing in his hands and he is gesturing, as if in discussion. The woman is holding the book and either pointing to a particular passage or reading from the book. They are still poor: although they are both dressed, neither are wearing shoes. Beside the woman is an empty household basket, and behind the man there are no other animals except one cow.

2. Application

Freire's use of this picture is best presented through the short paragraph which he himself wrote:

"In the first situation, we reached the analysis of relationships among men, which, because they are relationships among Subjects, cannot be those of domination. Now, confronted by this second situation, the group is motivated to analyse dialogue, interpersonal communication, the encounter of the consciousnesses; motivated to analyse the mediation of the world - as transformed and humanised by men - in this communication; motivated to analyse the loving, humble, hopeful, critical, and creative foundations of dialogue."

Brown takes the overall sense of Freire's objectives, but clarifies two particular points. First, that the picture can be used to show that culture is something created by people: animals cannot create their own culture. Human beings can do that because they can communicate with each other, both orally and graphically.

Secondly, and especially using V2, the proper relationship among people is that of subjects communicating
with each other, not as Objects, but as Equals. Communication takes place as a dialogue between equals, with the perception of each person having equal validity. Where this is distorted or denied, the communication is not a true dialogue: rather it is an exchange by communiqué.

3. Commentary

The Christian values of dialogue are clearly evident even on the surface of Freire's comment: love, hope, humility. Of more significance, however, is the subliminal faith which is portrayed in the pictures.

VI presents an "Adam and Eve" scene of man and woman in the garden, surrounded by the animals. It is the scene on which Freire's use of the expression "naming the world" makes most immediate sense and clearly can be used to create a very powerful reinforcement of the view that the literate person can somehow control their world, can name their world, and can live in a world of their own making.

There is a strong undertow of biblical imagery. The tree is the Tree of Life: the book is the Book of Life. The Adam and Eve figures are faced with a choice. However, in contrast to Eve, who came bearing the apple, the temptation which resulted in sin, labour, and misery, the new woman comes bearing the book, the invitation to literacy, a new life and a new history.
The idea of the "new woman" is not unimportant. Yes, she is a new woman in that she is different from Eve. But she is also the new woman, the mujer nueva, who with el hombre nuevo, formed the cadre of the revolutionary movements throughout South America (See: Gerassi, 1972:Chpt 13,14). She is the life-force of change, even of change as fundamental as that occasioned by revolution.

It is all the more interesting, therefore, that Freire should have chosen this picture to raise the theme of dialogue. Given the gender stereotyping of Latin American culture, and indeed the role given to men throughout the other pictures, it is significant that the conversation between a man and a woman should be seen as the strongest example of a dialogue between equals. The dialogue therefore which Freire is seeking receives its validation from two divergent sources of authority: on the one hand, it receives its strength from the transferred strength of the traditional view of the family, of marriage and of gender roles. On the other hand, in contrast to the macho values of society, (of which the family, marriage and gender roles are a part) the values of the new, authentic dialogue are reinforced by the Book, in the hands of the woman.

This is, by definition, a new dialogue. It differs from that which preceded it, communication by communiqué, in that it is an "encounter of consciousnesses". But what kind of encounter is that? What kind of dialogue does it
engender? Once the rhetoric and the mysticism has been removed from Freire's speech, what is the actual content of this dialogue?

Wilkinson (1985) has made an analysis of dialogic communication, but from a very different disciplinary base from Freire, but he offers a number of insights which are very relevant here. His basic theme has been "I communicate, therefore I am". I want to extend that to the wider context of dialogue and restate it as "I communicate, therefore We are".

Wilkinson posits three basic models of communication, Transmission, Reciprocity and Internal Dialogue. He has constructed the following diagrams to illustrate the differing processes:

Transmission

\[ A \rightarrow B \]

Reciprocity

\[ A \rightarrow \text{then} B \rightarrow A \]

Internal Dialogue

\[ A \rightarrow A \]

The fact that I communicate at all is because "I am as I am", viz. I exist as a personality, as a social being with a self image and with an identity in the social world. But I communicate with that social world in different ways at different times.

Transmissive communication is, at its most simple and banal, a transmission to somebody or something else which is outside of me. It is usually exhibited in a declaratory mode, the classic mode of the giver of
information. It is essentially within this mode that we can recognise the teacher/taught relationship which Freire calls banking education. It is not a communication that accepts the equality of the person to whom one is communicating. Sometimes it does not even require that anyone else is there at all. It has no need of hope, humility or love. It needs only a means by which it can know that the transmission has been effected: a noise has been made, a statement issued, a communiqué published.

The communication model of reciprocity is quite different. It is based on a theory and practice of social exchange (the elements of which are on the balancing of reward, cost, outcomes and comparison\textsuperscript{101}) and on a real perception that the communication from A in some way "creates" or "validates" B, who in turn is able to create and validate A through his or her response. In essence, such communication, both in its content and in its form, is about intersubjectivity, what Freire refers to as the "encounter of consciousnesses". It creates not transmission, but conferment, in that it confers on the communicator and on the receiver the status of active and mutual creators of the communication.

In the event, however, where one of the partners in this potentially reciprocal communication is "disabled"

Freire would say oppressed, encultured into silence), then the conferment, to the degree that it is real at all—if that is not a contradiction in terms—reinforces a low, non-adult status, or even a non-person status. This is the anti-dialogic mode of communiqué and banking education.

The processes of reciprocal communication, authentic dialogue, are the principal means of conferring or creating both the identity of the people engaged in the communication and their understanding of the reality within which that communication is taking place and which cannot be separated from the communication.

That reality cannot just exist in the mind. Things do not become real simply because I choose to think that they are. Like the communication through which reality is unmasked, reality itself is my engaging with the actual world, which is the world external to me. In a very real sense, we construct social and natural realities through our human communication.

That is why the internal dialogic mode, auto-dialogue is not authentic as a means of identifying reality. By definition the very selfhood which is engaged in the monologue lacks external validation. Like the nominalist, Freirean wordlists, the nominative of the monologue is not in relationship. There is only the I, for in the monologue there is no need of the You.
This is a very complex perspective on the use and nature of language. Is it realistic that Freire could expect such insights to be generated within the Culture Circles that were discussing Figure 2?

Freire has often argued that people are not "orally illiterate", i.e. that while they might not be able to read or to write, they can nevertheless communicate their ideas and feeling verbally. It is because they can articulate their responses and reaction that the individuals in the Culture Circles are able to create the generative words which form the first stage of the writing process.

This has been a view shared by many within the Freirean tradition. For example, in commenting on an Adult Education Project in Canada, Berezowskii (1974) attributed its success to the fact that people are able to generate the material for their own learning because "the coordinators assume that the people in the region have a ready access to experience, language and ideas when it comes to their own vital interests."

This optimistic view of the adult learner may be demonstrably true in those projects where the Freirean method of learning and literacy have engaged those who might see themselves as "upwardly mobile", e.g. in the Culture Circles in Guinea Bissau. But one would have to question if it is always true when, as Farmer queries, the educational effort is directed to those who are the
"hardcore disadvantaged"? Is it likely that the longer people have been immersed in the culture of silence, then the more difficult or even impossible it becomes for them to create even the preliminary stages of generative learning?

The use of Figure 2 requires not just an ability to enter into dialogue, into reciprocal communication. It also requires, as a prerequisite, a certain level of meta-linguistic skill on the part of the participants and of the coordinator.192

In his exciting study, Applied Communication in Developing Countries, Fuglesang (1973) suggests that the basis for such meta-linguistic skills cannot be presumed. He does so by arguing against the assumption that pictures are some kind of "intercultural language". Contrary to Freire who accepts without question that people can always interpret pictures accurately, he says that "it is probably right to say that pictorial illiteracy is almost as wide

192. The elements of this picture illustrate perfectly the kind of "communicative competence" analysed by Habermas. The fact that the (re)construction of a competence is a necessary preliminary to the study of its acquisition is as important here as is the distinction between the communicative performance, i.e. "the actual use of language in concrete situations" and communicative competence, i.e. "the ideal speaker-hearer's knowledge of the language". (see: McCarthy, 1978: Chapter 4.)

In this context, it would be important to assess whether Freire was aiming to achieve literacy performance or literacy competence, the former being constructed by the person-becoming-literate, while the latter is taught or constructed by the teacher.
spread as illiteracy itself. People have to learn to read pictures" (ibid:62). We are faced with a sudden, unanticipated question that learning to "read a picture" might be just as difficult as learning to read a text. Nor does it follow that someone who can read a text, for example the literate teacher/coordinator, is any more capable of reading the picture than the non-literate peasants.

This in part underlies Brown's note of caution: the coordinator begins the discussion with the question "What do you see in the picture?" because "this naming of objects is important because people not accustomed to graphic representations may not easily identify what is meant to be shown". There is even a hint of subliminal Banking Education in the implicit judgment about people's pre-literate awareness of themselves, e.g. that the non-literate, the oppressed, are ready, willing and able to become literate. Non-literates are seen almost as a ready market, potential consumers (the words themselves are redolent of Banking Education) for our dialogic skills. It is taken as given that they have the prerequisite attitude and skills that will enable them to participate (invest) in (our) liberating education just as effectively as they might in some other, so-called, domesticating education.

That may seem a harsh condemnation, but there is certainly a hint either of contradiction or of
condescension in the assumption that non-literate people can correctly "read" a picture, and thereby express their understanding of oppression, of relationships, of independence, etc., when, unconscientised as they are, they are obviously not able to view critically and accurately the world in which they are living.

The level of pictorial literacy required by Freire's use of Figure 2 is certainly high, if he wishes to draw from it the kind of discussion which he has indicated. We shall have to return later to the debate that, while attention seems to have been given more and more to the relationship between literacy and post-literacy, less attention has been paid to the requirements of pre-literacy, and in particular to the assumptions about language and communication which are implicit in these early stages of Freire's literacy programme.

For the moment, there is a further important distinction to be made here, if the coordinator/educator is truly to attempt a genuine dialogue through the use of this picture. It is a distinction based on Fuglesang's usefully provocative insight into that communication which he calls exclamation and that which he calls articulation. He gives numerous examples, pointedly to argue that exclamations are always genuine, while articulations may be both humanly inadequate and concealing. In my view, which moves beyond Fuglesang's own work, the former creates a foundation on which genuine dialogue can be built, while
the latter has a strong, in-built tendency to be anti-dialogic. Yet it is this latter form of communication which Freire is attempting to elicit through the use of Figure 2.

What Fuglesang instances as articulation - thoughts, ideas, conceptions, intentions, facts - is primarily the substance of a systematised thinking, a schooled assessment. It is often the mode of expression which we use to discuss an idea or a theory without committing ourselves personally. Sometimes it is unashamedly calculated, for example where educators talk of being unbiased, of having a "professional approach" that does not allow personal feelings or views to intrude into the exchange of ideas. It is almost as if the more critical, i.e. insightful, reasoned or well argued any communication might be, the more objective and impersonal it must become. "The facts speak for themselves".

On the other hand, Fuglesang argues, exclamation is about sensations, feelings, experiences, hopes as much as fears: it is the communication of authenticity, not least because it is immediate, honest, incautious. An exclamation is an expression that has not been filtered through the control mechanisms of "second thoughts".

It seems to me that the lettered educator (because of their experience of systematised education) and the unlettered learner (because of their culture of silence)
have both developed defence mechanisms which preclude communication through exclamation. They have been encultured, either through schooling or through fear of reprisal, into articulating (or not-articulating) their thoughts and ideas in a particular way. They have learnt that their responses ought to be considered, i.e. thought through [expressed in an appropriate manner]; balanced [cautious]; and well articulated [with carefully chosen words]. In short, the sanctions which govern the way in which we express ourselves lead us to resist exclamation and to devalue it as uncontrolled outburst. By contrast, articulation is seen as a product of mature and considered thought: the more such expression bears the hall-marks of political and social acceptability the more it is valued and appreciated.

Faced with this picture, the educator or coordinator has a difficult choice. He or she has already made an analysis of the picture/situation and is able to communicate that at the level of an articulated statement. They must provoke a response from the learner/peasant. If this response is itself an articulated response, then it has already been manufactured, tuned to the needs and interests of the learner and their view of what the educator most needs to hear.

Even if, therefore, the educator can provoke a response at the level of exclamation, a genuine response conveying feeling and immediate reaction, there is still a
danger that, no matter how valuable that exclamation on the part of the learner may be, the ultimate outcome is still only a reproduction of Banking Education under the guise of a false dialogue. Critical consciousness or critical awareness is, after all, the outcome of a measured and objectified analysis of the world—the roots of which lie in an articulated expression which reflects my true position in society, in the world. Exclamation has the immediacy of the language of the Culture of Silence but, as Wilkinson might indicate, this is primarily the language of transmission which creates not Dialogue but Anti-dialogue.

Freire himself would argue strongly that the measure of equality required of authentic dialogue cannot be achieved in the situation which has the hallmark of patronage. Yet this is what the use of Picture 2 can provoke: the educator/coordinator on the one hand encourages the learner to entrust to them their "exclamations", their genuine, immediate views and feeling, yet they (the educators) are only able to reciprocate at the level of their own articulations, their carefully contrived and balanced opinions. Is it unavoidable, even required, that the educator becomes "objective", depersonalised, as de-authored as the texts shown in the slides? Is the process of literacy acquisition itself a process not of humanisation but of depersonalisation?

This is a critical question for the dialogic educator who is trying to avoid the constant danger of Banking
Education. Despite, or in spite of, the directiveness needed to achieve the objectives of Picture 2, is it actually possible to respond in a way which is authentically dialogic? On a wider front but with a related question, is it possible to subscribe to the use of this picture, with its hidden agenda, in a way which is not fundamentally dishonest?

One view would be to admit simply that the objectives set by Freire, as outlined in the quotation p.166, require a high level of manipulation on the part of the coordinator/educator but that, nonetheless, the ends justify the means.

Notwithstanding the rhetoric, we may have to accept that the role of the educator is pivotal in this process, precisely because the oppressed or the non-literate do not have the awareness to channel their understandings or perceptions relating to the picture into what Freire would call "cultural action". The educator is necessarily an activator who is engaged in a form of cultural invasion, notwithstanding that it is an invasion for liberation and therefore acceptable to those who find themselves in the "occupied territories". Lloyd's (1972) suggestion that educators, by their broader perspectives, have the primary function of "posing problems" does not conceal the fact that it is the educator who is setting the agenda.

Freire was not unaware of the problem of motivation.
"...the leader/educator bears the responsibility for coordination and, at times, direction, but leaders who deny praxis to the oppressed thereby invalidate their own praxis" (1982:77) The educator, whilst being a partner of the students, nonetheless has to be interventionist, albeit that they must always "strive for an even greater clarity as to what, at times without their conscious knowledge, illumines the path of their actions" (1970h:212).

This creates in practice the dilemma which disables so many educators and which, classically, is articulated by Rousseau: how is it possible to educate for freedom, given the need to direct the learner along a path which otherwise he or she would not know? How does one liberate the mind of someone indoctrinated by the values of that very society which one wants to change, yet avoid merely re-indoctrinating that person with a new set of values?

The dilemma hinges on this issue: if education, that is dialogic education, is always about annunciation and denunciation, how can the educator/coordinator lead the learner to announce or denounce what evidently they do not yet know? There is a fundamental tension between the theoretical position that conscientisation is about being able to see one's own reality sufficiently clearly to be able to denounce that which dehumanises and announce that which humanises, and the practical demands that the educator works only from spontaneous themes generated by the participants/learners themselves, without being
This is the very idealistic model of the teacher/learner which Freire has so emphasised. Yet it is clear that the use of the content and the set agenda for figure 2 poses some severe questions for such an educator. We therefore need to examine whether the use of the other pictures makes it easier to achieve a truly dialogic communication which can provide a pedagogically sound base for furthering the development of literacy learning?

5.4 Third-Fifth Situations: Unlettered Hunter
Lettered Hunter (Lettered Culture)
The Hunter and the Cat

The third, fourth and fifth situations within the Literacy Process need to be taken together: they project the development of one major theme, viz. the difference between Nature and Culture.

Nature and Culture are presented each as the converse of the other, the two sides of the same coin which should be distinguished rather than separated. The vividness of the pictures and the argument of the accompanying script reinforce the apparent logic of the situations and the learning objectives which they support.

Despite that, however, these three situations also reveal Freire at his most vague or inconsistent. The strength of his argument may lie, not in the evident
authenticity of the analysis which he makes of these day-to-day scenes, but rather in the selectivity of his perception. It is almost as though Freire has come to these events, wittingly or not, with a kind of tunnel vision for, in order to direct the learners to the required themes, again a high degree of mind-guarding is required. The end result is an argument that amounts almost to special pleading. If this is the case, then these three situations may indeed represent the Achilles heel for Freire of both his method and his philosophy.

1. The Situations (Page 168, figures 3, 4 and 5)

The three situations reflect different hunting scenes. In the first, V1, there is a very stylised, even stereotypical drawing of an Indian, complete in feathered headdress, perhaps naked except for a decorated loincloth. He is hunting in a forest or in a clearing at the edge of a forest and he obviously has had some success: a bird lies dead at his feet and other birds look in imminent danger of falling to his skilful shooting.

In V2, (p. 200) the Indian is less stereotyped: he is clothed, but bare-footed and he has a single feather in his hair. Again, he is successful in his hunting. despite the open terrain: two birds have been shot.

In the second, hunting situation, (figure 4) again this statement of success is clear. In both V1 and V2,
the hunter, this time with a gun, has made a kill. However, it is not just the gun which distinguishes this scene from the previous one. The man is well dressed for the hunt, wearing boots and a hat (p.201). Because of this, he can hunt in difficult terrain where there is more cover. Not only can he kill from a longer distance because of the gun, but the birds that have been shot, even if they have fallen to ground out of sight, can now be found and retrieved by his gun-dog—an animal which has been reared and trained specifically for this purpose.

In the third hunting situation, (figure 5: the first picture for which there is not a copy of the Brennand version), a cat is toying with two mice (p.202). It is a powerful and menacing picture revealing the dominance of the cat and the powerlessness of the mice.

2. Application

According to Brown, "the next three discussions refine the concept of culture and raise the question of how culture is transmitted to younger generations." Freire indicates that the debate is initiated by distinguishing in the situation what belongs to nature and what belongs to culture.

The anticipated response is that the bow, the arrows and the feathered headdress are all part of culture. The feathers were part of nature, whilst they were on a living
bird, but they have been used now to make clothing and are hence a part of culture.

And how did the Indian learn such skill, hunting, tracking, making bows and arrows, making clothing? The discussion considers the transmission of learning through a non-literate culture, i.e. through the direct learning processes of father to son, mother to daughter.

The discussion moves on to suggest that the Indian, viewed from within his own culture, strictly should not be described as illiterate. "Illiteracy" only derives its meaning within a literate culture. Freire, however, requires this comparison: he leads the members of the group to contrast their situation with that of the Indian. "By distinguishing the historical-cultural period of the hunter from their own, the participants arrive at the perception of what constitutes an unlettered culture."

For some, he admits, this perception might be dramatic. They perceive "immediately that to be illiterate is to belong to an unlettered culture and to fail to dominate the techniques of reading and writing."

It is exactly this domination that the hunter of the fifth situation has achieved. Brown puts it starkly: the second hunter is using a tool so complex in its construction that directions for making it must be recorded, and only those who can read can learn to make it.
That is not all. In the culture to which the man with the gun belongs "only those who can read can earn enough money to buy guns, so access to their use is controlled by the literate members of this culture".

Clearly there are many differences between the Indian and the man with the gun. There is the difference in the technologies represented by the bow and arrow and by the gun. The latter is seen as an advance in technology because it gives the hunter "growing possibilities for transforming the world".

This is the point where the group again returns to the theme of education for technological development and to that of transforming the world. The first theme centres on the result of man's increasing opportunity, his work and his creative spirit. The second has meaning only to the extent that it contributes to the humanisation of people and is employed towards their liberation.

This idea is refined through the use of the fifth picture. The participants discuss the fundamental differences between human beings and animals. In the sequence of pictures, all three are hunters, but not all "create" culture. The cat is not a hunter (caçador) but a pursuer (persequidor); the cat does not make tools with which to hunt, but acts only through instinct.

The development of this debate produces, according to
Freire, a wealth of observations about "men and animals, about creative power, freedom, intelligence, instinct, education and training".

3. Commentary

The three situations, all ostensibly around the theme of hunting, develop a very Cartesian epistemology. Human beings are distinguished from the animal world by the way in which, not only do they know, i.e. they are self directed by knowledge rather than by instinct, but they also know that they know. A human being is a conscious being (corpo consciente): it is not simply "I think, therefore I am", but "I know what I think, therefore I am". It is in the knowing about, the awareness of what is thought, that each person becomes authentic.

It is towards this awareness that the three situations are directed, but the achievement of such objectives can realised through the neglect of other questions and interpretations.

Freire offers a wholly pacifist and utopian analysis. Leaving aside the obvious fact that the man with the gun is, at least pictorially, no more successful than the man with the bow and arrow, and neither are more successful than the cat, there is the question of the 'culture of weapons', viz. how do human beings use either guns or arrows.
There is a naive view that such weapons are for hunting. Evidently this is not untrue, but it does avoid the equally obvious use of weapons – for invasion, control, and domination. The arrow, like the gun, is an artifact of war. Both are means for transforming the world but there is no categorical imperative that such transformation should "contribute to the humanization of man". On the contrary, there is perhaps more evidence that the gun and the arrow have been one of the main expressions of man's inhumanity.

There is, indeed the expression of playing or toying with someone "like a cat with a mouse". This describes a relationship of oppression, the control of an Object by someone who has power. It is the very opposite of a dialogic relationship.

What is interesting is why Freire should have chosen the image of the cat. Perhaps more than any other household animal, the cat has been "domesticated". Even the great cats, the lions, cheetahs and leopards have become, like their smaller more common relation, simply pets. Such a life of control and possession has become their means, albeit not self-chosen, of survival. To refuse the role of family or zoo pet is to run the risk of extinction. The life as household pet may be unauthentic, but it a way of staying alive.

Perhaps the illiterate peasant, oppressed and
domesticated (the very image of Freire’s concept of banking education) has more in common with the cat than with either of the hunters. However, Freire would not have tolerated a self identification with the cat: he would not even have accepted an identification with the Indian, although perhaps culturally, economically and socially, many peasants could see themselves represented in that picture.

Perhaps Freire was wanting to note the fundamental necessity of hunting: people need to hunt in order to live. By analogy, therefore, it can be appreciated that people need to be able to read in order to live.

It is, of course, unwarranted to go so far as to suggest that the three pictures support the analogy that the hunter searching in the wild is like a literate person in a non-literate society. However, it is not unreasonable to argue that they do support the analogy, or that they are intended to support the analogy, that the man with the gun is different from the Indian and the cat precisely because he is a symbol of the power of literacy.

Freire wanted the Culture-Circles to identify with the man with the gun. It is this latter instrument, like the book in the earlier pictures, which has the value of symbolising what it means to be literate. At its most simple, it is argued that the use of guns (and therefore of the power that accompanies them) is controlled by those who are literate.
There is a limited sense in which this might be true, but there are sufficient examples of non-literate people having guns and ammunition to suggest that, here, Freire is special pleading. The peasant farmers knew that even the Indians had guns. Ah, but of course, the Indians were not literate.

This is the subterfuge which the coordinators used to exit from this dilemma. The Indian lives in a unlettered culture, in which strictly speaking, one cannot talk of being illiterate. The whole concept of illiteracy or non-literacy (there is a subtle difference of emphasis and of values in the two terms) only has meaning in the context of a literate or lettered culture. The group appreciate this through distinguishing the historical-cultural period of the Indian from their own.103

This is where the force of the discovery about literacy arises. It comes not from the obvious comparing of the world of the animal from the world of men, and not from comparing the world of the Indian with that of the peasant, but from the discovery that, if one lives in what

103. A debate to be avoided here is whether the Indian who can send and receive (write and read) smoke signals is to be considered "literate". Such practice would amount to a semiotic communication, but it would not constitute literacy for Freire. He would want to stress his Cartesian analysis of pure-knowledge which is ultimately power-knowledge. The gun represents a particular competency which is attributed to those who are literate, through which they have power and control. In a sense, literacy is intended to give to the non-literate the ammunition with which to enforce a redistribution of this power.
is a lettered culture and yet one cannot "dominate the
techniques of reading and writing", then one is truly
illiterate. The group is forced to give a currency value
to a new coin, the heads and tails of which are that, on
the one side, they are aware that they cannot read or
write, and on the other side (and inextricably related)
they are aware that they are dominated and oppressed by
those who can read and write.

This is a rewriting of Graff's (1987) literacy myth
that gains its value not through re-affirming the myth of
the savage Indian but through insinuating the myth of the
sophisticated literate who can wield the power and control
which is a product of being literate. This retexturing
of the myth is achieved through the assertion that such
power and control, such application of the values of
literacy, "only has meaning in that it contributes to the
humanisation of man". The evidence is against Freire on
this point, and his constant insistence on some other
reality amounts indeed either to special pleading or to
some unexpressed view that there is an almost "magical"
content which adheres to the concept of the Book and the
man's ability to read it or write it.

There is much that is hidden in this sequence of
pictures. The initial scenes that were so redolent of the
Garden of Eden are now replaced by the realities of life on
earth - survival, the need for food, the natural cycle of
the hunter and the hunted. Following the analogy, reading
is as basic and as important as eating. The assumption is, of course, that man hunts out of necessity. It is perhaps not part of the culture of Brazil, and certainly not part of Freire's world view, that hunting can simply be for pleasure and entertainment. He would not accept that hunting should be considered a pastime.

This is not necessarily a moral judgment on the role of hunting in an affluent society. The point is rather that the coordinators of the Culture Circles cannot afford a discussion on the rights or wrongs of hunting as a pastime. That would be to dilute and weaken the analogy: hunting for pleasure rather than necessity would be like reading for pleasure, and it is not within the objectives of the literacy programme to attribute such a marginal importance to the need to read and write.

Freire suggests that the three pictures are primarily about the distinction between nature and culture. However, although presented in this guise, the underlying debate is actually about literacy and power. The major themes of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed viz. a) the identification of those who are oppressed with those who are not literate and b) the centrality of literacy as a means of liberating the oppressed, are reasserted here both overtly and covertly.

Pictorially, the three scenes are very powerful images that gain in force because of, or in spite of, the basic stereotypes which they represent. All three, the
Indian with the bow and arrow, the man with the gun, and the cat are predators. They are each an image of, and a role model for, the members of the Culture Circles.

Linguistically, also, there is a further level of power dormant in the scenes which can be revealed even without an intensely Freudian analysis, but it is an analysis that is only possible in some languages, viz. Spanish/French, but not English. A schematic view of the three pictures reveals the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig. 3</th>
<th>the Indian</th>
<th>the bow</th>
<th>the dove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>le Indien</td>
<td>le arc</td>
<td>la colombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>el Indio</td>
<td>el arco</td>
<td>la colombe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig. 4</th>
<th>the man</th>
<th>the gun</th>
<th>the dove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>le homme</td>
<td>le fusil</td>
<td>la colombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>el hombre</td>
<td>el fusil</td>
<td>la colombe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig. 5</th>
<th>the cat</th>
<th>the mouse</th>
<th>la souris</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>le chat</td>
<td>la souris</td>
<td>la rata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dominant "male" motif within the language, revealed within the pictures by the active Subject of the le and the el which dominates the Objects of the la, is easier to state than to interpret. It is at least an echo of the often made criticism that, throughout Freire's work, there is more than a hint of sexism, a bias educationally and culturally engendered. Here that bias is emphasized both through the strong, masculine images of the hunter, the gun and the prowling cat and through the submissive, controlled and powerless images of the birds, the dog and the mice. The images of power and domination which are so visually striking are reinforced by a bias that is also
evident in the structure and semiotic of the language itself.

There is a sense in which all language is a semiotic within which the selection of masculine/feminine categories is arbitrary. However, language is also a means of identifying the personal constructs which we use more or less consciously to convey meaning. In Saussurian terms, the signifier represents what is signified. Here we find an example of how the signifier, viz. the three hunting situations, reveal the covert meaning of what was to be signified. It strengthens the view that the real discussion is not one of nature/culture, but one of power, dominance and oppression.

One can always attempt to rebut such a argument by saying that the language was never intended to convey such meaning and that this is an unwarranted over-interpretation of the text, i.e. a gloss that is, in the strict sense, a "reading into" rather than a "reading out of" the text. The charge is that the reader is infusing his/her own value judgments into the given statement. In other words, (and here we can consciously change the medium) the reader hears in the words more than the speaker intended to say.

This is an interesting attempt at rebuttal, not least because it may be that the reader/listener has seen/heard something not only which the speaker did not intend to say but which even contradicts what he wanted to say. In this
case, it may be possible that what we have seen and read actually does contradict Freire's intentions. Ostensibly, the sequence of pictures is presented as a debate about culture and nature, in the context of a free-ranging, student-directed discussion: literacy is offered as the hallmark of development, culture and humanisation. In fact what we have found is a debate about force and dominance, in the context of a very controlled, tutor-directed discussion where literacy, symbolised in the replacement of the book for the gun. The central theme is not just about power but, ultimately, about power which has a very male/macho connotation.

Echoes of this, or, in the Derridean sense, traces of this particular use of language have been seen before. Using the above male/female image of oppression, we can also note the gender attributes of other key Freirean words which are often presented in a binary relationship:

- **power**
  - le pouvoir
  - el poder

- **oppression**
  - la oppression
  - la opresión

- **state**
  - le état
  - el estado

- **population**
  - la población

- **book**
  - le livre
  - el libro

- **reading**
  - la lecture

- **silence**
  - le silence
  - el silencio

- **communication**
  - la comunicación

Freire asserts frequently that literacy is not simply the mechanical process of reading and writing letters. It
is more fundamentally the process of conscientisation and a necessary means of liberating people from the culture of silence in which they have been oppressed.

Through these three pictures, with the dominant image of the gun playing the same totemic role as that of the book in the first scenes, the debate is led to the discussion of literacy and power. Literacy seems to be offered as the key to regaining power and one can easily imagine and explain the reactions of the dominant classes in Brazil in 1964, if this was all that they knew of the discussion of the Culture Circles.

What is not offered in these three hunting situations is any clear correlation either between literacy and humanisation, or between the language of development and the language of power. What we then have to ask is: what other images have the coordinators got, what other convincing argument does Freire want to offer the Culture Circles, so that they will be motivated to continue with their quest for literacy? If it is evident by the end of the fifth situation that illiteracy is about powerlessness, what is the counter argument to show that, while literacy is about empowerment, it is also about an empowerment, personally and collectively, which is more than the replacement of one oppression by another? The remaining five situations should provide an answer.
5.5 Sixth-Seventh Situations:
Man transforms the Material of Nature by his Work:
A Vase, the Product of Man's Work Upon the Material of Nature

1. The Situations (page 169, figures 6 and 7).

VI of Situation 6 offers a direct and simple picture of two men working at a potter's wheel. One man is engraving or decorating a pot while the other, who is sitting at the wheel and moving it with his feet, is making a pot. The scene is "framed" by two large, potted trees with splendid fruit, possibly lemons or pomegranates. One of these pots is signed with the initials of Francisco Brennand.

V2 (p.217) shows the more obvious context of a workshop where the two men are again working, one modelling, the other decorating. Behind and to the side, there is a range of pots and earthenware jars, from the small and ornamental to the large and practical. In the foreground, near two substantial jars, is the written signature of Vincente de Abreu.

Both artists picture a vase of flowers for the seventh Situation. The vase in V2 (p.218) is well decorated in symmetrical patterns that offset the shapes of the flowers. VI has a cascade of flowers that droop down each side (p.219).
VI, however, shows one important visual difference. The vase is actually decorated in the centre and at the top rim with drawings of flowers. There is therefore a double representation: a picture of a vase of flowers on which there are graphic symbols of two different kinds of flowers.

2. Application

These two situations serve, for Brown, to move the discussion on from a general discussion of culture referring to other places (countryside) and time (Indian pre-literate culture) to the discovery for members of the group that they themselves are makers of culture. They recognize "their brothers from the people making clay pots" and they realise that clay pots are as much culture as the work of a great sculptor.

Both Freire and Brown quote from comments made in the Culture Circles:

"They are working with clay," all the participants answer. "They are changing the materials of nature with work," many answer.

"I make shoes," said one participant, "and I now discover that I have as much value as a professor who makes books."

Freire intended here that there should be a discussion and analysis of work. The coordinator is able to ask whether the work represented in this situation will result in an object of culture. The expected answer is "Yes. A vase. A pot. A jug. etc."
In this sense, the main axis for an interpretation of culture is that of aesthetics. The clay, which is nature, is transformed into culture by work, just as the flower, which is nature, is used for decoration— which is culture.

The inherent values of culture are reinforced by the use of the flower/vase of VI. Effectively, the coordinators, who may only have had copies of V2, would have to make the point verbally here that the original version was significantly different. VI illustrates, through the use of a graphic symbol, how ideas can be drawn, can be written. The flowers in the vase are represented by a drawing of them on the clay of the vase. Brown's comment is more that indicative: "Nature, transformed into culture, has been transformed once again into a written symbol".

The foundation is thereby laid for the use of Situation 8—the written poem. That, at least, is the more obvious progression. Less obviously, Freire intended to make the transition through the use of the "aesthetic dimension". These two situations, he suggests, have awakened the ideas of aesthetics: these can now be discussed fully in the next situation when "culture is analysed on the level of spiritual necessity".

3. Commentary

The severity of the previous discussion about power
and domination seems to have been tempered in these two situations through the leading of the debate into questions of aesthetics and culture. This may have resulted as an instinctive reaction that sought to control the revolutionable ideas about change and the use of literacy to challenge or to supplement the power of the gun. One could envisage the kind of Culture Circle where such argument would arise naturally in the course of discussion about Situations 3-5. But that is not part of Freire's agenda. He wants to make the connection between literacy and culture rather than between literacy and revolution.

He is able to do this through a sleight of hand, a refinement of the argument about culture. He has in effect created a confused middle term, CULTURE, but then the Culture Circles were not meant to revel in the finer points of logic.

That is a very patronising comment, but I make it in order to expose the patronage and directiveness that seeks to lead by misleading which is what, in a sense, Freire is attempting to do.

In the earlier discussion, culture was contrasted with nature; what was given (some would say "God given") was nature; what was man-made was culture. Now, in these two scenes from the potters' workshop, culture is not simply what was man-made. It is rather those things which are man-made and which have an aesthetic value. The
examples that will be selected here are: pottery, flower-
arranging, drawing/painting, poetry and, by extension,
literacy. The unspoken conclusion from the premises
expressed is that to be literate is to be cultured. There
is a perceptible move away from the distinction between
nature and culture towards the distinction between being,
on the one hand, illiterate and, on the other hand,
Cultured (with all the social and aesthetic values which
lie hidden in the use of the majuscule).

"Illiterate-Cultured (with all the social and
aesthetic values which lie hidden in the use of the
majuscule)." This comment is itself a product of the
processes of literacy, but it exemplifies the degree of
reorientation which Freire is seeking in the use of these
two pictures.

Although the comment has the quotation marks of
direct speech, it is a form of expression that is
essentially literate rather than oral. There is an implied
change in the tone of voice, an emphasis, which is
indicated by the change of script. It is not uncommon for
a writer to use such a device and to note "emphasis added
by the author" or some similar expression. In this
apparent quotation, which is simply the restatement of a
line from the previous paragraph, the reader is intended to
identify a new emphasis, a rephrasing of interpretation.
The other accoutrements of literacy are also important:
the use of the parenthesis, and the signifier of the
This is not simply a semantic or linguistic diversion. It is an attempt grapple with what is essentially a written rather than an oral use of language and to illustrate the degree of "literese" which Freire has imported into the discussion. His objective of discussing Culture, (that is with the values of the capital C) is actually infused with values realised through his own literacy. They are, by definition, not the values of those who are illiterate.

What the ensuing discussion of these two situations demands, therefore, is the very thing which Freire was at pains to deny for himself and to criticise in Banking

104. The majuscule is not a meaningful oral expression: its purpose and use is essentially as part of a script, a written semiotic that transposes the meaning of a word. e.g. the and The, summer and Summer, god and God. Nonetheless, the use of the "oral majuscule" and other literate sign systems has passed into some, perhaps affected, oral speech. I might say in "literese" (the formula by which one chooses to speak in the way that one writes, rather than write in the way that one speaks) : Although the Introduction said, in parenthesis one is not always sure why they are always so dense, quote. This is a fascinating book: unquote, this is yet a further instance among many, e.g. the editors' other generalisations, which prove conclusively their lack of judgment i.e their Incompetence -with a capital I.

105. The point is made in detail by Ong (1988) who develops Havelock's important analysis of the transition from orality to literacy. This is critical for the use of Situation 8, re. oral poctry, but here it illustrates that Freire is unconsciously assuming that such a transition is unproblematic and developmental. In fact one cannot simply transpose the accoutrements or outline of oral language into their literate equivalents.
Education, viz. cultural invasion. For these discussions to be successful, in the short term in providing the generative words for the final three situations, and in the long term in providing a base of achievement and motivation for the rest of the literacy programme, Freire and his coordinators must impose their values of literacy. To do this, he offers the participants in the Culture Circle not the possibility of power and an ensuing liberation but the possibility of Culture and an ensuing assimilation into the ranks of those who have "dominated the techniques of reading and writing".

The very concept of assimilation, like that of cultural invasion, was so much the butt of Freire's criticism (see: Education or Communication: Chpt. 2) that it is all the more extraordinary to sense here the same processes, yet such is outcome of his directing of the discussion towards his particular view of Culture. One may even pause to consider why he was at such pains to insist that the "learning circles" should in fact be called Culture Circles. The naming of the groups in this way creates almost a predisposition for accepting the imposed debate about Culture. It serves as the unspoken rule of the group as much as it activates the hidden curriculum of the learning process.

Yet how is Freire able to do that, to achieve the manipulation of the discussion verbally from culture to Culture, in a way analogous to the written transition which
I have described above "with all the values of the majuscule"? Such a transition from c to C in a written form would be immediately obvious to the reader: how can the verbal transition therefore go undetected?

The key lies again not so much in what is said as in what is not said. Freire own guideline suggests "after a series of analyses of work (some participants even speak of the pleasure of making beautiful things), the coordinator asks whether the work represented in the situation will result in an object of culture. They answer Yes."

Within the debate as constructed by the coordinators, the answer has to be Yes. Freire himself records that, while everyone could look at the pictures and see that the men were working with clay, not all could answer immediately that the men were "changing the materials of nature with work". That is a learnt response, arising from the discussion, just as their final, affirmative response is learnt within the group, "after a series of analyses of work".

We are not told what this series of analyses contains, but it is clear what they do not contain: they are not centred on an economic analysis or on the nature of unproductive work.

As with the debate about the role and function both of the gun in the hunting situations, and of the book in
the initial farming situations, the discussion and analysis of work removes the reality of employment, market forces and exploitation from its known context.

The Culture Circles could look at the two pictures and say: the picture of the flowers (fig. 7) is irrelevant to our lives. We are more concerned with surviving, with finding food to eat. The realities of our poverty are not concealed beneath the cosmetics of flower arranging. The picture of the two men working is our reality: they have to work many hours a day, and while pots and jars are a necessity, they are a necessity for only part of the population. The rich do not buy clay pots for their dinner tables. The potters, having paid for their clay, their glazes and the wood for the kiln, can only charge for their wares what the poor can afford to pay.

Freire was either unaware of the real dimensions of social poverty (as opposed to cultural poverty) or he chose to exclude this debate from the analysis. Not all work results in an object of culture: not everyone who works has the "pleasure of making beautiful things". In the day to day necessity for production, few artisans can pause to lavish attention on their vase, at the risk of prejudicing the economic viability of the product.

There is within these two pictures the double bind of value systems that have their origin in Christian work values and/or in non-working class social values. The
experience of the poor and the oppressed is that they are most exploited through their work. and that manual labour does not bring job satisfaction or pleasure.

Additionally, there is the echo of the illusion of the enlightened savage of the hunting scenes, but this time offered as the illusion of the contented craftsman. Poor, illiterate he may be, but he can still “make culture”, can still contribute to society something that is beautiful. There is no discussion of the possibility of work as employment, of the oppression of the employers (where is the senghor del engheno, the mill owner who was such a model of oppression in Pedagogy of the Oppressed), or of the difficulties of being self-employed, without sickness insurance, pensions or other social security benefits.

On the contrary, the myth is reinforced by Brown: the assertion that the person who makes shoes has as much value as the professor who makes books is left unchallenged. Yet in what society is this true? How do the coordinators relate this kind of statement to the realities of the lives of the participants who are shoemakers, potters and farmers? In a utopian sense, there is an acceptable truth to the statement, but it reflects more a world of what should be than the world as it is.

Or does it? What happens if the illusion is reversed, if the values and hierarchies of the crypto-literate are rejected? It clearly suits Freire and his
coordinators that the participants of the Culture Circles should themselves assert the literacy hierarchy within which all are inferior to the academic professor, the writer of books par excellence. This is an illusion, but an important illusion. The group cannot be encouraged to accept or even to admit the possibility of another reality, viz. that it is easier to live without books than it is to live without shoes, that the shoemaker actually has more social value than the professor. One has only to look at the pictures of bare-footed peasants, let alone know of the status which someone in a Third World society can gain through owning a pair of shoes, to be convinced that it could be wholly reasonable and possible for any critically active Culture Circle to challenge and ultimately to reject this illusion.

The fact that they do not do so, or that there is no evidence that they have ever done so, speaks more of the degree of “mind-guarding” in the groups which has been a feature also of the earlier discussions.

However, the maintenance of this “culture of silence” (and one is immediately aware of accusing Freire of that which he himself has defined as the most potent symptom of educational oppression) is also achieved through the channelling of the discussion away from the sketch of the workshop (fig.6) towards the graphic representations of fig.7.
In Brown's use of the picture, the group initially discuss the difference between the flowers in the field, which are Nature, and the flowers in the vase, which is Culture. The distinction between the two may be made more obvious both by this simple example and by the dislocating of the two nouns. That is the objective of the picture and, while the use of the majuscule N and C facilitate that process visually, it is clear that this is the outcome which must to be achieved by the coordinators orally.106

That, however, is the preliminary part of the discussion: the importance for Brown is that "a graphic signal is introduced for the first time in this picture. The flowers in the vase are represented by a drawing of them on the clay of the vase." (see: pp. 218/219).

I have already noted that the coordinators who only had V2 would have some difficulty in making this point. If it was as significant as Brown suggests, then it is hard to imagine why de Abreu was not advised to include an equivalent graphic form in his version.

Nonetheless, the importance of the graphic signal is not whether it appears either in version 1 or in version 2.

106. There is an additional, but more complex, discussion about the validity of this distinction which becomes particularly clear when one asks "What is natural and what is cultural?" rather than "What is the difference between Nature and Culture?". However, one must prescind that discussion here rather than loose the main point behind an ontological or phenomenological excursion.
The significance of Brown's comment is that it is not true.

Brown is referring to the written symbol for the flower, and this she takes as the starting point for discussing graphic, i.e. written representations as a means of widening the approach to literacy so that it includes writing as well as reading. This is not invalid in itself, but it does illustrate the selectivity of the literacy tutor and the ways in which the whole discussion of these situations has been orchestrated. Within the learning schedule, graphic symbols are introduced in fig.7.

What then are we to make of the two major graphic symbols in fig.6? In both versions of the pictures, the artists have writ large their signatures or initials. What do they represent and for what were they intended?

In all the Brennand pictures (see pp. 168/169) his initials are towards the bottom or to the side of the drawing and represent the normal marks of authorship and possession. In figures 1-4 and 9-10, (figures 5 and 8 are from de Abreu) the signing can be ignored: it is wholly incidental. However, in figure 7, but particularly in figure 6, the signature is in sharper focus and is clearly intended to be seen. It is a signal from the artist to the viewer. A picture it may be, one among a series, but the viewer (that person in the Culture Circle who will shortly be the reader and the writer) should be aware that Francisco Brennand has written his name.
Of all the visual images which the group could recognise in all the pictures, and which they could be expected to "name", it could have been anticipated that any genuine but non-directive application of the Freirean method would have produced the question "what is that in the box or the plant pot under the tree?" The constant question which underlies the methodology is "What do you see?" Yet it appears here that nobody has seen what is there clamouring to be expressed, and the only explanation can be that the coordinators were in fact working to their own agenda and discussion profile and not to the freely generated discussion which would have reflected the more immediate searchings of the group.

Despite his rejection of a literacy Primer, Freire has actually created a paradigm for the group discussions which serves exactly the same purpose, viz. the establishing of certain common norms and ideas. Brown argues that Freire and his coordinators avoided the use of primers "on the grounds that they were mechanical and did not lend themselves to much flexibility in the discussion. Furthermore, primers discourage people from expressing and writing their own ideas and words." However, it is one thing to suggest in principle that the choice of words, questions ideas, etc., should be jointly undertaken by the non-literate adults and by the coordinators, when the realities even of time and resources (the Culture Circles often comprised some 25-30 non-literate participants, and the ten picture situations were intended to be discussed in
as little as two hours) demand a highly structured and directed agenda.

This agenda setting role of the coordinators is in fact reinforced through a comparison, at this point, of the two versions of the pictures. In the use of version 1, I have illustrated how Brown suggest that the first graphic symbol appears in fig.7, when in my view a far more significant graphic symbol appears in fig.6. One may want to offset that analysis with the comment that it applies only to the Brennand version and that most coordinators did not use that set of pictures. However, paradoxically, this major criticism of Brown can be applied with even more force to the de Abreu version.

If the graphic symbolism noted by Brown was such an important feature of fig.7, then that detail should have been reproduced in the de Abreu version. Evidently it is not, even though de Abreu may well have had copies of the original slides. What is significant it that, in this second version, de Abreu has not copied the "graphic signal" in fig.7, but he has signed his own version of fig.6, with exactly the same clarity and force as Brennand’s fig.6.

This has to be more than coincidence. Of all the de Abreu pictures, only figures 2, 6 and 10 are signed, whereas all ten of Brennand are initialled. It is as though he alone has actually read Brennand’s graphic signal
on the plant pot, and reproduced the picture (two men working in the pottery workshop) and the graphic fuse which Brennand had left waiting to be lit.

In assuming that the written word is the only form of literacy, and in implicitly ascribing to literacy a value system created around their own cultural norms, the coordinators had misread, or not read at all, one of the most important cues in the whole sequence of pictures. Brennand and de Abreu, consciously or not, had written their name. They had given the lie to the claims of the literacy campaigners that writing one's name, naming one's world was always going to be part of the process of collective liberation and personal recognition achieved through becoming literate. They were not critically aware, conscientised, to the very process taking place before them. Sadly, in my view, what seems to have desensitised them was their unquestioning acceptance of the importance of their own culture, i.e. the presumed culture of literacy.

In denial of the philosophy and the principles of his method, there is an elitism inherent in Freire's use of these pictures. One may have looked at the pictures of potter at work and of the use, socially and culturally, to which that work can be put, and one could then have begun to identify some of the very practical reasons why someone who cannot read or write should become literate. After these two situations, this could have been the point for
grounding the discussion in the realities of the daily lives of the participants of the Culture Circles. What, at the end of the day, has literacy got to offer them?

Surprisingly, Freire does not take that line. On the contrary, he continues with his analysis of Culture and his argument based on aesthetics. He wants to move the discussion, following these two situations, to an analysis of Culture as a spiritual necessity.

The reasons for this approach, and its effect, we shall now have to examine.

5.6 Eighth Situation: Poetry

1. The Situation (Page 169)

The picture shows a large, open book. On one page, there is a short, two verse poem A Bomba, and on the other, a representation of people and trees. The script of the poem is hand-written, rather than printed, but all the writing is in capital letters. Despite that simplicity, the text does not forego the need to include accents and a hyphen, but it does take a modern, poetic license to exclude commas and full stops.

The actual text of the poem is:

A BOMBA

A TERRIBLE BOMBA ATOMIC

The awful, atomic bomb,
E A RADIO-ATIVIDADE
SIGNIFICAM TERROR
RUINA E CALAMIDADE
SE ACABASSEM COM A GUERRA
E TUDO FICASSE UNIDO
O NOSSO MUNDO DE HOJE
NAO SERIA DESTRUIDO
(trans. PVT)

2. Application

From Freire’s own notes, it is not immediately clear where the emphasis of this situation lies. His directions are that the coordinator first reads the projected text slowly. This is accepted as a “poem of the people”, and there is then an ensuing discussion about whether such a poem is culture. In comparing the production of the vase, from the previous situations, and the production of a poem, the participants are intended to “perceive, in critical terms, that poetic expression, whose material is not the same, responds to a different necessity”. There follows a discussion on the difference between popular and erudite artistic expression in various fields, and then a rereading by the coordinator of the poem.

Brown has more practical objectives. Building on her identification of the graphic signal of the flowers in the previous situation, she wants to use the picture of the poem as the next step in “graphic representation”. Her
them is that "words known by and put together by non-literate people can be written down and are as much poetry as poems by educated people". When the coordinator reads the words of the text, the participants are able to recognise that they are the words of a song which they all know. The seed is sown for a later understanding that all and everything that can be sung or said can be written. Brown suggests that this discovery is highly exciting to non-literate because it shows them "that they can learn to read the words and songs they already know".

This latter point is significant because it underlies the whole framework of the Freirean method. The idea of "generating words" and then decoding them syllabically, is based on the principle that the adult learners will be recognising the written forms of words which they already know and use without any problem. It is in that sense that it has been suggested that no-one is verbally illiterate: a non-literate person is simply someone who is as yet unable to master the techniques of reading or writing the words which they already know.

3. Commentary

It does appear that Freire and Brown are using this situation in very different ways, or at least with very different emphases. Given the high level of correspondence between the two over the presentation and interpretation of the previous situations, this divergence
Here needs to be explained. We need to question whether the differences lie simply in the prioritising of ideas or whether there is a more fundamental, methodological difference. For one, the situation has been selected in order to give rise to a discussion on poetry and Culture: for the other, it is a means of establishing a practical confidence in the processes of word recognition.

It is possible to see Brown's approach as being product centred, focusing on certain selected outcomes, while that of Freire is more process centred, seeing the scene as part of the complex unveiling of critical consciousness. Pedagogically, one is skills based, the other is more theoretical. One is concerned with the content of literacy, the mechanics of word recognition, the other with the wider, cultural context.

Schematically, the differences can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freire</th>
<th>Brown</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>process centred</td>
<td>product centred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td>practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the context of literacy</td>
<td>the content of literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>literate Culture</td>
<td>literate culture</td>
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</table>

Presented in this almost traditional, binary system, the difference between the two educators is profound, representing a divergence both of method and orientation. It might therefore be logical to explore how effective either approach might be and to try to explain each in the light of their related personal philosophies and
professional experience.

This, however, while it may be interesting, would distract from a more important question. It focuses, as do most discussions on the philosophy or practice of education, on the philosophers and the practitioners themselves. What it ignores is the effect that such differences of method or emphasis might have on the learners, on the consumers of the method. It would be worth pausing here to try to understand the role and position of the adult learner faced with this particular situation and Freire's and Brown's interpretation of it.

There is little to be gained from a simplistic, "cause and effect" analysis, as if this learning model was some kind of refined operant conditioning.107 What we need to look at is what actually occurs within the brain, or within the person, that impedes or facilitates a learning moment, that point in time when one appreciates that one now knows something which one did not know

107. Such a traditional approach, which Hill calls "connectionist theories" or Lovell "stimulus-response-associationist", is too much part of the operant conditioning which is so prevalent in Banking Education to offer a fair framework within which to attempt to place Freire. The underlying principles of reward and punishment, of a "learning economy" within which we learn to maximise benefits and minimise costs, (classically expressed in Thorndike, Hull and Skinner) reflect more the "culture of silence" where people have learnt (have been taught) to be oppressed. Freire was seeking more a method of operant de-conditioning, a pedagogy of liberation.

For further reading on traditional, behaviourist and cognitive theories of education, see Hill, (1980).
previously. It may be called revelation, or awareness or perception, or learning: it is always an acceptance of having changed.

This is the final objective of all education and one overtly pursued by Freire. Learning becomes a multi-threaded concept, the product of perception, memory, analysis and transference. For him, a learner needs to be able to perceive a learning need, to relate that need to other learning or knowledge, analyse what is the issue or problem to be solved, and to then transfer that accumulated learning to the new situation or event.

Through the "problematisation" of fig.8, how can this theory be put into practice? Is such learning the most likely outcome for the participants of the Culture Circles?

The guiding criteria which would be relevant to such a judgment can be found in a key text of educational psychology, of which there was a Spanish edition and which Freire knew: Koffka's (1935) Principles of Gestalt Psychology. It is suggested that there are two, interdependent laws of learning -the law of proximity and the law of closure. In essence, learning is facilitated where we can see the relationship, the correlation or unitary nature of several "perceptions", in such a way that we are able to construct a new, composite piece of information. In the strict sense of the words, we make sense of possibly disparate or divergent information, we
look for coherence. When we say something or somebody is "coherent", we understand that to mean that they are intelligible. Hence the value of Koffka's laws: the nearer we are to an event or learning situation, or, more accurately, the nearer a learning situation is to us and our accumulated learning, memory and perceptions, either in actual physical, spatial or temporal proximity [the law of proximity], or the more intrinsically coherent the event or stimulus is [the law of closure], then the more are we likely to construct a meaningful understanding of it.

We can then ask whether the use of fig.8 by either Freire or Brown does proximate to the experiences of the people in the Culture Circle, whether it enters their "zone of proximate development" (to borrow Vygotsky's useful term), and to what degree is their exposition of this situation coherent both in itself and in relation to the other, preceding pictures? The degree to which the answer to either of these questions is found to be negative would create a measure against which we could assess the level of "cultural invasion" required to implement this programme.

That would be a value judgment over and above the more neutral assessment that, even within Koffka's laws, the teacher / instructor has an instrumental role vis-a-vis the learner, i.e. the bridging of the gap between the learner's experience of perception and the relevance of the new learning stimulus, even to achieve learning objectives.
created by, or agreed with, the learning group. The illusion is that this, of itself, creates a learner-centred agenda: the reality is that, despite the rhetoric, each leap of understanding, each newly acquired learning, has to be facilitated. The learner is, by definition, the person who says "how can I, unless someone helps me?"

Most learning theory, (which perhaps, more accurately, we should call teaching theory), concentrates on this latter apodosis, on the way in which the teacher/educator can assist the learner or the learning process. This is what Freire had attempted to criticise in his analysis of Banking Education, yet he has a counter argument, a more important question that relates to his enquiry and emphasis on the prodosis: how can I? He demands that we ask "Who is the learner, who is the me who will say "I have learnt"?"

To concentrate on the individual, the person who is the learner, requires a movement away from the traditional behaviourist and cognitive theories of learning which are the hallmark of Banking Education, and the espousal of a theory and method which is truly "learner-centred", that concentrates on creating learning which (in Koffka's terms) is so proximate that it is experienced as being directly and personally relevant.

Leaving for the moment the debate about how instrumental a teacher can be/ought to be, we can look at
the criteria for assessing \textit{proximate learning}, viz.

i. it is the teacher who formulates the units or packages of learning,

ii. ideally in some "developmental sequence"

iii. that accommodates the cultural and social background of the learner.

The first, two criteria need not detain us. Clearly the literacy programme has been created by experts \textit{for the use of coordinators and culture circles}. By definition, non-literate groups do not have the capacity to become "self-taught". Reading and writing is not an innate skill, and it is not surprising that the learning sequence should be prepared by the educators.

The question of a learning sequence which is also developmental we shall leave until the end of the programme and then review the ten pictures/situations. That leaves the question of the relevance of this picture, fig. 8, to the cultural and social background of the learners.

According to Brown, the poem is meant to be sung. There is, in Northeast Brazil, as in many part of non-literate Africa, a strong tradition of spreading news, telling stories and giving information in song. Like the "griots", their counterparts in Africa, individuals or groups travel from town to town, singing the news, and entertaining the people. Clearly the structure of the poem, like the structure of the twelve bar blues in other cultures, would have been known to the Culture Circles.
Freire notes that, after the poem had been read by the coordinator, the group would say "This is a poem" and would describe it as popular, and would describe its author as "a simple man of the people".

Criticism from afar is always dangerous, if not always difficult, and at this point one may have to admit to a degree of cultural distance or alienation. Nonetheless, it is still important to ask whether such "simple men of the people" actually did go around singing songs against the atomic bomb. The simple poem actually carries a very complex, political message, the origins of which are uncertain. Brown suggest that the non-literate would be highly excited because this picture would show them that they can learn to read the words and songs that they already know. One possible source of the song/poem may have been as a reaction or popular comment to the Bay of Pigs incident, the narrowly avoided, total conflict between Cuba and the United States during the Kennedy presidency.

However, neither Brown nor Freire are concerned with the actual content of the poem, interesting as it might be. For Brown, it is a means of facilitating word recognition: the group "sees" the visual image, i.e. the written words, of the song which they all know. That is the sole purpose of using the song in this fig.8, and it gains its strength from the pertinence and relevance that it has to the daily lives of the learners. For Brown, this is the value of
the picture, but for Freire it is almost seen as a weakness. For him, the debate is about whether or not this poem is or is not culture. Yes, it must be culture because, like the vase, it is produced by people in response to a certain necessity. In this case, spreading the news. But no, it is not erudite, it is not artistic. Freire himself sets the agenda for the coordinators by making the distinction between popular and erudite artistic expression. It is his way of re-asserting the difference between culture and Culture.

The point is subtly but powerfully made, for it is not a casual distinction. It is part of Freire's hidden agenda that the transmogrification of culture to Culture is achieved through literacy. He makes this point, not through what is said by the coordinators or within the general discussion, but through the subliminal message of the visual image of the poem in the book.

In explaining their use of this situation, neither Freire nor Brown seem to be aware of the profound significance that the picture of the poem is actually a picture of a book in which is written the poem under discussion (p.246). Yet their reactions implicitly make that observation. Brown says "the words of non-literate people can be written down and are as much poetry as poems by educated people." This superimposes on the concept of poetry, which normally is taken to be an oral medium, the primacy of the written word. It is that which makes it
A BOMBA

A TERRIVEL BOMBA ATÔMICA
E A RADIO-ATIVIDADE
SIGNIFICAM TERROR
RUINA E CALAMIDADE

SE ACABASSEM COM A GUERRA
E TUDO FICASSE UNIDO
O NOSSO MUNDO DE HOJE
NÃO SERIA DESTRUIDO
cultural, in the value laden term which Freire uses. For him, the poem is culture - but it becomes Culture through being written in the book. The book enfolds the poem, just as it enfolds the whole world, "nosso mundo de hoje", the pictorial image of which is on the page opposite the poem. The simple picture of the poem, which Freire could have used (page 248) is severely enhanced by the setting of the poem in the book. The power of the book, and thereby the power of literacy, is such that it can encompass the whole world, even the atomic bomb. It has the power to create, just as the bomb has the power to destroy.

So the debate can be seen to be less about the bookish nature of poetry and more about the bookish nature of literacy. Brown confronts the Culture Circle with the text of words which they already know. Freire confronts them with Culture. Both are foreign to the group, both represent a high level of cultural invasion. The degree of proximate learning, in Koffka’s terms, is simply an illusion. The members of the Culture Circles are no more textually competent than they are culturally competent.

Freire does not explain how the poem, which is essentially about oral communication, is any different for being written down. However, there is an implied

108. The picture is no longer a representation of a poem or song, but rather a poem-in-a-book picture, a page from a poetry book. That this bibliocentrism is subliminal only renders it the more powerful.
A BOMBA

A TERRÍVEL BOMBA ATÔMICA
E A RADIOATIVIDADE
SIGNIFICAM TERROR
RUINA E CALAMIDADE

SE ACABASSEM COM A GUERRA
E TUDO FICASSE UNIDO
O NOSSO MUNDO DE HOJE
NÃO SERIA DESTRUÍDO
hierarchy of culture, rising from the oral (the original song) to the visual (the representation projected on to the wall of the classroom) to the written (the book). Fig. 8 serves to emphasise covertly the primacy of the written form. Unlike the book in figs 1 and 2, this book is decontextualised: it is not held by anyone, nor associated with anything. It is simply The Book.

A text without a context is normally taken as a contradiction in terms, yet here it serves to emphasise the sublime nature of the book, of literacy itself. That is what Freire meant when he said, at the end of fig. 7, that the aesthetic values which had been raised re. the vase, would be "discussed fully in the following situation, when culture is analysed on the level of spiritual necessity". Nowhere in fig. 8 does he actually discuss spiritual necessity: Brown even attempts to make it a very functional discussion. Nonetheless, the unspoken words are not about the poem, but about the poem in the Book.

What has been projected on the wall, writ large, is not the poem but the unspoken value of literacy which is of such importance to the life of humankind that one can legitimately call it a "spiritual necessity".

Where does that leave the non-literate who is confronted by this picture, by these values which appertain to a literate world? Does it not represent a damning criticism of those who are non-literate? They cannot read
nor write, and apparently have no need of this spiritual necessity which is engendered by literacy. They are a sub-class, cultured in a populist and simple way, but not artistic, erudite, or creative.

So again, the impact of cultural invasion becomes evident. The non-literate are presented with a set of values which are not their own and which must replace their own, if they are to become literate. Fig. 8 is an invitation for them to begin the process of assimilation into the world of literate culture, the world represented in the picture of the book.

Freire sounds like a missionary of old, seeking conversion on the basis of spiritual necessity. What in fact he has created through this invasion of nonliterate culture is not a pedagogy of liberation but a pedagogy of assimilation. As a model of change, both for individuals and for society, that is the complete antithesis of Pedagogy of the Oppressed. How interesting then that his latest book, *Reading the Word, Reading the World* encapsulates, in its title, the two processes required in this picture: on the one page, there is the Word, the Text, while, on the other page, there is the World. Both symbolically represent that world from which non-literate are excluded and by which they are oppressed.

In this picture, the book which is the world of literacy is open for them to see. It is an invitation, an
opportunity. What then must they do to ensure that this book will not again become closed to them? Unnervingly, Freire, who has allowed the real text of this picture to be read in silence, has already prepared a response to that question. In anticipation that the Culture Circle may have correctly interpreted the unconscious meaning of fig.8, he has prepared fig.9 and a discussion of resistance to change.

5.7 Ninth Situation: Patterns of Behaviour

1. The Situation (Page 169, figures 9)

Fig. 9 shows two men: one is a gaúcho from the South of Brazil, and the other is a cowboy from the Northeast. They are dressed in clothes which are typical of the two areas. V1 (p.169) shows the differences more clearly than V2: there is a marked contrast between the boots, trousers, jackets and hats of the two men.

The first man is warmly dressed in wool−he comes from a largely sheep rearing area in the colder South. The second man, from the cattle country of the Northeast, wears clothes made from the leather which is both readily available and a useful protection against the cacti which are found throughout the scrubland.

In both versions, behind the men, there is one horse.
perhaps symbolically representing the fact that both are cowboys. VI might indicate a simple situation where the two men have met and, standing a little apart, are having a conversation.

V2, however, is different from VI in two ways. (see p.253) Firstly, it is much more difficult to recognize the difference in clothing and styles. At least to the unlearned eye, they seem to be dressed in a very similar fashion. The background of spiky plants suggest the scrubland of the Northeast.

Secondly, and in a sense despite the similarity, the men are intended to be different, not so much in clothing but because one of the men is holding a book and seems to be reading it to his companion. Structurally, the picture is an exact echo of that used in Fig.2 where the relationship between two people is mediated again by the presence of the book.

2. Application

Neither Freire nor Brown allude to this significant feature in the picture. Rather, Freire intended the picture to be used to "analyse patterns of behaviour as a cultural manifestation, in order subsequently to discuss resistance to change." By analysing the two traditions, North and South, shown here as differences of clothing, the discussion can move on to consider differences in other
forms of behaviour. A comment, first noted in a Culture Circle in the South, is used to guide the other groups: "traditions are formed as a response to need. Sometimes the need passes, but the tradition goes on."

Brown has a slightly wider use for the picture, but is clearly influenced by the Freirean model. For her, the picture is intended to "expand the notion of culture by showing that clothes and ways of behaving are also part of culture". She notes that sometimes (but, evidently, not always,) the picture leads to a discussion of people's resistance to change.

3. Commentary

This is the weakest of the sequence of pictures, not only because there is no great clarity about the focus or use of the picture, but also because it is presenting no information that has not already featured in the programme. The picture could be removed from the set, without loss to the overall theme or to the required development of ideas.

109. Another context in which to view this picture is Freire's remarks about the enforced isolation of the regions in Brazil under colonial rule. "Such relations, if permitted, would have provided an indispensable exchange of experiences by which human groups, through mutual observation, correct and improve themselves" (1976b:25).

It is interesting that the potential of this scene to create political discussion is not mentioned by Freire in his commentary, preferring as he does to emphasise the nature of culture and behaviour.
Indeed, what is required here is an extreme degree of orchestration of the discussion. It is not immediately obvious from the pictures, V1 or V2, that the different fashions in clothing are meant, almost metonymically, to represent the differing modes of behaviour/traditions in different parts of the country. It may, at best, support a discussion that looks at the broader definitions of "culture", but there is a leap of logic required to channel that debate towards the notion of resistance to change. The intended syllogism must run as follows: In the case that a) Culture [e.g. clothing and behaviour] is created out of Necessity, and b) Tradition [= continuous Culture] implies a continuation of the original Necessity, but c) Tradition may also continue beyond the original Necessity [= unnecessary Culture], and d) Unnecessary Culture implies a resistance to Change, then it is also the case that e) Culture is created either out of necessity or as a reaction against change.

Brown concentrates on premises b) and c). Freire on a) and d). Neither have a evident logic, nor do the discussions which they suggest sound like the authentic voice of people from within the Culture Circles. The objectives for this picture require that the coordinators manipulate the discussion around the confused middle term of tradition, shown above in premises b) and c).

However, neither Freire nor Brown pause to recognise
that culture is also a confused middle term, and they fail
to draw the more obvious conclusion which I have added to
their intended premises, i.e. e) that Culture is a reaction
to change, either to create it or to deny it. Not only
would this have provided Freire with a base on which to
explain the Culture of Silence (i.e. that reactionary
culture which exists beyond the need) but he could also
have begun to explain or explore what were the contemporary
needs of the group that would have led them to redefine
their culture, what in other contexts Freire would have
called “naming their world”.

Yet this is what he singularly fails to do, almost as
if he had in mind some other picture or some other debate.
It does seem to be the case that the discussion which he
was seeking here is only marginally supported by the
picture, while, on the other hand, what is actually in the
picture he does not use.

What is missing is any comment or reference on his
part to the presence of the book. This is the more
remarkable, given the incongruity of a picture of two
cowboys reading a book, a scene which could not have been
part of the everyday life of the members of the Culture
Circles. How can this be explained?

A simplistic response would be that Freire was again
seeking, through a kind of subliminal advertising, to
emphasise the totemic value of the book, that prime symbol
of literacy. He seems to know instinctively that the whole
impact of such advertising is enhanced by silence, that it
cesses to be subliminally effective once the targeted
individuals or group become consciously aware of it. As
such, it represents a very powerful form of cultural
invasion.

However, it is more than that. The very totemic
value of the book reveals, in an encoded way, the personal
value system which Freire has for identifying or asserting
the importance of literacy.

Although he has elsewhere spoken of the centrality,
within the process of conscientisation, of that very active
process which he called "naming the world", the evidence
from these pictures suggests that, in practice, he offered
a pedagogy that required a more passive response on the
part of the learners. Literacy would enable them to read
the word, that is, to read the world. They would be
assimilated into the world of the coordinators. That was
the rôle-model which was presented when the coordinators
read the poem in Fig.6, although it was stated that this
was a popular song already known to the group. There would
then have been an opportunity, if so required, for the
group themselves to "read" the poem.

However, this was not required: the constant image of
the sequence of pictures is that of the literate person who
is a reader, and this is the rôle-model which is affirmed
and re-affirmed in Fig.1, Fig.2, Fig. 7, Fig.8, and Fig.10. Nowhere in any of the ten pictures is anyone seen to be writing, yet it is writing, rather than reading, which is more symptomatic of dialogic learning. It is in writing that we come closest to actually “naming our world”.

This is not simply to assert the primacy of writing, of the written over the oral, in some Derridean fashion. It is to draw attention to the important fact, which Freire has here neglected, that, unless it is clearly and symbiotically related to writing, Reading, like the voice of the educator, can so easily be another mode of Banking Education: it is the author who writes, but the student who reads. It is the sound, says the old Zen master, of one hand clapping. That is an incongruous image, the epitome of non-dialogue, yet it is an apt way of describing both the sight of the book in Fig.9, (V2), and the sound of the silence occasioned by Freire’s lack of commentary on this point.

The paradox of this figure is that, while ostensibly it portrays two men who have stopped to have a conversation (a dialogue), it actually reveals the presence of a book which may be anti-dialogic. In VI, Brennard draw a scene which was out of the ordinary, viz. the meeting of men from the North and from the South, but at least the men were ordinary, recognisable to their peers in the Culture Circle.
By contrast, in V2, de Abreu has drawn an apparently ordinary scene of two men meeting, but the men are quite different from the participants of the Culture Circle. They are extra-ordinary, for they are (or at least one of them is) el hombre nuevo, revolutionised, conscientised, literate.

The men in the two pictures (VI and V2) inhabit two different worlds, within which their cultural differences from the North or from the South are insignificant. Both the men in Version 1 live in the world of non-literacy, while both the men in Version 2 live in the world of the Book. De Abreu has named this latter world visually: his picture does not just speak the book, but does, in the full sense of the common expression "speak volumes".

Even when they have been using de Abreu's version, both Freire and Brown retreat behind the simplicity of Brennand's visually more simple picture. They could project the former (V2) onto the wall of the Culture Circle, but it is around the latter (VI) that they both direct the discussion. For them to achieve their objectives in the session, it is essential that the group are led, encouraged, or directed to discuss what is not in the picture in front of them (i.e. the clarity of the cultural difference, which is only in VI) while disregarding what is actually there, viz. the presence of the book (which is only in V2).
What is it then about the book in this picture which forces Freire into such a blatantly false pedagogy, into contradicting the very principles of his own method of "decoding" critically what people can actually see?

It may be that there is no convincing answer to that question, that we have to leave Freire, as he so often demands "at peace with his contradictions". However, in the context of these pictures, there may be the germ of an answer or explanation.

It may be that Freire has never fully come to terms with the powerful dualism or Manicheism of which he often spoke and which is inherent in the Catholicism that has so clearly influenced his personal and professional life. This we have already noted in the constant, binary nature of much of his thought, where there is always a polarity between good and bad, rich and poor, oppressed and oppressors, teachers and taught. Nothing can be simply good or bad: virtue and hope and loving are always contaminated with the possibility of sin, despair and non-loving, even while the most bigoted oppressor or the most enculturally silenced of the oppressed retain a spark of being "something other", of being humanised, where there is always the possibility of humble, positive, creative change.

We have noted earlier re. the Second Situation the implied context of a Garden of Eden, and the representative
figures of the man and the woman as the Adam and Eve of humanising literacy. There it was the woman bringing the Book of Life, here it is the cowboy, but the implied choice is the same. The parallels between the two pictures, even pictorially, are clear (p.262), but whereas Freire’s use of fig.2 was positive and generative, his use of fig.9 is guarded and selective, almost as if, like the Adam figure, he first wanted to refuse what was offered. This is because the tree of life is also the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Its benefits are not unalloyed.

Without sharing his disquiet with the Culture Circles, Freire has had to confront his ambivalence towards issues of literacy and power, and towards the real content of what is contained in the book. One the one hand, he is wanting to assert the positive aspects of literacy, of naming the world, of creating one’s own history and of being liberated. On the other hand, he is not wanting to explain why it is that those who are literate are more likely to be the oppressors, that the book, like the gun, is not necessarily dialogic, that being able to read the word does not automatically enable you to read the world. The book may reveal the possibility of change, but it equally shows up resistance to change. The book both gives and demands a bifocal, even Manichean, perspective of the world. Freire perhaps unconsciously knew that, and tried to say so, not just in overlooking the presence of the book in V2, but in insisting that the discussion of V1, against the evidence, was not so much about cultural habits
and fashions but about resistance to change.

Situation 9 is not truly a part of the sequence of learning for the Culture Circles because primarily its content is not directed towards the learner participants. It provides rather the focus for a discussion among the educators and coordinators about their approach to literacy, about their reluctance to forego the methods and styles of Banking Education and about a fear of that very change which they are in the process of facilitating. The question is not whether they understand or respect the various cultures of the people in the North or the South, although it is hard to assert such respect and still go ahead with the cultural invasion which this picture demands. The fundamental question is even more demanding: given the culture of the people, are they really prepared to accept that the people should be in possession of the book in the way that is proclaimed in V2?

From their refusal to see the book, and from their orientation of the discussion, the evidence suggests that, despite the rhetoric, Freire and the coordinators were inhibited by their own resistance to change from acknowledging that the people had the right to unrestrained access to the book. They had refused to see the book, to countenance this possibility, and, as a result, the members of Culture Circles had been disabled from reading the picture correctly. The coordinators, like the God in Paradise, had said: if truly you could eat of the tree of
Life, (if truly you were literate, without need of us),
then you would be like us.

Is fig.9 therefore really about resistance to change
on the part of the coordinators, or is it more about the
obverse, their fear of being the same as the people of the
Culture Circles? Or is its hidden agenda more positively
altruistic and more about tuning the speed or the quality
of change which is occasioned by literacy to the life style
and capacities of the group so that, in the longer term,
the full, liberating effects of literacy can be realised?
Is fig.9 about Banking Education, benign paternalism, or
the offer of radical, dialogic learning?

The intended summary of fig.10 may clarify an answer.
1. **The Situation** (page 169, figure 10).

There is a high level of consistency between the V1 and the V2 of this situation. Both show a group which is recognisable as a Culture Circle discussing one of the projected pictures of these introductory lessons, viz. the pot of flowers, (p.266). The Brennand picture, V1, is obviously a copy of his own earlier picture. Abreu has not copied his own, but has done a drawing which closely resembles Brennand's, perhaps indicating that he had a print to hand from which to make the new slides. (see p.267)

Both versions show the small projector on which the presentation depends. In V1, the group is quite small, some ten people amongst whom there appears to be only one woman. In V2, there is a larger group, 25 or more, of whom three or four are women.

In neither version is the group sitting in a circle. On the contrary, the pictures reveal a very traditional, classroom situation, with the "pupils" all turned to face the board /projected picture. In V2, the male co-ordinator is pointing to the picture with a stick, perhaps eliciting a question or clarifying a point. In V1, the co-ordinator, again male, is not using his stick but is pointing to the picture with his hand.
Both are very directive gestures and, even within the freeze-frame of the pictures, it seems clear that it is the co-ordinator, standing at the side of the picture and in front of the class, who is speaking at the time and leading the discussion.

At the bottom, right side of the picture, each artist has signed or initialled his name.

2. Application

Situation 10 is intended as a structured reflection where, according to Brown, the "group can look at itself and reflect on its own activity..... The function of the circle of culture is examined by everyone, what the experience has meant, what dialogue is, and what it means to raise one's consciousness." Freire says the same, but with a different intensity: "the participants analyse the functioning of the Culture Circle, its dynamic significance, the creative power of dialogue and the clarification of consciousness."

This is, however, not a simply discursive review of the previous situations. Brown's stage direction sets the tone: "The co-ordinator introduces the phrase "démocratisation of culture" to be discussed in the light of what has been happening in the circle of culture." It is intended that the discussion of democracy and culture be set within the more general context of fundamental
democratisation. The end product of this evidently complex discussion is that "the participants have regained enormous confidence in themselves, pride in their culture and a desire to learn to read". So the base is laid for the next stage of the literacy process.

3. Commentary

This tenth drawing is not intended as an idealisation of the principle of Culture Circles, nor as a portrait of a successful group that would serve as publicity material in the programme prospectus. It is essentially a photo-drawing of a situation which the participants of the groups would easily recognise. It makes no pretence to be more than is claimed in its title: A Culture Circle in Action, yet it derives its strength only from the fact that it is correct in detail. The participants can recognise the projected picture as that which they have already discussed, they can see the little projector, perhaps recognise the co-ordinator who may have taught them and, most importantly, begin to recognise themselves as the participants in the picture.

Consequently, whilst there are no detailed, written, process recording available of what actually happened in the groups, this pictorial record has particular significance. The details of the picture can be confirmed to such a degree that there is no doubt that this is a
When, in 1963, Freire was appointed as Director of the National Literacy programme, he spearheaded the design and organisation of a National Development Plan: he planned that this would involve some 2,000,000 people, who would then be enrolled in the Culture Circles. Clearly he was influenced both by the success of such groups within the Trades Union Movement in Brazil in the 1920's, and particularly encouraged by the experience of the Cuban Literacy experiment which had been completed the year before.

On 26th September, 1960, Castro had addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations for the first time, an event that was recorded and noted throughout South America.

"In the coming year, our people intend to fight the great battle of illiteracy, with the ambitious goal of teaching every single inhabitant of the country to read and write in one year, and with that in mind, organisations of teachers, students and workers, that is, the entire people, are now preparing themselves for an intensive campaign...Cuba will be the first country in America which, after a few months, will be able to say that it does not have one person who remains illiterate."

The relative size of the illiteracy problem in Cuba may well have been greater than that in Brazil. Kozol records that, in 1953, the year of last official census

110. For the full text of Castro's speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, see Kenner (1969).
prior to Castro's speech, some 1,632,849 adults were illiterate, approximately one in four of the adult population. Nonetheless, Cuban educators were convinced that conventional, educational methods (by which they meant a teacher working with a class of pupils) would not confront this problem. Instead, they were looking for a normative teacher/pupil ratio of 1:2, but were accepting of a higher ratio of 1:4 in exceptional circumstances.

Freire followed much of the structure of the Cuban programme, but clearly differs from it on this point. Nowhere has he explained this major divergence of method, but it may be possible that it was simply an acceptance of the reality, financially and politically, that he was only able to enrol a small and limited number of educators/co-ordinators in his programme and that the enormous resource of the Cuban brigadistas, (which Castro had obtained by closing all the schools and enrolling teachers and secondary school pupils), was not available to him.

Instead he opted for large group teaching, justifying this choice in part on unit costings. Although there is a divergence in the actual figures which he has quoted, there is no doubt that the overall expenditure for the programme was cost efficient. He notes (1976b:53) that "in a period of six to eight weeks, we could leave a group of 25 persons reading newspapers, writing notes and simple letters, and discussing problems of local and national interest". The Polish made projector, of which the Education Ministry
imported 35,000 cost $13.00 and, because they did not have their own laboratory, a film-strip cost $7-$8. Three years later, in *Education for Awareness*, he recalls that the Polish projectors cost $2.50 and the film/slides cost $1, and that, on the basis of a group of 25, each initial cycle of the programme would cost $5-$7 per group/Culture Circle (1976:n:14).

This is the evidence, the size of the group, the projector and the projected picture, which clearly supports the conclusion that fig.10 represents a Freirean Culture Circle. It is, as Brown notes, a picture which "shows a circle of culture functioning: participants can easily recognise it as representing themselves."

What the observer sees, however, is not just the participants but also the pedagogy, the functioning of the group. Yet it is here that some major contradictions are exposed.

The most obvious is the overtly directive manner of the teaching. There is no hint here of a learning partnership, of a dialogue between equals. Rather, what is evident is the clear distinction between the teacher and the taught. Fig.10 actually presents an image of that Banking Education which Freire had so rejected in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

"A careful analysis of the teacher-student relationship, inside or outside school, reveals its fundamentally narrative character. This relationship involves a narrating Subject (the
The teacher talks about reality. Or else, he expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experiences of the students.

Narrative Education turns students into "containers", into receptacles to be filled by the teacher. The more completely he fills the receptacles, the better a teacher he is."

There is nothing to suggest, in Fig.10, that the teacher/student contradiction has been resolved, although Freire insists that Education must begin with the reconciling of these two poles so that both teacher and students are "simultaneously teachers and students". On the contrary, the picture reveals the central, controlling role of the co-ordinator who must, for this picture as for the earlier pictures, direct the discussion to pre-set learning objectives. It is the co-ordinator who introduces the phrase "the democratisation of culture" which is a theme which the group in unlikely to come to unaided.

The democratisation of culture, however, is not the democratisation of learning, i.e. the possibility that learning outcomes could be controlled by the learners. Brown and Freire are already assured of the outcome of the discussions; for the former, it is that the participants would have regained enormous self-confidence, pride in their culture and a desire to learn to read. For the latter, it is that there is a foundation for the literacy programme.
This foundation, a prerequisite for the continuation of the programme, has been created in just two sessions, possibly in two hours, so that, on the third night, the literacy programme can begin. The actual statement by Freire here needs careful analysis:

"The preceding situations are discussed in two sessions, strongly motivating the group to begin on the third night their literacy programme, which they now see as a key to written communication".

It is evident that, with only two sessions, the co-ordinators would have to control the content of the discussions. To actually consider all the pictures, the agenda setting picture of Fig.1. through to the summary, recapitulation of Fig.10., a high degree of manipulation and direction is required on the part of the co-ordinator. Certain themes which lie outside the experience of the group have to be introduced: other questions or issues, which would be thrown up in the light of the experience of the group, have to be avoided.

Taking just three of symptoms by which Freire's identifies, in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, the attitudes and practices of Banking Education, we see in this Fig.10, and indeed throughout the programme, that it is:

- the teacher who chooses and enforces his choice, and the students who comply;
- the teacher who acts and the students who have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
- the teacher who chooses the programme content, and students (who were not consulted) who adapt to it.

There is a subtle, but important, nuance in the
difference between students being self-motivated to begin their literacy programme, and the fact that it is "the preceding situations (i.e. the discussion of the ten pictures) which strongly motivates the group". The participants of the group are led to a position where they can express a need for literacy rather than to a position where there is an awareness in the group of their own felt needs. This is because the essential content of Fig. 10 is educator-centred rather than student-centred. There is an evident iatrogenesis underlying both the malady and the remedy. The educator has been enabled or required by Freire to act as pharmacist and to present the group with the pharmakon of literacy (in two, differing senses of the word: pharmakon), through a heuristic device which uses the remedy for the symptoms to identify, even to create, the prognosis.

The real need, therefore, for literacy, which responds to those needs of someone in the process of conscientisation, viz. those needs exposed and sustained within the ideas of Culture presented in the ten pictures, is required to give place to the more superficial, reactive need which is voiced, in other contexts, by the consumer to the supplier. The illusion is that the need, the demand for literacy, is created by the consumer and that it is the supplier who must respond by continuing the learning programme. In reality, it is the supplier/educator who has created the need and the level of demand has been controlled so that the consumer will only ask for that
which is currently available. The demand, therefore, for such a literacy programme may arise more in a group or society that is still unconscientised rather than in one which has become critically aware and liberated through the processes of dialogic learning.

This dichotomy or inversion of the outcomes of critical consciousness is encouraged in this Fig.10 through the unconcealed implication that there is a difference between the processes of literacy and the processes of conscientisation. The discussions of the ten pictures may have contributed to the latter, but they serve only as an introduction to the former. It is stated that it is only on the third night, that is, after the discussion of the pictures, that the participants begin their literacy programme. The discussions, however valuable or essential, are clearly intended to be distinct from the actual literacy programme.

That distinction is not shared with the participants of the Culture Circles any more than what has now become apparent, that is that their literacy programme is in two stages: there is a first stage of learning to read the word, but that in itself is only a key, an introduction to writing the word.

This element of literacy Freire has avoided. We have noted that, throughout the pictures, there has been very little emphasis on writing. On the contrary, the
main themes have been about reading, reading the word and reading the world. There has been no analysis of the processes by which words are written, no reflection on the technologies of writing, no consideration of script as culture. At best there has been the refrain, there-enforcement of the view that literacy is about "dominating the techniques of reading and writing". (Fig. 1.)

Here, however, a further difference within the literacy process is identified: that learning to read is a key to, a prerequisite for, learning to write. Literacy is not simply a composite of both skills, a reading-and-writing skill. It is instead a hierarchy of skills concealed within a single definition, viz:

\[
\text{Literacy} = \text{mastery of the skill of reading} \\
\text{mastery of the book;}
\]

or

\[
\text{Literacy} = \text{mastery of the skills of reading AND writing} \\
\text{mastery of the pen.}
\]

The content of the each skills base in left vague: Freire simply asserts a correlation between the two, although for many of the participants of the Culture Circles this may not be obvious. They would almost certainly know of people who could read but who could not write, just as they would know of people who could read but who were still oppressed.

The importance of this confusion is that, having said that literacy is a key to written communication, Freire then asserts that
"Literacy only makes sense in these terms... literacy which is not external to people but becomes a part of them, comes as a creation from within them. I see validity only in a literacy programme in which people understand words in their true significance: as a force to transform the world" (my emphasis).

What is thereby left unsaid is that literacy, without the ability to write, cannot transform the world because literacy, if that means only the ability to read, is not dialogic.

At this late stage of the discussion, Freire is asserting the critical role of writing and the primacy of the written. As an image, it is as if he were saying that it is not the man with the book who can change the world, but the man with the pen. But the rhetoric fails the reality. Throughout the sequence of pictures, no mention has been made of the pen, no hint has been given as to this hierarchy of influence. On the contrary, the participants have been encouraged, motivated to start their literacy programme because it will enable them to read.

This is a severe accusation of the Freirean methodology and philosophy for such literacy has, as its objective, to enable people to conform to their world rather than to transform it. It succours the oppressed with the balm of assimilation. It is not a pedagogy of the oppressed: it is a pedagogy for the oppressed.

Freire ends by saying: "Learning to read and write has meaning in that, by requiring men to reflect about
themselves and about the world they are in and with, it makes them discover that the world is also theirs, that their work is not the price for being men but rather a way of loving— and of helping the world to be a better place”.

This is the Utopianism, the claim that Literacy only makes sense in these terms, which so many critics have noted in Freire. Yet reality will not support the rhetoric. The lived experience of the members of the Culture Circles will not support it. The sequence of ten pictures, offered as evidence for the defence, not only will not support it but actually contradicts it.

* * * * *

In reviewing the evidence to hand, it would be easy to dismiss Freire with the pedagogy of a Canute who confronts, with his literacy programme, the waves of oppression. We could mock him for holding up The Book of revolution in defiant gestures against the guns of the status quo. We can accuse him of being a crypto-Banking Educator who has made considerable profit from the discovery of new markets. All that might be true. Yet it is also true that the process works, that many thousands of people have learnt to read and write through involvement in such Culture Circles in South America, Africa and other parts of the Third World. Despite its inherent contradictions, Freire’s literacy programme has created new levels of social literacy.
What remains to be done now is to use the clarifications which this analysis has provided, to move into that third stage of the Freirean method where reflection returns self-consciously to action. We can pose the question simply: is it possible, with this Freirean perspective, to construct an overview of literacy that directly addresses the underlying issues of power-knowledge, culture-conformity, writing and social change?
PART 3:  TOWARDS REFLECTIVE ACTION

CHAPTER 6.  A PRACTICE AND THEORY OF LITERACY

CONCLUSION
6.1 Redefining the Obvious

The final picture used in Freire's literacy programme clearly highlights the essential interaction between the teacher and the learner, the literate and the non-literate, bringing into question the viability of a truly dialogic process of education. Beneath that, however, there is a further interaction of Power-Knowledge that is even more critical to the particular debate about literacy and which the preceding analysis of Freire's work can help us to reconstruct.

In Fig.10, (p.267) the most obvious, indeed even superficial, relationship is that between the teacher and the taught. Yet that relationship is only symptomatic of the underlying, more critical relationship between the teacher and the text/screen. For the non-literate, they combine as the guiding hand and the guiding text which lead the learner to literacy. For the teacher, the text/board is the essential supplément: without the board and the generative text, the teacher cannot teach.

The authenticity of the teacher is therefore dependent on this "bank" of literate information and gadgetry, in exactly the same way as is the learner who is being guided, not primarily by the teacher, but by the arche-text which appears on the board.
In that relationship, the teacher is sacramental: he or she is the minister, the pupils the congregation, the text/board the altar. Through the enactment of certain rituals (the animation of the classroom), both teacher and taught have access, albeit differential access, to a superior power, viz. the power of Literacy.111

That power of literacy cannot be denied, but it does need to be explained and understood. In this chapter, therefore, we shall apply the framework of contradictions which Freire has exposed to formulate a definition of literacy, to consider again the inherent problem of literacy as patriarchy and symbolic power, and to attempt to construct the principal elements of literate language such that it becomes clear that dialogic Literacy (if that is not to be a contradiction in terms) is primarily a process of Writing rather than the Freirean process of Reading.

The first stage of defining terms, far from providing some standard, formalised preface through which the writer/reader must struggle before getting to the real content of the argument, is actually an essential, heuristic device which may help us to reduce the argument.

111. There is an intense inversion of values hidden here in the language. The teacher, the Magister (lat. magis., more, better) becomes the minister, the Minister (lat. servent or helper, minus, less, below. The educator in search of Freirean dialogue may, therefore, be seeking the irreconcilable—the function of the ministerium of teaching and the role of the maisterium of the teacher.
to its essentials, to identify the key elements which lie hidden in any phenomenon which is patently not self-explanatory.

Yet this is exactly what is lacking in many studies of literacy, not least in Freire. Graff (1987:18) notes that "it is depressing but instructive to note how rarely debates and discussions about literacy levels pause to consider what is meant by reference to literacy", but he excuses that in part by saying that the question of definition is at once an insolubly complex problem and a deceptively simply issue. Graff's own response, which is not untypical, is to err on the side of the deceptively simple.

He sets himself three tasks which are easily met: to provide a consistent definition that serves comparatively over time and across space; to stress that literacy is a technology for communications and for decoding and reproducing written and printed materials; to step into precise, historically specific material and cultural contexts. My criticism here is that Graff is mainly descriptive and that he does not confront the underlying value judgments with which he constructs his approach to literacy. His selective, operational definition and his insistence that literacy is primarily a communicative technology lead him to grace literacy with a quasi-instrumental role in individual and social change which does not yield to sustained and detailed analysis.
His is an approach, influential as it has been in
many studies, that justifies Giroux's (1989:150) wider
comment that literacy has been "gravely undertheorised".
As a consequence of ideology or of pragmatism, literacy has
been accepted either as desirable for certain social or
cultural settings, compulsory for education, advisable for
employment or obligatory for economic development. Yet
all these approaches conceal diverse, even mutually
exclusive, theories of literacy.

A definition that confronted these inherent
contradictions would enhance the immediate study of
literacy, but it would also serve to clarify other key
concepts which are necessarily included in any literacy
discussion, e.g. orality and illiteracy. Illiteracy is
not the converse of literacy, nor is orality its obverse.
There is no simplistic continuum,

\[
\text{ORALITY} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{LITERACY} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{ILLITERACY}
\]

nor is there any automatic correlation between orality and
illiteracy.

The point is worth making from the outset because
many projects which claim to be "Literacy Campaigns" are
couched in terms of combating or eradicating illiteracy.\footnote{112}

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112. The now classic campaigns in Cuba and Nicaragua,
(Kozol, 1978; Cardenal, 1981) which became models of
similar campaigns in Africa and Asia, are good
examples of this literacy inversion.
Here one is not simply playing with words: frequently the motivation for literacy teaching, the adequate resourcing and effective support for such activities politically, financially, practically, and the evaluation of identifiable outcomes depends how and why one has drawn the distinction between illiteracy and non-illiteracy.

The distinction is thrown further into relief when one asks: If literacy is to be a priority, for whom should it be a priority? For whom is it a problem? Without a definition of terms, and without a detailed analysis of the elements within that definition, we are unlikely to be able to answer those questions.

We are not helped, however, by the kind of overview and apparent directness of the response offered e.g. by Nickerson. He states (1985:313) that "Adult illiteracy is a serious national problem." and then clarifies that by saying "illiteracy is everybody's problem."

"It is the problem of the person who lacks literacy, because it limits one's ability to compete in the workplace, it narrows one's options for communication and information acquisition, and it impoverishes...

113. Reflecting this disparity of approach, Nickerson (1985) notes that the lack of significant progress towards literacy has not been the result of lack of attention. Quoting Weber (1975), he points out that, in the U.S.A., some ten major federal agencies were authorised by nearly 30 laws to teach reading to adults, while more than 600 non-governmental agencies were engaged in adult basic education. In a national guide to literacy facilities, Kadavy et. al. list 39 national literacy programmes and several thousand state-level resources.
one's intellectual life in numerous ways.

"It is the problem of local, state and national governments, because it represents a cost to taxpayers and necessitates the maintenance of various programmes to provide for people whose job opportunities are severely limited.

"It is a problem of institutionalised education, because a high incidence of adult illiteracy is stark evidence of the failure of the education system as a whole.

"It is the problem of society in general, because it promotes the kind of inequalities that fuel conflict, disorder, and discontent.

"Illiteracy is a fundamental and profound problem to the nation, because only to the degree that its citizens are sufficiently well informed to participate meaningfully in the political process... can a democratic society expect to survive and prosper."

One has only to count the number of value judgments in this generalised problematising of the issue to see that it is not an approach that can be sustained by rigorous analysis. Like Freire, is Nickerson presenting here a diagnosis of Literacy or a pathology of Society?

To study specifically the issues of power and literacy, the clear focusing of the definitional lens requires that a number of distinctions be made.

First, we need to distinguish literacy as the CONTENT of teaching/learning to read and write and literacy as a MEDIUM. In the first case, we could consider what actually happens when someone learns to read and write, what linguistic or epistemological theory explains the process, what pedagogical exchange takes place, what books
are used, what script is produced, what changes individually or socially are directly attributable to this "literacy event", etc.

This would put into sharp contrast literacy as MEDIUM. On the one hand, it would reveal what Heath calls the difference between "being literate and behaving as literate"114, literacy objectives which are actually more about "literateness", and what Debray is referring to when he suggests that "the instrumental value of writing is less than its symbolic value."115

"Being literate" clearly represents a certain range of social and personal values, and in certain settings and relationships it is important to be "seen to be literate." It is frequently said to be the case that people who are not literate can conceal their illiteracy: by appropriate imitation of acceptable, literate behaviour, they can "hide their deficiency". Equally, being able to write in a community where that is a rare skill ensures, as we have seen, because of the totemic value of the Book, a certain social status and recognition.

114. Heath, 1986a:282: "Their major complaint sounded familiar: "high school graduates are not literate." But discussion revealed that they did not mean that high school students could not read and write, but that they could not talk as though they read and wrote."

115. Debray, 1980:24 "Si la réalité instrumentale de l'écriture compte moins que sa symbolique, c'est que cette dernière prend effet au sein des relations politiques entre les hommes et les groupes."
Even a casual reading of the aims and objectives of certain local literacy projects or some national literacy policies reveals that a priority is placed on the teaching of literacy precisely because it serves as a medium for group and social control, correct thinking, correct behaviour, citizenship, or cultural integration. This is more than the application to literacy of Bourdieu’s theory of education and cultural reproduction. It is the enactment through literacy training of the value in Olson’s statement (1977:257) that “Speech makes us human and literacy makes us civilised.”

This distinction between the processes of literacy learning and the outcomes or consequences of such learning, which arises from the question “What do we mean by literacy?”, also raises a secondary question: “What do we mean by literate and illiterate?”

The prime meaning of literate describes a person who “has some acquaintance with literature”116. To be literate is to be well educated, cultured, able to think and speak in a particular way, able to appreciate the finer things of life. It is all that goes with being “well-read”: to be learned as well as wise. “Non minima pars eruditionis est bonos nosse libros.”

Paradoxically, in the more modern times of mass literacy, this maximal view of literacy has received little attention. Heath (1985:2) makes the same point:

"It is unfashionable, except in certain narrow circles, to discuss what being literate means or to take up topics that ring with elitism. The term "literate" smacks of exclusivity and values traditionally tied to the leisured upper classes: it is often used synonymously with being intellectual."

The focus of contemporary literacy debates is less directed to looking up to cultural literacy, to the "upper" classes and to the great heights of knowledge and learning, than to looking down (and the social and political connotations of the expression are not to be missed) to functional literacy, the basic, minimal skills of "being able to read and write". Modern pedagogues may add the ability to count, numeracy, to these two skills, unmindful of the fact that "reading numbers" is only analogously a literacy skill and not an essential part of the concept of literacy.117

The possible confusion then in describing someone as literate is evident, but that is not the end of the difficulties. Even when "literate" is reduced to what

117. Numeracy, which is not treated at all within Freire's pedagogy, is now considered to be part of our standard alphanumeric sign system and included in "being literate". Because the functionality of such literacies has been the dominant factor, this important difference between numeracy and strictly alphabetic literacy has been overlooked. In my view, the metalinguistics and intellectual perception required for competence in numeracy differ from those required for the analogous competence in literacy.
many would call the mechanical skills of being able to read and write, a further reduction is possible. "Literate" can mean simply "the ability to read". Many literacy projects, schooling curricula and educational policies concentrate on reading, and very little attention is given to writing. In common parlance, a person who cannot write but who can read will be counted as literate.

Who then is illiterate? Given the usage of "literate", a person may be illiterate who

a) cannot read or write,

b) cannot write but can read or,

c) can read and write but not "properly", i.e. not reflecting the level of cultural literacy as defined by the dominant classes. 118

118. There is a fourth category of illiterate which derives from an "anti-critique" of literacy. If literacy is viewed primarily as a semiotics of communication, the ability equally to receive information through reading and to transfer information through writing, then there is an argument that some of those who are considered highly literate are in fact illiterate.

I have developed this conclusion from Levine's (1982) analysis of 36 leaflets produced by the department of Health and Social Security in Britain and an evaluation of selected news items in British national daily newspapers.

Material from both sources required a reading age of between 13.5 and 16.5, and clearly the content of the material was dysfunctional when viewed against the estimated reading ages of clients and consumers. In that sense, the writers of the material could be judged to be illiterate. The myth of "hyper-literacy" would merit a detailed analysis in itself. The point can be noted here without deflecting from the argument of the present study.
The danger of such an apparently exhaustive definition of illiteracy is that it ceases to be meaningful. This is particularly true in the debate about the transition from orality to literacy and the comparing and contrasting of literate culture with oral culture. "Illiterate" then again becomes a confused middle term: firstly, it may mean someone who lives in an oral culture, i.e. in a society that is not literate, and who has never had the need or the opportunity to read or to write, and for whom such skills would be exculturating, i.e. might place that person outside the norms and values of the society. Secondly, "illiterate" may mean someone who lives in a literate society, i.e. in a society where oral communication and the semiotics of orality do not suffice, who may or may not be aware of their need to read and write, but who nonetheless is exculturated, marginalised by the society because of their lack of such skills. Finally, "illiterate" may mean someone who lives in a literate society, who has learnt to read and even to write, most frequently through the years of compulsory schooling, but for whom their level of competence in these skills or their need to use these skills post-schooling, was not sufficient to sustain usage, and hence the person has lapsed into illiteracy, i.e. a life style which does not require them to read or to write beyond an absolutely minimum level.

This latter category of person may perhaps better be classed as Semi-literate rather than as illiterate, and
this will be the term adopted in this study. But what of the other two categories of "illiterates"? A useful distinction can be made in French, in part in Spanish, but not in English, that confronts this difficulty and may help in finding appropriate English terms.

In French/Spanish, one can speak of those non-literate whose discourse and patterns of communication are founded in modes of orality: these are les analphabètes, los analfabetos, those who have never been "alphabetised." In relation to the First or the Third World, one can speak of a literacy programme as a campañ de alfabetización, and of e.g. areas of illiteracy as poches d'analphabétisme.119

On the other hand, illettrisme,120 a concept which exists in French but not in Spanish, specifically denotes those who inhabit a literate culture, who have been through formal schooling but who either, despite that experience,

119. For an example of French and Spanish usage of these terms, see: Roman, 1990; Jerez and Pico, 1971.

120. The word seems to have first been used by the ATD-Quart monde in the 1960's, and passed into widespread usage in the 1980's. See: Fondet, 1990.

le Robert Dictionary quotes a 1983 usage of illettrisme: "état de ceux qui sont illettrés", and defines illettré as "qui est partiellement incapable de lire et d'écrire."

It is worth noting, en passant, that in current French usage lettré retains the high cultural values of "literate" in English: "qui a des lettres. de la culture, du savoir", for which the synonyms given are cultivé and érudit.
have never learnt to read and write, or who achieved such a low level of competency in reading and writing that they have regressed to a state of illiteracy.

"Illettré" in this sense approximates to what I have called "semi-literacy", but it serves to highlight the need to distinguish those, other than the semi-literates, who are not literate. Here cultural factors are wholly significant. Given that the construct of illiteracy only pertains to a literate society, the use of the term to describe people in an oral culture may indeed be a form of intellectual colonisation.121

In the strict sense of the term, people within an oral society are non-literate: literacy is simply not a construct that is meaningful or relevant to them in the context of their individual lives and collective culture. However, people who are members of an otherwise literate society but who cannot read and write are more precisely illiterate. They may be aware that they are outwith the cultural norms of the society and may be seeking to remedy that situation through learning to read and write; they may unaware of any particular problems arising from their illiteracy; or they may be aware of particular problems, but nonetheless have chosen to remain illiterate. The costs of acquiring literacy skills outweigh the possible.

121. See the discussion of Situation Three, "The Unlettered Hunter", p.198. Freire, 1976b:67 "The participants discuss how education occurs in an unlettered culture, where one cannot properly speak of illiterates."
future advantages or may even result in the loss of certain present benefits.

This large group of people, which exists in both developed and underdeveloped countries throughout the world, I have referred to previously as non-literates.122 Here I shall retain the use of semi-literate to describe those who have only a minimally literate functioning within the literate culture.123

With these clarifications in mind, we can now focus our definitional lens of the actual terrain of literacy teaching.

122. The problem is highlighted in the translation into French of A B C: The Alphabetisation of the Popular Mind, by Ivan Illich and Barry Sanders. 1988. (A B C: L’alphabétisation de l’esprit populaire, La Découverte, Paris, 1990. trans. Maud Sissung.) The translator notes that French does not have a word equivalent to the English literacy, that is “the ability to read and to write”. She explains her choice of the word alphabétisme. It is clear, however, that the nuance of the word actually alters the sense of certain passages in the book.

Interestingly, she does comment (p.9) “le français a possédé un mot pour désigner la capacité de lire et d’écrire: la lettrure, terme que l’on rencontre dans les textes du XII et du XIII siècle...mais il est tombé en désuétude.”

123. Semi-oral might be just as logical a term to use, and one that would certainly be provocative of a useful discussion. However, firstly, I shall want to argue later that patterns of orality are not lost through literacy, or at least not through functional literacy. Secondly, what we might call the hegemony of literateness is best reflected in the term semi-literate: in a literate society, it is against criteria of literacy and not of orality that each individual and each class is judged.
In the conclusion to their study, Chartier and Hébrard (1989) draw attention to literacy in the modern world as a universal social paradigm. Reading, they argue, is omnipresent, at one and the same time a functional necessity, a legitimate pastime, and a never-ending task. "One never finishes learning to read".

The importance of their argument is not that it provides a Cassandra-like pessimism that serves to check the pursuit of what I have criticised as "hyper-literacy", although it is perhaps prudent even for the highly literate to be reminded that there is no such thing as 100% literacy. Their most significant point is to site universal literacy as if it were in tandem with universal suffrage.

There are those indeed who consider literacy as a fundamental human right, an implied term, for example, in the United Nations Charter on Human Rights. Article 26 states:

"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality."

The first obvious problem arises in deciding whether the terrain of literacy teaching is located within this general right to education. If literacy is a right, might it not also be an obligation? If schooling is itself compulsory, i.e. obligatory at least at elementary level, does one have the right not to be literate? Can one claim the right to
be literate by the end of elementary schooling? Must all education be literate education? 124

These are very important and much discussed questions clearly influence the way in which we construct the role of education as the purveyor of orality and/or literacy. There is, however, a prior question of fundamental importance which is very rarely discussed but which throws into relief the whole issue of literacy as a right. That question is one we have already confronted in Freire and concerns literacy for women, or "patriarchy and literate power".

124. In his review of UNESCO and of the proceedings of the International Symposium for Literacy which was held at Persepolis, Iran, Bataille (1976) confirms that agency's strong commitment to literacy as a universal, human right.

It is in this light that we should view UNESCO's initiative Education for All, (1984). It was modelled on a similarly argued programme within the World Health Organisation. Health for All. The W.H.O. had proposed, following its conference on primary health care in Alma Ata, (USSR) in 1978, a programme of basic health care to achieve "a more equitable distribution of health resources throughout the world" and to "enable all people to lead a life which was socially and economically productive". UNESCO proposed a programme of basic education, again "to achieve a more equitable distribution of educational resources" and "to enable all people to lead a life which was socially and economically productive."

6.2 Patriarchy and Literate Power

The issue of sexism in Freire's work is not primarily a question of Brazilian culture, albeit that is of great significance. Rather, the evidence of linguistic and social discrimination which we have already noted suggests perhaps that this particular expression of power-knowledge is inherent in the dominant construction of the relationship between language, literacy and power itself.

In their very honest study of this relationship in the context of power and silence, (that Culture of Silence which Freire would recognise), Lewis and Simon (1986) were confronted by, but in turn were enabled to confront, the dominant role of patriarchy in the construction and control of a graduate seminar, mutatis mutandis —a Culture Circle. This setting of learning-teaching, which one experienced as a female student and the other as a male tutor, revealed what Lewis describes as:

"...the power relations within which men's lives and interests circumscribe those of women. I equivocate deliberately on the word "interest" for I do indeed intend both meanings of the word —what interests men as well as what is in their interest." (1986:459)

In showing how patriarchy provides an auto-reproductive immune system which protects men's interests, the study also shows "how women are politically disempowered, economically disadvantaged, and socially delegitimated, not as individuals but as a group" and how "the overwhelming experience of women in a society
dominated by men is that of being silenced.\textsuperscript{(1986:463,459)}

Lewis is not a unique case. Although she is a graduate student, and although she represents many other women who may find themselves in what we may call "the higher echelons of literacy", she also represents many more women who are less literate than she but who, nonetheless, experience literacy, illiteracy and alphabetisation as an expression of patriarchy and domination.

This is a profound repositioning of the terrain of literacy, a perspective which is as essential to the discussion as it is absent. Rockhill (1987) notes:

"With rare exception, discourses about literacy, whether about power, skills or social relations, are strangely silent on the questions of gender or of women - especially strange since women are the primary participants of literacy programmes."\textsuperscript{125}

The effect of this is not simply to remove the discussion of women and literacy from the agenda. It is to allow those patriarchal perspectives, which underpin so much of current literacy practice, to raise the banner of universal literacy in order to catalogue all the benefits of "liberating pedagogy" and "critical literacy", for the

\textsuperscript{125} Rockhill (1988:7) makes the point even more firmly functional literacy. "Literacy is important to women; in the gendered construction of work in our society, literacy is more important for women than for men."

Monaghan (1987) presents the historical construction of male literacy through her detailed study of penmanship in the Writing Schools of 18th Century Boston.
individual, society and the economy, yet, at the same time maintain women in a state of oppression. Women's literacy exists, it is said “to allow women to eat bread so that men can eat cake.” Literacy may be more and more a necessary part of a woman's work, but it is not yet a fundamental, human right.

What evidence is there to support these last two judgments? Is it possible to refute the implications of the advice of Restif de la Bretonne quoted by Furet and Ozouf (1982:340)?

“All women should be prohibited from learning to write and even read. This would preserve them from loose thoughts, confining them to useful task about the house, instilling in them respect for the first sex.”

Some figures prevent the discussion from becoming merely theoretical. It is evident that the highest rates of illiteracy are to be found in the least developed countries and, most often, among the poor. In 1985, India and China accounted respectively for 30 and 26% of the illiterate population in the world. In the 25 “least developed countries” (those with an annual per capita income of less than $100 U.S.) the level of illiteracy was some 80% in 1970, (Bataille, 1976) and 68% in 1985 (Unesco, 1985).

126. The quotation was from Restif de la Bretonne, a schoolmaster in Burgundy in the 1740's, but it retains a decidedly modern ring.
Nearly 70% of women are illiterate. According to recent estimates (Ramdas, 1989) the total number of illiterates worldwide rose from 760 millions in 1970 to 889 millions in 1985, but the proportion of women as a percentage of the total illiterate population rose from 58% to more than 60% over the same period.

The Table (p.301) shows the percentage difference between male and female illiterates throughout the world. If one then notes the correlation between non-literacy and under-development, and the fact that women in under-developed countries are also likely to experience a lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, minimal access to education, lower levels of nutrition, poor health facilities, longer working hours yet low productivity, then it is not difficult to draw the conclusion that women who are also illiterate suffer a double jeopardy.

Whilst this situation may be more immediately obvious in the Third World, evidence of similar oppression is not lacking in the developed world. A recent report in *Canadian Women's Studies* (Lampert, 1988) showed a clear gender-related correlation between women, poverty and illiteracy.

Notwithstanding this evidence, it is only in very recent years that UNESCO, among other agencies, has seriously considered the way in which illiteracy affects women.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Rates of Illiteracy in 1985 amongst adults aged 15 years or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Illiteracy aged 15+</td>
<td>Men &amp; Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Countries</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Developed Countries</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>54.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>17.3</td>
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<td>Asia</td>
<td>36.3</td>
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<td>Oceania</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe (including USSR)</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We are clearly here discussing literacy as more than the mechanical skills of reading and writing, but thereby illustrating how literacy cannot be assessed outwith the particular social contexts within which it is realised. This is not simply the retort that there is no text without a context: it is a means by which one of the most fundamental dilemmas in the literacy terrain is revealed.

Let us take the Experimental World Literacy Programme as an example. The UNESCO evaluation of the EWLP states that the programme reached one million illiterate people at a total cost of some $32 million. The cost-benefit analysis may in itself be a male construct that would not have considered the question "Within this million, how many were women?" The question was not raised by UNESCO: for diverse cultural, political or religious reasons neither was it raised by any of the participating countries.127

It was no accident, therefore, that the EWLP's criteria for assessing the value of functional literacy per

127. UNESCO has recorded for some time the worldwide percentage of women illiterates, but it was only at the Jomtien Conference (Thailand, 1990) that this information was translated into active policies.

For example, it was known in 1965 that the proportion of female illiterates significantly exceeded that of males. In at least three countries, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the Yemen, it was claimed that the total female population was illiterate, while in many other countries the figure was over 90%. Nonetheless, women's literacy was not seen as a priority. See:UNESCO, Literacy Statistics, Unesco, Paris, 1965, pp. 45, 118, 129.
as excluded women: functional literacy, according to the assessors of the programme, brings about a "change for the better, on condition that it is associated with a process of genuine innovation, (of a political, social, or technical nature) in which participants are themselves involved" (Unesco, 1976:160).

What UNESCO was unable to contemplate was that, for many women, its campaign of functional literacy was dysfunctional. The way in which women live literacy or illiteracy, as the way in which they live patriarchy, politics, society and technology, means that they cannot profit from literacy policies or programmes which are predominantly designed by men for men.

Within patriarchy, literacy is modelled around reading and writing skills, but it is also constructed as a way of achieving an equality of opportunity, a means of confronting oppression, a vehicle for liberation. These are the goals of which literacy is a prerequisite. But as something which is required, literacy is also a "something" (a thing, an object, an article, a commodity) that has to be acquired. Literacy is objectified: the processes of learning to read and write are separated from the product; the content of the learning is separated from the context in which the effects of that learning will be felt.

Removed from the lived experience, literacy then becomes, in Foucault's term (1982), an element of
governaunce, part of the structures which direct and control human relations and individual action. I would argue that it is impossible to identify an element of such governaunce that does not have a gender bias, and that this is evidenced in the case of literacy.

Rockhill's (1987) specific study of Hispanic women in Los Angeles is indicative.

"The study we conducted in Los Angeles points to gender differences in everyday literacy practices, as well as the integral relationship between the sexual oppression of women and literacy."

One has only to look at the ordinary lives of literate and illiterate women. Obviously, no one paradigm can represent all women in all social and cultural settings, but one can note factors which tend to recur. For example, because of the silencing of women, their confinement to the domestic sphere, the content and structure of female employment, women tend to use and depend more on the written word than do men. They rarely go out alone, even to go to school or adult evening classes. Most of their literacy work is also household work and involves purchasing goods for the family, often from catalogues or through a third party, managing insurances and family allowances, arranging or paying for public services (water, gas, electricity, garbage collection), being responsible for primary health care and for the schooling of children (helping with homework and maintaining contact with the school).
That is why the objectives of functional literacy programmes are a non-sense to many women. What they are directed towards is not in their interests and does not reflect their needs. Rather, traditional objectives reflect a male role model, e.g. a man who will get a job and work outside the home, who will drive a car or a lorry, who will complete tax returns for himself and for his wife; he may well read the public notices, but it will be his voice that is heard in local politics.

This is a social paradigm which one could replicate almost anywhere in the world. It may differ in its choice of examples or in the carefulness of its language, but it does not differ in kind from the paradigm reflected in Restif de la Bretonne (p.299 supra). It is a paradigm that asserts categorically that it is not possible to review the terrain of literacy without clarifying a gender perspective. Literacy is not simply located at the interface between male/female patterns of communication or role-typing. It is embedded in the experience of patriarchy, culturally, socially and politically, and therefore in the constructions of power which “govern” male/female relations.

It is one of the paradoxes of literacy, that many “illiterate” women are more literate than their male “illiterate” counterparts. Yet it is the male definition of literacy which is validated, forged as it is in the public economy of the workplace and tempered as it is with
cultural and social patriarchy. Women's literacy is devalued because it belongs to the home, to care of children and to the maintenance of private life. Women's literacy is forced to belong only to what Freire calls "the culture of silence".

Perhaps, however, the ultimate paradox of contemporary literacy discussions is simply that women who have the greatest need of literacy, who enrol more often than men in such programmes, and who can apply and capitalise on new learning more significantly than men, are excluded from positions where they could plan and implement their own literacy programmes.

The terrain of teaching and learning literacy is peopled primarily by women. Therefore, to the degree that either the concept or the practice of literacy lack a predominantly female construct, to that degree will they fail in their objectives to promote creativity, equality, and liberation.

6.3 Ordinary Language and Literate Language

This construct of female literacy, or literacy for women, is missing entirely from Freire. Like UNESCO, where he himself was an acclaimed consultant, he never followed the logic of his own pedagogy to ask (given that it was clear that the panacea of education could treat the
Instead, his emphasis has been primarily on the structure of language and on how, parsed alphabetically, someone might learn to "name their world".

This would lead us to search for a further point of clarification: does one so name the world in one's own language, or does that have to be done in a new, "literate language"? The question is more complex than it seems.

Any study of literacy is based on notions, more or less explicit, about language, language that is spoken, language that is read and language that is written. Embedded in these notions is the requirement that one can make sense of what, in Heath's words (1986b:213) is "the segmenting, isolation, labelling, and describing of bits of language apart from their communicative context." The discussion about literacy can only occur where there is an ability to take language apart, to analyse the very construction of language in terms of sentences, subclauses, verbs, nouns, words, etc. Without this linguistic framework, what is there to be literate about? Literacy, one might argue, is only a way of expressing a critical awareness of the written and the read word.

The development of literacy, therefore, according to
Heath, requires not just the development of immediate language skills, but the capacity to engage in a meta-linguistic debate about the very notion of language itself. For example, to be able to discuss the statement that "there is no comma or quotation marks in oral speech", or Freire's provocative comment "no-one is orally illiterate", or "silence is communicative", one needs to have acquired that meta-linguistic skill.

Such skill is more than a merely personal attribute. Heath's second requirement for the development of literacy is that the society itself should engender institutional settings in which knowledge gained from written material can be talked about, interpreted and extended. In this way, she creates a bridge between linguistic theory and language practice. While she asks, "Does the retention of literacy depend upon the decontextualising and depersonalising of the content of written material?", i.e. an ability to conduct a metalinguistic discourse, she avoids an answer by suggesting instead that there will be institutions or structures which will support "extended oral discussion about written knowledge" (1986b:216). Because such discussion will become an integral part of the newly literate society, then literacy will be retained.

Heath is not clear which of these two prerequisites is initially the more important. Is it the case that, without the required institutions, it is not possible to develop the refined meta-language of the literate person?
Or is it that, without the meta-language relating to words and ideas, the need for, and the development of, the literacy-supporting institutions is irrelevant?

The question is not fruitlessly circular: it at least draws attention to the fact that it does not seem possible to talk of the literate individual without also talking of the literate society within which that person expresses themselves in a literate way, and vice-versa. However, it does again avoid the question: what is the nature of literate language? Is literate language the same as written language?

In posing the question in that form we do, however, fall again into the trap of the confused middle term: literate individual = literate society = in a literate way.

In order, therefore, to look specifically at language, and the structures of language, I shall consider here only graphic literacy, that is, the particular skills of writing and reading which result in text.

This is a useful definition in that it provokes a more complex question that Olson's "Do we write as we speak or do we speak as we write?". We need to explore whether writing and speaking both carry "meaning" in the same way, and therefore whether reading and listening are comparable, human activities.
Olson makes a special case for Meaning that is subtended by writing: this is not the same Meaning that is possible in oral discourse. His argument (1986:305) is that

"Literacy created hermeneutics. The development of a distinction between statements and text on the one hand and their interpretation on the other was a consequence of literacy."

This is too narrow a conception of the outcome of literacy language. In essence, it privileges the role of the interpreter who, as listener, reader, or exegete, imposes his or her choice of interpretation onto the text. The critical distinction, which is essential to the creator of the communication, the author, between what I have written and what I meant is not relevant to the interpreter. Text becomes de-authored, impersonalised. Writing is excluded from dialogue, not in the way in which Plato complained that text could never answer a question, but in the sense that the exegete has no further need of the author. Dialogue survives in the domain of oral discourse, but within literacy it has to give way to the monologue created by reading.

In prioritising the importance of hermeneutics, Olson reduces literacy to a unidirectional mode of communication. However, we cannot resolve the problem of communication, which is always a problem of mis-understanding, with what amounts to a partial, mechanical or mathematical construct of language.
The influential model created by Shannon and Weaver helps to illustrate this point.\footnote{128}

When he talks of statements and texts on the one hand and their interpretation on the other, Olson is essentially viewing this model with a certain myopia: he wishes only to consider the relationship between sound/script and decoding, e.g.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (source) {Source};
  \node (code) [right of=source] {code};
  \node (medium) [right of=code] {medium};
  \node (decoding) [right of=medium] {decoding};
  \node (destination) [right of=decoding] {Destination};
  \draw[->] (source) -- (code);
  \draw[->] (code) -- (medium);
  \draw[->] (medium) -- (decoding);
  \draw[->] (decoding) -- (destination);
  \node [below of=source] {sound/script};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

DECODING \rightarrow Destination

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (decoding) {DECODING};
  \node (destination) [right of=decoding] {Destination};
  \node [below of=decoding] {SOUND/SCRIPT};
  \draw[->] (decoding) -- (destination);
  \node [below of=destination, align=center] {= Hermeneutics};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\footnote{128. Shannon, C. and Weaver, W. \textit{The Mathematical Theory of Communication}. University of Illinois, 1949.}

The use of "mathematical" in its Greek sense of \textit{mathematikos} and \textit{mathema} is interesting, based as it is on "that which is learnt, learning, knowledge, science." (Liddell and Scott's Greek-English lexicon). If one correctly has learnt the mode of communication, then logically (through using the word which is \textit{logos}, and the \textit{logos} which is reason) the communication should be unimpaired: what you heard/read was what I said/wrote.
Because, in that Platonic sense, the author cannot speak, then there is no insight to be gained from an analysis of the MEDIUM or, possibly several, MEDIA. Text is de-authored. That is the barrier to communication imposed by literacy. Therefore, Olson can exclude the Sender, the Sender's codifying of their meaning, and their selection of an appropriate medium. Such is the logic of his very Lutheran view that all meaning resides in the text: the text is the text, and what is written, there in front of me, is sufficient unto itself. The text speaks for itself (and by extension, the text no longer speaks for its author.)

This objectivising of the text, and subsequent de-personalising of authorship, appears in many studies, including Olson, which follow Goody and Watt (1968) in suggesting that writing made language an object of reflection.

It is, of course, by no casual association that we talk of "reviewing" a book or an article. Like an Ozymandias in paper-back, the words of written text remain long after the spoken words have taken flight. The spoken word, it is said, is ephemeral, existing only in the Now which, although it allows a word to be recalled or repeated, does not allow it to retain the authenticity of the moment in which it was uttered. Not so the word in text for, once written, it passes beyond the Now: it becomes historical and historising. It retains its past.
and it constantly recreates its present. It has an authenticity at each and every reading. The written word is marked by that Derridean trace which, not like the spoken word whose trace exists only in memory that searches from the Present back into the umbra of the Past, actually heralds the arrival of the Past into the Present.

With the first written word, Etymology was born, not to sire opinion and interpretation, (doxa) but to celebrate meaning and reason (authentic logos).

129. This represents perhaps the one aspect of Plato's view of literacy with which Freire might have agreed. The inversion of language is important. Unlike the written word, once written (λέξα), which then is but the shadow or image of the spoken (λέγειν), now we find the spoken word, once spoken, exists only in the penumbra of recollection. The one becomes historical, the other ahistorical. The oral dies without trace, the written is recreated at each reading. Orality is different from Literacy, precisely because the oral must differ to the written.

For a detailed study of trace within the writings of Derrida, see:
Etymology, however, is not hermeneutics. For Olson, meaning does not reside in the word as written, at least not wholly. Meaning can only be identified in the word that is read, i.e., interpreted, repossessed by the reader. With an author's dexterity, he passes from talking about writing to talking about literacy, by which he means reading (Olson, 1986:305).

"Here, I believe, we have our link between literacy and modernity—the systematic distinction between something which is taken as given, fixed, autonomous, and objective, and something which may be construed as interpretive, inferential, and subjective."

"A written text preserves only part of language. What is preserved is the form, and the meaning has to be regenerated from that form by the reader."

The assertion is that the preserved parts, text, are given, fixed, objective, but no explanation is offered as to the nature of this preservation other than that it is the form from which meaning is absent until it is "reconstructed" by the reader. This reconstruction is the activity of literacy, because the relation between a text and an interpretation is problematic only in literacy.

130. Etymology relates to the formation and meaning of words, and is often treated as a sub-science of Grammar. Here it is used in its prime sense—that which gives meaning or literal sense to a word.

*etymos* (έτυμος) means "What is real, what is true, actual". In its poetic form, *etatumos* signifies what is real, genuine, authentic. Homer used it in an adverbial sense to mean "in truth and in deed", corresponding in modern English to the dual sense of "in fact" or "actually".

Etymology is then the study of the actual meaning of words, a tautological definition because words can only have their actual meaning. A word without etymology is but a noise.
Olson seems unaware of the inherent circularity of his argument here, (that without literacy, there is no text, and hence no problem) but chooses to argue that oral language may implicitly recognise the distinction, but because it focusses on the person doing the communicating and not on the utterance, the form and the meaning are perceived to be an indissoluble pairing.

The evidence for this last claim is that when, in oral communication we don't understand a sentence or utterance, we say "What do you mean?" and not "What does it mean?", i.e. we do not distinguish what was said (form) from what was meant (meaning).

This seems to me to be based on a very slender discourse analysis that is both culturally specific and grammatocentric. Firstly, the conversational discourse

131. It will remain to be seen how much of this "classical" literacy theory will have to be re-written in the light of modern technology, answerphones, video-recorders, cassettes and compact disks, etc. The oral word can now be stored, reviewed, even re-transmitted and the "What was said" can be studied, almost textually, independently of "Who said it." Few seem able to contemplate a post-literacy era, a return to a dominant orality, although the debate does serve to protect the current study from complacency and from an automatic acceptance of the cultural superiority of literacy.

On this subject, see: the grammatocentric approach of Steiner, G. "After the Book" in Visible Language, Vol.VI, No.3, Summer, 1972, pp.197-210 (which is interesting not least for the date of the article), and the techno-centric approach of Nickerson, R. "Adult Literacy and Technology" in Visible Language, Vol.XIX, No.3, Summer, 1985, pp311-355.
to which Olson is accustomed may well explore misunderstanding or non-understanding by a direct, personal question: what do you mean? There are, however, other cultures where such a question is so direct as to be offensive: in effect, it would be taken to mean "Are you talking nonsense, because I cannot understand you?".

Secondly, the "You" of "what do you mean?" is part of that myth of orality by which Plato attacks literacy. The You is present, able to answer the questions, able to clarify and explain. The You is real and not simply an image, an ikon of the author: the You is a partner in a dialogue that creates true knowledge. So, the You, presented in this way, supports the myth that orality excludes non-authentic discourse, that the You can always explain what was meant. "There is Knowledge and Understanding and true Belief: these must not be classed together, because they reside not in sounds or in physical

132. In Hausa culture, (Central-West Africa), one could say "I am sorry, does this mean nothing?" (ban ji ba, Wannan ba ta da ma'anna Ko ?) indicating a respect that the speaker was saying something meaningful, but admitting that the listener had not understood. A normal reply that one could anticipate would be "No (i.e. no, it does not mean nothing - it means something). It means ..."

This personal experience of living in Niger and Nigeria has, somewhat surprisingly, been reinforced during a year as an immigrant in France. I have been struck by the number of times both adults and children use the construction "What does that word mean?" or "What is that in English/French?" as a means of expressing misunderstanding. Contra Olson, I would assert that form and meaning are NOT indissolubly linked, and that children and non-literates can distinguish between them.
shapes but in souls" (Plato, Letter 7:342). This is the discourse, which is the legitimate "brother of writing", which guarantees true knowledge but which exists between the speaker and the listener without the intermediary of the book, in dialogue between the I and the You.\footnote{\footnotetext{This is an emotive appeal to the power of Dialogue, and one use equally by Freire. He also was greatly influenced by Martin Buber and his exploration of I/You and I/It relationships. See: Buber, M. Ich und Du, translated as I and Thou, by Smith, R.G., T. and T. Clarke, 1937. \par It is one of the paradoxes of modern communication that the significance given to so-called "face to face" contact, person to person, eyeball to eyeball, with all the values of idealised oral culture which it entails, does not necessarily result in greater honesty or greater understanding. \par A parallel Hebrew expression, which lies at the heart of Buber and the talmud tradition, is panim-el-panim: face to face (כ"א המ) and can mean that person who is present to the other and who is a present to the other, i.e. the gift of disclosure, the discovery of the I and the You. \par However, the expression can also be read consonantly as pnim-el-pnim: the within to the within (כ"א המ) and represents that which is interior, which is hidden, which cannot be communicated. \par Communication in this mode is marked by ambiguity and by non-disclosure.}}

Olson does not feel himself to be part of this oral culture, yet psychologically he seeks the assumed security of oral communication: "What does it mean to understand me," he asks (1982:151), "as opposed to understanding my sentences?" Yet where, in the pursuit of the "me", is the "me" to be found, if not in those informal oral-language statements which he calls "utterances" or in the explicit, written prose statements which he calls...
"texts" (1987:253). Presumably, because form and meaning, in his view, are inseparable in oral discourse, then the question of meaning, i.e. the problem of misunderstanding, does not arise.

There is a sense, of course, in which Olson's use of "informal" and "explicit" in these definitions already begs the question about meaning. There is nothing per se which requires utterance to be informal or text to be explicit. The defining of the polarities are, at best, unconsciously bibliocentric: text is assured of meaning because it is explicit, written prose. This carousel of meaning is wholly defined and controlled by the reader/interpreter.

It is this egocentric attitude that leads Olson to a bibliocentric search for meaning which is provided by the reader, by the interpreter. The reader relates the given sentences (S) to his or her own experience or "possible world" (PW), and through that is able to discover the meaning (M) of the text (1982:153).

"The expression to mean, to understand, are members of a class of verbs which are sometimes called "intentional predicates" (Dennet, 1981; Fodor, 1975) along with such verbs as know, believe, remember, forget, notice, think, perceive. They are verbs which express "propositional attitudes" or psychological states or mental states. Together they make up what may be called a commonsensical theory of mind."

This theory of mind is also a theory of literacy for it defines literacy exclusively in terms of the reader/text
relationship. It is not grammaticentric as much as bibliocentric: it claims that the book, the text, is sufficient unto itself, that it is *sui ipsius interpres*. Whether it is supported by Hermeneutics (e.g. Luther’s scriptural reductionism or by Linguistics (e.g. Chomsky’s theory of generative grammar), it identifies the necessary elements of literacy as a) a text which is potentially communicative, *capax docendi*, and b) a common-sense reader who is *capax discendi*.

Literacy, therefore, becomes possible for anyone who has acquired the mechanics of reading. Firstly, that requires the ability to appreciate that there are different sounds in speech and that these sounds can be represented visually or graphically. Secondly, it requires a mastery, or at least an initial competence in recognising the graphic signs, in decoding the graphemes from which the spoken word is reconstituted. Word recognition will follow from the recognition of individual letters (Le men, 1985), and the construing of sense from those words will require a basic knowledge of essential punctuation.135


"Hence the meaning of a sentence relies on no private referential or contextual knowledge; nothing is added by the listener. One is justified, therefore, in concluding that, for Chomsky, the meaning is in the sentence per se." (Olson, 1977:259).

The literate person who is now the Reader, has to move beyond a simple, mechanical vocalising of the text to a reading which expresses not just sound or the meaning of a word but the meaning of the text. This is what many teachers call the development of bifocal comprehension skills: on the one hand readers learn to engage critically with a text, to find its meaning, ("What did Shakespeare mean when he wrote "The quality of mercy is not strained"?) and, on the other hand, they learn to identify their own experience and personal reactions to the text: the Reader becomes the Interpreter: ("In what ways are we all like Joe Orton? Do you find him a moral person?").

Literacy teaching, based on this model of psycho-pedagogy, is evident both in school and in much of what is deemed to be "Functional Literacy". Here, in a method that parallels Freire, the non-literate or illiterate person is taught how to read, (recognise words) and how to extract the meaning of the words from the written text (make relevant). Learning objectives may target reading labels in a supermarket, reading a simple story to the children, following instruction on an assembly line, understanding directions on a medical prescription, or reading a daily paper. Reading, therefore, becomes a source of knowledge and information, and at the same time gives the reader access to economic activity (work) and to "public opinion" (newspapers/propaganda). Consequently, it is Literacy at this level and with this individualistic mind-set which is most central to formal
The problem, however, with such a view is that it is egocentric and bibliocentric: it identifies the meaning of a text with that meaning given to the text by the reader. "I understand what it means". "What it is actually saying is...". So the meaning of the text is "found" by the reader, although the meaning intended by the author clearly has prior existence. Just as the previous existence of the islands is neglected, devalued, in order to valorise the new discoverer, so the previous existence of the author is ignored in order to acclaim the presence of the reader. The text is de-authored and decontextualised. Text simply becomes "reading material".

That could almost suffice as a critique of both literacy and Freirian "codifications" or textualisings. However, it is only one of a number of points. First, such a view of literacy implicitly accepts a monochrome view of textuality, in that the meaning enclosed in the text is taken to be The Meaning, a single voice rather than a polyphony. The possibility of several meanings cannot be considered, nor, least of all, a cacophony of contradictory meaning.

Secondly, literacy that occupies itself only with reading fails to understand the nature of text. Of course, it may be that the surface pattern is so dense or so diverting that one does not notice the warp and weft of
its construction. But text is also texture; it is
arranged, positioned, constructed and it has a quality
which is multi-dimensional, more than the single attribute
of surfaceness. Text is the vellum, the sheet of paper,
the sail (the velum) which propels the bark of meaning
(which is at once the bark-boat that holds the meaning and
the bark-outer sheath which protects what is in the hold,
in the interior) to its destination.

Literacy which is Reading only, therefore, is
redolent with mind-guarding and Banking Education precisely
because it denies the existence of the Writer. This has
immense significance, culturally and politically, for those
Literacy campaigns which prevent, or fail to encourage, the
reader from becoming a writer. The point here, however,
is that this is not simply an abuse of literacy but a
fundamental misconception of literacy.

Reading matter, text, does not exist in a sterile
form, vacu-packed for consumption by the reader as if it
were, so to speak "untouched by human hands". No process
of education, presentation or marketing can decontaminate
the text of the traces of authorship which are embedded in
it.

This is because, following Derrida, far from reading
being separate from authorship, authorship actually creates
reading. Authorship, writing, is reading in embryo: the
traces of reading are found in the act of writing.
Those traces, which are often misinterpreted as signifiers of those events which follow them, actually take precedence over what they are deemed to indicate. Trace is not the track which is left by something, but the essential guarantor that leads to something. Trace authenticates the passage of what was to what is: to be without trace is not to be. The trace therefore exists before the entity of which it is a sign, but it exists as an all-embracing trace, that is, "where the relationship with the other is marked, it articulates its possibility in the entire field of the entity (étant)" (Derrida, 1976:47).

This field envelopes both past and future, but it is not the temporal relationship between reading and its trace back to writing that is important. That would simply indicate a causal relationship, a relationship of convenience (convenientia.) Of greater significance than that which the trace and its object, or rather its subject, have in common, is the difference between them. Reading is not Writing but must defer to Writing.

This is the central dialectic of Literacy: the difference between Writing and Reading. Difference is "the systematic play of traces of differences, of the spacing (espacement) by which elements refer to one another, without which the terms could not signify, could not function" (Sturrock, 1979:47).

In this sense, reading is but a supplementary symbol
"Although the fact of Writing follows the fact of Speech, nonetheless the idea of Speech depends upon the idea of Writing" (Harland, 1987:129). This inversion of priorities is created by the fact that Writing supplements Speech, and thereby supplements Reading (for reading is only the symbolic listening to graphic speech). Those attributes which pretend to make Writing marginal to Reading are actually those same qualities which make it central to the very existence of Reading. 136

If we return then to the model of communication, what do we need to consider to create a literacy that is writer and writing oriented?

![Source → code → medium → sound/script](image)

136. The concept of the Supplement refers to a positive, measurable element which defines or identifies an amount by which a given entity is lacking something. This is not a deficit, but an ullage, an absence which justifies the presence of what remains.

For example, consider "the exception which proves the rule." Without the possibility of an exception, the rule would not be needed: it would be reduced to an unnecessary tautology. The rule therefore needs the exception to prove (to show evidence) why the rule exists, and to prove (to put to the test, probare,) the application of the rule.

The rule, consequently, can only authenticate its existence by deferring to the exception. The exception has priority precisely because it is an arche-rule, it is a condition without which the rule can have no meaning.
Central to the logic here, in the reversal of the literacy magnet from reading to writing, is a concept of literacy that somehow provides the *fil conducteur* between notions of power and knowledge, between the content of education and the context of employment, between the incapacity to read and write and the experience of oppression and marginalisation.

We shall have to examine this filigree of relationship, but in doing so, we have arrived at another inversion of the literacy myth. We started by asserting that literacy is social because primarily it is about the means of communication: the literate person requires a societal context in which to express, communicate his or her literacy. However, this might be only a bibliocentric judgment. Might it not be more true to say that Society requires literacy, (which is Literacy rather than a literate person), because in the power-knowledge relationship of the modern world, Literacy defines who controls the means of production, viz. the means to produce wealth (industry) and the means to reproduce knowledge (education).

If this is true, then the very nature of Literacy has changed. Its essential attributes are less instrumental than teleological. When we consider the interface, the “between”, which is created either when two people try to
communicate or when an individual reflects on his or her role in the larger society, what is the role of Literacy? The communicative view of literacy would say that it is the thread that spins the web of human relationships in what Arendt calls the "space of appearance", the context in which we encounter one another, are seen and are heard (Arendt, 1958:188).

Within this space, within relationships, power-knowledge is instrumental, creating a praxis which exists wherever individuals speak and act together. No thing, no person, possesses power: it inhabits only the interface, "springing up between people whenever they act together and vanishing the moment they disperse."137 Arendt's analysis of this power-knowledge relationship is founded on a model of active communication, of interactive subjectivity. Each person, as Subject, is free to communicate orally or in writing with another Subject. They recognise, with Freire (1970b:212), that the human word is not just vocabulary, it is word-and-action.

"As such it is a primordial human right and not a privilege of the few. Speaking the word is not a true act if it is not at the same time associated with the right of self expression and world expression, of creating and recreating, of deciding and choosing and ultimately participating in society's historical process."


"Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keep together." Arendt, H. On Violence. New York, Harcourt-Brace, 1970, p.44.
Within this instrumental communication, as Subjects, human beings are not "beings outside of"; they are "being for another" (ibid.).

At this point, Freire and Arendt converge, yet both remain within the idealism of bibliocentric communication. Both assert the value of Literacy as the capacity to communicate (Habermas's communicative competence) which is the antidote to speechlessness, to the culture of silence, to oppression. However, neither confronts the possibility that Literacy is teleological, that is, because it primarily serves not power-knowledge which is collective but force-knowledge which is divisive, then it is Literacy itself which is at the root of oppression, silence and marginalisation.

What is at stake here is not just a play on words but a defining and redefining of a word and its usage (although both are clearly very literate exercises). Arendt 138

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Arendt's explanation of communicative power and of "public space", which is the interface between those who are in communication, can be seen as a social anthropology of the statement which she quotes from Bakunin: "I do not want to be I, I want to be WE." ibid:330.

herself makes the distinction between power and force (Macht und Gewalt): the former is grounded in a relationship between free and equal partners; the latter is the potential, because one has the disposition and the means, to influence the will and the behaviour of another, so ensuring their conformity.

Can Literacy then be seen as force rather than as power? Educationalists talk easily of that "symbolic violence" which is the prerequisite for cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1970), assuming that something can only be a symbol if it lacks efficacy. They scarcely pause to consider the contradictions of "Compulsory Education". On the one hand, what is the content of compulsion? No-one can be compelled to learn: they can only be compelled to attend schooling. On the other hand, what is the content of education? What the system of education compels people towards is not learning and erudition, but rather to "finding their place in society", particularly through finding a place in the labour market. So Bowles and Gintis (1976:94) speak of education firstly as the acquiring of cognitive capacities and concrete technical and operational skills, but secondly as the development of certain personality traits (for example, motivation, perseverance and docility), plus certain behavioural traits (self presentation, dress, good manners, style of speech, encultured "social distance").

Sociologists will talk of social stratification and
even of structural inequality, yet there is no stratification of castes or slave, rich or poor, male or female, young or old, which does not contribute something to the archaeology of literacy. In return, what literacy contributes to all of these is Voice. The oppressed and many educators know that speech is helpless when confronted by Violence: hence Freire’s “culture of silence”. But what is mostly ignored is that “Violence itself is incapable of speech” (Arendt, 1985:12). Literacy, which is both the ability to write and to think as a writer, and the ability to read and to think as an interpreter, is the co-author, along with economics, of oppression and violence. Literacy gives expression to that imposed Force-knowledge which is the violation of communicative Power-knowledge and as such, in so far as it is oppressive, it is the contra-diction, (the opposing in speech, the opposite word) of emancipatory literacy.

One might well argue that, as a consequence, literacy cannot be, at one and the same time, the means of giving voice to domination and the means of liberating those who

139. For a clear overview of this point see:—

Bourdieu, P. Questions de sociologie. Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1984. "Nous passons notre temps à objectiver les autres. Le matérialisme a une propension particulière à tomber dans l'économisme qui est conforme à la tendance spontanée de la lutte quotidienne des classements, qui consiste à réduire l'autre à sa vérité objective. Or, la réduction la plus élémentaire est la réduction à l'intérêt économique."
are dominated. However, this would be a mistake, not because we might be using "Literacy" as a confused middle term; not because we might be saved by a subtle distinction between liberation and freedom which redefines oppression, but because, in accepting this argument, we are denying the essential nature of literacy.

It is of the essence of Literacy to be contradictory: Literacy is the genus communication, (and also the genius of communication, its daimon and its power daimonia ), the species of which are writing, speech, sign, number, and silence. It is, in Derrida's phrase (1981:63), "the web that envelopes a web." It is the thread that spins the web of human relations (p.93), and the symbolic net that casts cultural reproduction (p.95). In short, Literacy is truly the Pharmakon: we have found the aberrant toxin, the pharmakon that leads astray (Plato: Phaedrus:230, D), but equally we have found its antidote, the pharmakon of "liberating remembrance".

I have used Giroux's expression "liberating remembrance" as a less than literal but more than exact translation of Plato's actual phrase "memory and wisdom" (ibid:274, E), because it provides a link between the theory and the practice of literacy, and particularly of Freirean literacy.

We have seen that History and a sense of the historical is a product of literacy, and that it is script which creates the possibility of that personal "retro-writing" which facilitates the discovery of the "me-of-me". What Giroux is doing is advancing Metz's (1980:66) notion that personal identity is engendered by memory, and applying that not just to the objective fact of literacy but to the subjective teaching of literacy.

Teachers of literacy, he argues, (at least those who are transformative educators) are "bearers of dangerous memory" who keep alive the memory of human suffering along with the forms of knowledge and struggles in which such suffering was shaped and contested (Giroux, 1989:99).

"Dangerous memory has two dimensions: that of hope and that of suffering...it recounts the history of the marginal, the vanquished, and the oppressed. In doing so, it posits the need for a new kind of subjectivity and community in which the conditions that create such suffering can be eliminated."

Two corollaries follow for the literacy educator from this pharmakon of memory which is the pharmakon of literacy. Firstly, the two elements of the pharmakon, curse and cure, can be distinguished but not separated.

This refusal to seek the illusion of clarity which exists at the extreme of any continuum does not arise from a natural, essential Manicheism, any more than it seeks to reject the concreteness of the polarities in favour of some Aristotelian mean. It asserts rather that any response to the pharmakon of literacy must not de-nature what literacy
is: because literacy is pharmakon, it is its own cure. Therefore the only valid response to Literacy is one that is homoeopathic: similia similibus curantur. Literacy cannot be treated by politics, by economics, by education or by culture: it can only be "cured" by literacy itself.\(^{141}\) Only literacy can provide that scouring which reveals, that curing which protects, and that caring which validates; the body which is uncured, powerless, akuros, takes on a new vigour, a new power by becoming kurios. Paradoxically, Literacy is at its most literate, its most curable and its most curiological, kuriologikos. Literally speaking, when its values, its methods and its achievements are reflected back upon itself care-fully to be the subject of its own pharmaceutical regard.

The second corollary of the fact that literacy is its own pharmakon is that, rather than allowing educators the grace of self-absolution, it actually requires a total engagement on their part, even unto that class suicide which creates Freire's "Easter experience". Literacy is not an independent, moral personage: it has no existence outwith the atmosphere of human communication. Of its essence it is social, founded in History, and it cannot be idealised, like Justice, Truth, or its sister Beauty, to inhabit a world of Forms. Yet sometimes this is implied, when we speak of "the effects of literacy", "the myth of

literacy", or "the right to literacy".

There is no such thing as "critical literacy", or "emancipatory literacy": there are only people who are critically literate, people who can engage in a literate way in their own emancipation, just as there are people who are illiterate. Literacy is an attribute firstly of a society and, only by extension, is it taken to be an attribute of an individual.

This is a critical demythologising of literacy. Because it is its own pharmakon, it directs our attention not towards the powerful institutions of politics or economics or culture, but at the people in any given society who are engaged in being or becoming literate. And what is central to all their interests is the knowledge-power which is proclaimed and validated by literacy, or more accurately, by those who are literate.

Consequently, any truly person-centred literacy programme must start with the dialectic that exists between those people who are literate and those who are illiterate, thus revealing both the common sense knowledge and the gnostic knowledge (that which is known by the initiated, by the elites) which must be acquired by, and is required of, those who are literate.

Imperatively, this demands the prioritising both of knowledge over power, and of power over force. It is the
exploration of what Foucault (1970:359) calls the "analysis of discontinuities that seek to draw out the internal coherence of signifying systems, the specificity of bodies of rules and the decisive character they assume in relation to what must be regulated."

Literacy for liberation has to achieve the reinstatement of knowledge-power and communicative competence over force-knowledge and debilitating silence.

Such reinstatement is not simply re-statement. It is, as Freire would say, that recreation, reinvention and enquiry which is directed towards humanisation - humankind's historical vocation.

"The pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot unfold in the antagonistic relations between the oppressors and the oppressed" (Freire, 1982:58).

Here we have the effective criteria for judging literacy as its own pharmakon: humanity, solidarity and reconciliation. Let us, therefore, consider the policy and rationalisation of literacy and its use of knowledge, power or force. We can then assess, against these criteria, whether there is any basis for Freire's attempt to create a counter-hegemony of literacy, or whether a "literacy of liberation" is simply a contradiction in terms.

6.5 Literacy and Policy: an Overview

The potential terrain of literacy lies somewhere between force and power, between accredited knowledge and
subjugated knowledge, between poverty and wealth, between the society and the individual, and between the Culture of Voices (orality) and the Culture of Letters (literacy).

The cardinal points on this terrain reveal four very different perspectives: from literacy, from orality, from non-literacy and from non-orality. (Diagram p. 336)

The terrain at Point A valorises literacy. The right to read is considered as a universal right, and literacy is seen as a key civilising factor, essential to culture and to aesthetics. It provides the context for the development of bureaucracy, centralising government, and international business. It encompasses, on the one hand, the Religions of the Book and a mass media, while, on the other hand, it reflects a preference for written contracts and for individual case law. It encourages an articulate consumerism and esteems individuality.142

Point B represents the position at the opposite end of an imaginary literacy continuum: Orality. It is primarily a fictive position, because it is necessarily the perspective of a literate person who vicariously assesses what it means to live in an oral society. A person who lives in an oral society could never have the construct of orality with which to assess their society: the concept

142. Although this is a caricature, it would serve as a headline summary of the main themes in Goody, J. The Logic of Writing, London, Cambridge University Press, 1986.
### PERSPECTIVES ON THE WORLD OF LITERACY

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that their society was non-literate would be meaningless, for the construing of society in relation to the understood factors against which orality and literacy is defined is, in fact, a construct only of literacy.

The actual terminology "oral society", if it is meant to delineate the perspective at Point B, is therefore problematic. Firstly, it is hard to recreate the meaning of oral: even prior to the discovery of the alphabet, there were communities which had some form of written communications, hieroglyphs or ideograms. In modern times, however, very few communities or societies can be described as oral: "Wholly oral cultures have all but disappeared. One finds instead sub-cultures where oral modes of communication continue to play a central role and where the literacy-rate is less than 5%" (Gerhardt, 1989:537). One finds, therefore, that our understanding of orality is largely based on inference and extrapolation. At one extreme, that includes the detailed scholarship of Havelock and Parry, but, at the other, it includes the conjecture which Ong wittily refers to as "defining a horse as a car without wheels".

The second problem in defining the perspective of an oral society is that "society", as we now use the word, is itself a superordinate construct of literacy. The friend and neighbour, the socius, in an oral society was not the political animal, politikon zoon, of the Greek polis, nor...
the civic worthy, the *civis* of the Roman *civitas*, and certainly not the passport-carrying national of the Modern State.

One might reject this point because it appears to confuse the experiences of a Society with the development of the idea of a Nation State. However, this brief, archaeological review is intended to illustrate that our current perceptions of the individual, the individual in community, community and the wider society, and the individual, society and the State, no matter what period nor what culture we might be considering, are so impregnated by literacy and the effects of literacy that they cannot now be effaced. As literates, we cannot begin to think of a society which is decontaminated of all traces of literacy. To think “society” at all is to think, consciously or not, “literate society”. We are condemned to never being able to get behind literacy to reinvent orality or an oral society.

Nonetheless, there are certain things that we can state about an archetypal oral society, (given that “archetype” is a known construct of orality\(^{143}\)). Oral

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143. The role of the archetype, the nominal person who represents a whole society, even the whole of society, is an element common both to the great myths of India and Greece, and to the biblical stories of Israel. Without the aid of the historical perspective provided by literacy, oral societies (for example, the pre-literate Greek and the Hebrew) made frequent use both of the epic and of fables/parables (*mashali*) to pass on their culture through the mouths of anonymous heroes and teachers.
culture is performance rather than information centred, and knowledge is conveyed, through the drama of epic, narrative and folklore from one generation to the next. Children learn by experience and by practice, not by theory and abstraction. Teaching is task oriented, for only useful knowledge is properly knowledge. Communication is authentic because all discourse has the immediacy of presence, and because there is no dichotomy between word and action. People in an oral culture have a pictorial view of their world, yet within that they can encompass, and even explain, contradictions, uncertainties and not-knowing. Often there is a directive fatalism that softens or accounts for what otherwise would be the sadness of things. Given that, and because culturally people can only live in the present, (there being no Past, only Narrative), those who live in an oral society may live hopefully (full of hope) but they cannot live optimistically. The present world is the best of all possible worlds because it is the only possible world.144

I have already noted that Points A and B are not logical opposites that meld to form a genuine continuum. Nonetheless, each does have a unique valence towards the other: Orality contains within it the trace, the

144. Again, a summary of the main traits of Orality that has echoes of Lévi-Strauss and Malinowski. Obviously the main source is Ong; it is to be hoped that the summary is not a total injustice to his influential book: Ong, W. Orality and Literacy: The technologising of the Word. London, Methuen, 1988. (first published 1982)
potential, of literacy, just as Literacy highlights rather than eradicates orality. Ong (1988:179) equally rejects the idea of such a continuum, and confirms that there is no simple transition from orality to literacy: there is rather the transition from orality to literacy and orality. "Orality-literacy dynamics enter integrally into the modern evolution of consciousness". It is this dynamic, this osmotic interaction across the membrane of communication, that effectively makes the literate world bi-cultural. It would perhaps be usefully provocative to create by fusion a new word, for example, oralit, so that we could then speak of an oralit culture. Or we might have litoralness to describe the transition from orality to literacy and orality.

The conjunctive and, however, is more significant than word-fusion. To create Literacy, elements of the two cultures, orality and literacy, become miscible, but that does not mean that they become indistinguishable. Separately, they offer two, very distinct perspectives on the world: together, they create a dynamic integrity which forms the double helix that spins itself into the web of Literate Culture.

That is why, although orality and literacy do not form a continuum, they do form an axis that, potentially, cuts synchronically and diachronically across all cultures. I have called this the "axis of superiority" (p.336).
Across this axis lies the zone where literacy is exploited: it is the domain of power-knowledge and of force-knowledge, and of the control of wealth and investment. It is to this area that two of Scribner's "metaphors" apply: Literacy as Force and Literacy as a State of Grace.145

"Historically, literacy has been a potent tool in maintaining the hegemony of elites and dominant classes in certain societies, while laying the basis for increased social and political participation in others." (Scribner, 1984:11).

Certainly, hegemony and oppression existed before Literacy: oral cultures have never been thought of, even by the most romantic, as ideal societies somehow marked by the principles of advanced democracy, equality, and social or economic parity. Elitism and segregation, dominance and subservience are factors of both Orality and Literacy. The difference between Point B and Point A is that literacy highlights and augments any distinguishing factor, economically, spiritually, culturally or socially, in such a way that that factor then serves to separate the powerless from the powerful.

This is because Literacy can structure the

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I have put "metaphor" in inverted commas in the text because I am not convinced that this is a genuine metaphorical use of language, viz. "applying a descriptive term to an object to which it is not strictly applicable." (Concise O.E.D. p.748.)

In my view, the concepts of force and salvation can be applied to Literacy, without apology. The use of such metaphor, like the use of inverted commas, (as above) is perhaps a refuge of liberal pedagogy.
inequalities which Orality could only organise. In a textualised world, power over land, money, life, marriage, over faith, freedom, over government and administration, over individuality and even over memory, all gained an objectivity and security because each could be justified: Look, here is the written evidence as proof. 146.

In an oral society, force, even where it existed, could only be imposed: it could never be legitimised, or justified (justice-fied). Force was always violence, a violation of the society and/or of the individual. In a literate society, force does not need to be justified: it is written into the very fabric of society by the structures which Literacy creates for its own support and protection. The whole panoply of Literacy (the panoplia: a full suit of armour) fits comfortably on the body politic, to the degree that there is now no social, economic, political or religious institution that could exist without it.

The interweaving of force and literacy is now so complete that any violence that accrues from either is deemed to be "symbolic". In reality, it is the reverse that is true: all protestation that literacy ought not to be aligned with Force should be treated as token ignorance.

146. A detailed exposé of all these elements can be found in Goody, 1986, although the analysis of Literacy as Power/Force is largely absent in Goody, who considers Literacy primarily from a technological rather than a teleological perspective.
However, the power of literacy is such that it is the token that is rejected and not the symbol.\textsuperscript{147}

The explanation for this contrary reaction lies in the second of Scribner’s metaphors: Salvation. The literate person finds that he or she is actually in a “state of grace”.

There is no escaping the aroma of incense here, although the association between literacy and the so-called Religions of the Book is widely noted. (Resnick, 1977; Goody, 1986). However, Salvation is more than bible-centred: it is bibliocentric. Literacy enfolds a certain piety, in the religious and classical sense of the word: one has a duty, a responsibility to be cultured, to be

\textsuperscript{147} The play between the two words is also a way of revealing the inherent contradiction of Literacy. Symbol is indeed a sign and a mark, but it also has three other usages. Ecclesially, it is a \textit{credo}, a profession of faith; commercially, it is the \textit{tessara}, the tokens that were used for money or as a guarantee of money; juridically, it is a \textit{covenant} (also a religious word) for the protection of commercial interests. To speak, therefore, of the symbolic power of literacy is to invoke the many-tongued hydra which is the full force of symbolism.

Token, on the other hand, is not just the \textit{arrabon} which we have already noted. Its etymology lies in an Old English/Teutonic root, \textit{taiknon}, which means “to teach, to demonstrate the truth, to define the characteristics of.” Token ignorance, therefore, is not evidence of a minimal ignorance, but a token of ignorance, the proof of a total lack of understanding.

Literacy has the capacity to be tokenistic, that is, to be truly educative. Emancipatory literacy is indeed the attempt to construct a “token of ignorance”, a learning process that explores pedagogically, in Freire’s term, the content of false or naïve consciousness.
Steiner (1972) reflects that dominant theme of traditional pedagogy in the view that a book is culturally sacred, and that, consequently, the burning of books for political ends, for example, is equivalent to a crime against humanity. 148

There is also a view, that certainly enhances the feeling of superiority, which posits a cognitive deficiency on the part of those who are illiterate. This is still frequently stated (Penichaut, 1990; Olson, 1982), despite the increasing evidence to the contrary. Scribner notes (1984:14) that:

"the notion that literacy per se creates a great divide in intellectual abilities between those who have and those who have not mastered written language is deeply entrenched in the educational circles of industrialized countries."

Like all grace (which is always gratia as well as gratis), the grounds for being superior are unfounded, but the force of literacy is such that it overrides compunction. Although Scribner's second metaphor is only a corollary of the first, the implied apodosis, it is established in literate cultures as the First Premise of Literacy and, as such, it is stated implicitly or explicitly as a rule of first principle, something that is not to be questioned.

Across this axis of superiority lies the contrary world of illiteracy and non-literacy (those who live in a

148. The total, bibliocentric presumption here is that people would or should want to read books rather than menus, tax returns, pay slips or the TV Times.
literate culture and who have a less than minimal literate competencies, and those who, in non-literate cultures, have never been introduced to literacy.) That is not a simple divide, however. Perspectives A and B do not form a continuum with perspectives C and D, any more than there is a continuum between A/B or A/C. (p.336)

In the view of those on the top side of the axis of superiority, those who are illiterate or non-literate inhabit a deficit culture which I have denoted, phenomenologically and less judgmentally, as "the zone of literacy programmes". However, the perspective from point C and D is not the reverse image of the axis of superiority. Their view is further refracted by the double jeopardy created by the "axis of marginalisation".

Beneath this axis, the world at Points C and D differs only in the degree to which people can not read or write. Some have no literacy skills at all, other have a little, but not enough. If this is true of literacy, it is also true of wealth, access to resources, autonomy, health and education. We have already seen the direct correlation between illiteracy and deprivation. None have chosen to be marginalised, los marginados; but they have been marginalised, as Freire was sure to point out (1970h:210).

We have yet to see whether literacy can be the means of demarginalising, liberating, those who are illiterate or
non-literate, and obviously that raises the question of whether that liberation is only a liberating from ignorance, or whether it is also a structural liberation that confronts the other, associated oppressions.

Clearly, the marginalised cannot liberate themselves: one becomes neither free nor literate for the wanting to be. That is why the axis of marginalisation also creates the zone of literacy programme. The world of non-literacy/illiteracy is not a time-warp that can recreate the pre-Platonic world as it was when it was on the cusp of the discovery of the alphabet. Nor is it the world of the savage in the depths of the Amazon jungle. Even if we could pretend that this is our image the world of orality, non-literacy and illiteracy still cannot be defined as mutations of orality: they can only be defined in terms of Literacy.

That is why any movement from illiteracy/non-literacy to Literacy (even if that is literacy and orality) requires the creating of two, new axes that links the Culture of Voice, Literacy, to the Cultures of Silence, Illiteracy and Non-Literacy. In the schema of p.336, this means ligating Point A to C, and A to D.

Freire would call this an invasion of culture, but this has to be the case. Unlike Literacy, illiteracy is not its own pharmakon. Illiteracy cannot be treated homeopathically: it requires the kind of radical
transformation, cognitively, culturally, socially and politically, that cannot be created by some form of spontaneous combustion. 149

This assessment is not intended to reinforce the superiority of Literacy (Point A): it is a judgment on how far the Literate perspective has created a cultural and social disequilibrium. The fulcrum of power is so far from those who are illiterate that any real attempt to create a literacy programme has to be initiated outwith the axis of marginalisation. This, ultimately, is what justifies the creation, by those at Point A, of policies and initiatives "targeted" at those at Points C and D.

The UNESCO Expert Team on Evaluation (1976:191) provide a good example, not least because they echo Freire's comments about his approach to literacy in Guinea Bissae (Freire, 1978). They had proposed that Literacy was a necessity both as a national priority to raise the cultural level of the population, to break with the past of ignorance linked to domination and exploitation and to build a democratic society, and as a duty of international solidarity in the perspective of a new world order adawning.

149. I am therefore not considering here Scribner's third metaphor: Literacy as Adaptation. In the light of my argument, this is again not an example of metaphor but of oxymoron.

Scribner, to my mind, still posits a bibliocentric view of literacy, although what she says re. adaptation is still relevant to my analysis of functional literacy. (see: Section 6.6)
"For these reasons the concept of functionality must be extended to include all its dimensions: political, social, economic and cultural. Just as development is not only economic growth, so literacy - and education more generally - must aim above all to rouse in the individual a critical awareness of social reality, and to enable him or her to understand, master and transform his or her destiny."

The Expert Team then go on to talk about integrating national necessities with the needs of different social groups, about literacy as but one element of a process of lifelong learning, and about the need to speed up international aid procedures so as not to delay literacy activities.

Three major themes are evident even in this summary. Firstly, literacy is deemed to be an attribute of an individual rather than of a society. Secondly, there is the transition from Functional Literacy which enables a citizen to contribute to society, to Functional Citizenship which is achieved only in part by Literacy. Thirdly, and as it were the provider of the tempo for the other themes, there is the alignment of literacy and economics.

From these themes, the main premises of the argument are constructed:

i) there can be no effective community development without economic development;

ii) for the community to create economic development, it must be able to master and transform its own destiny;

iii) to be able to master and to transform its own destiny, the community must be literate;

Therefore:

iv) Literacy, which is Reading and Writing (the key to Knowledge Capital) is the key to economic development.
So Bhola (1989a:524):

"Considering knowledge as capital which is to be redistributed helps us better to understand these processes (of policy making) at both local and world levels. Development, which means both modernisation and democratisation, is as much a material process as an ongoing intellectual process."

It is sometimes hard to know whether such a statement exhibits the shocking simplicity of a self evident truth or the scandalousness of wishful thinking. One is drawn to the logical opinion that Literacy as Knowledge Capital has to be (re)distributed throughout the world in order to facilitate the (re)distribution of economic resources. Yet there is an aroma of fallacy around.

In looking for the fault, one might be tempted to suggest that the error lies in positing that what is observed as effect and alleged cause (the fact of material wealth in the Developed World and the fact of widespread literacy) can be inverted and actualised as cause and effect (literacy will bring about material wealth): that is, the weakness lies somewhere in the confusion of the methodological and ontological planes.

While this is true in part, it is not the whole answer: we need to look further, for neither Literacy nor Economics can be hypos tatized, as if they each were enduring, fixed, historicised entities. The problem is not primarily one of repositioning the objective coordinates of these two functional Structures, or structural Functions.
This would produce a policy analysis that was static rather than dynamic, factual but not historical. It would deny Titmuss's (1974:23) advice that "the concept of policy is only meaningful if we believe we can affect change." We need to ask: what kind of change is being envisaged when we talk of Literacy and Modernisation or Development, be that for individuals or for societies?

Apter (1987), in a study of modernization and development, speaks of those who are poor, ill, oppressed, those who, to all intent and purpose, are superfluous for the functioning of the society. Clearly they have neither capital nor power, which is explicable because nor do they have any knowledge-capital (which is founded on literacy) which is the means by which they could become non-poor and non-powerless (which is not necessarily the same as becoming rich and powerful). Knowledge-capital can, therefore, be seen symbolically as the effective means of creating the possibility of liberation and as the prerequisite for triggering the processes of development.

Apter actually names this power Symbolic Capital. The immediate concept is apparent: Capital suggests the world of finance, of resources, of influence. Capital is also collateral, the alongside power which is the guarantor of investment, the token of confidence and security. Capital is finally the central power, the source of government and control. If knowledge is power, and the key to knowledge in the textualised world is literacy, then
What then of symbolic? What reality of Literacy remains to be expressed symbolically? Or is it that, to return to Jacobson's classifications, symbolic here actually means "symbolic". As a sign-word within the inverted commas, symbolic is not referential, that is, it does not define the relationship between the message and the object to which it refers, but it is metalinguistic. Its purpose, therefore, is to "refer one back to the CODE from which the sign takes its MEANING" (Guiraud, 1975:8).

That code can only be understood from the upper side of the axis of superiority where it was first used. The second thing to note that it is a code. It is not intended as a language which is self revelatory: its purpose is to be cryptic, hidden, not heuristic or obvious. Thirdly, as a symbol it is an intensified metaphor, minus its reference point.

Lemaitre speaks of a symbol as "overall, an extended comparison of which we have only the second term." To fully understand "symbolic capital", we shall have to find the code and the missing term, and therefore we must go back to the zone of literacy exploitation.

150. The tautology is added deliberately for emphasis. In the modern world there is, in fact, no other world. No contemporary society can now disinvent its own literateness.
My hypothesis is that the code is that which we have already uncovered in order to speak about symbolic violence, and symbolic power. The missing term is functionality. Together, they create a new, uncoded term: symbolic literacy.

In order to explore this final point of contradiction, we must now consider the concept and practice of functional literacy.

6.6 The Functionality of Functional Literacy

The root idea of functional literacy has developed with that of Adult Basic Education around the simple logic that a) all adults have a right to a basic education, and that b) literacy is functional. Universal suffrage and pragmatism meld in mutual convenience.

Yet that is the difficulty: what is basic is deemed to be of value, to be essential, while what is functional is deemed to work or to be effective. The very language around functional literacy discourages a critical analysis, and this is shown by the largely unquestioned acceptance of the term.

It was first used by the American Army in World War II to categorize those recruits who were “less than fully literate”, i.e. illiterates as defined as “persons who are incapable of understanding the kinds of written
instructions that are needed for carrying out basic military functions or tasks" (Harman, 1970:227).

The obvious implication is that literacy denoted, quite simply, at least for this period during and after the war, the ability to read and write. It reflects a time when the perspective on literacy was completely and unashamedly bibliocentric. One is tempted to remark that that was idealistic, even naive, but then neither Harman (1970) nor Levine (1982), who analyse literacy against schooling ages and levels, draw attention to the fact that three to eight years schooling also comprises certain behavioural and attitudinal development which might also be essential for the Army. It would indeed be worth a detailed study to assess in what ways "the kind of written instructions needed for carrying out basic military functions or tasks" differed from those which might be needed for carrying out educational functions and tasks in school.151

151. The nearest, comparable study that I know of is that by Sticht. (1972). This is a study of functional literacy levels for selected military jobs which have civilian counterparts: cooks, repairmen, supply clerks, and armor-crewm en.

One of their conclusions is that "reading grade levels have a "psychological meaning" in that most people "feel" that they understand the difference between a person who reads at the 3rd grade level as opposed to one who reads at the 8th or 12th grade level." (p.463)

This general, common sense appreciation may or may not be true, but again the authors do not go on to suggest that the difference between grade 3 and grade 8 reading could also be correlated against a Likert scale of behaviour and attitude.
What is important is that, contrary to Harman, schooling and literacy have never been solely about reading and writing. No one has ever learnt to read or write simply so that they could read or write: such skills have always served specific functions. In that sense, Literacy has only ever been functional. What the expression functional literacy draws attention to is not its literateness but its functionality. The obvious question which then arises is "Of what is Literacy a function?"

One response is contained in the very definitions which Harman and Levine use without comment. While illiteracy is defined as "the ability to read, write and compute at or above the minimum level of competence ", literacy is defined as "the ability to hold a decent job to support self and family, to lead a life of dignity and pride" (Harman, 1970).

To the degree that decency, dignity and pride are social values, they illustrate how the map of literacy is drawn by tracing it over the cartography of any given society. Postman effectively demonstrates this by his allegations that, if you cannot read, you cannot be a "good citizen". Firstly, if you cannot read forms, regulations, notices, signs etc., you cannot be governed, you cannot be an obedient citizen. Secondly, you cannot be a good consumer, because you are immune to so much advertising and product information. Thirdly, you cannot be a loyal citizen, perhaps the most disturbing allegation, because
you will not be sufficiently well-read to have imbibed the myths and superstitions of your society. Reading serves the important function of making political and historical myths accessible to students (Postman, 1970:246).

That Literacy should be twinned with Citizenship is, of course, not a modern phenomenon, and it underlies the problem which confronted Plato in the Republic, viz. the association between universal or selective literacy and universal or selective franchise, especially where the former is used to define or control the latter. Citizenship requires that the person is a consumer, politically and economically: citizens consume the products of the market place (for which they need to be literate), plus they consume, accept what governments produce, viz. laws, and regulations (for which equally they need to be literate).

That association between schooling, economics and politics provided the motivation for Adam Smith’s teaching of English literature as a means of expounding his economic and political system of laissez-faire. His study of English “was to be a pedagogical social prescription, supportive of a socially acceptable ideology.” (Court, 1985:328). Smith’s “good man” is Postman’s “good citizen.” The whole thrust of his Theory of Moral Sentiments is the development through literate education of a mentality that could “recognise the synaptic correspondence between acceptable and unacceptable literary
styles and acceptable and unacceptable social and moral behaviour." (ibid:337).

The synapse, to borrow the analogy from neurology, is the interface, the between, that describes zeugmatically the relationship between literacy and society and literacy and knowledge-capital. The syllepsis is constructed from the way in which we talk of "literacy skills and socialisation", assuming that there is a process of literate socialisation which has a centripetal force that necessarily makes literacy skills applicable to the creating or sustaining of a culture or society.

This is the very principle defined in Gray's influential report for UNESCO (1956:24): a person is functionally literate who "has acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enables him or her to engage in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his/her culture or group."

The "normally assumed", however, is again sylleptic. It is taken as applying to the individual but it actually applies, in the first instance, to the culture or society. It is the society that requires a certain level of literate functioning, that "assumes" or "presumes" a given level of literacy. Therefore, in order to find their place in that society, its members need to function in a way that is commensurate with those literate expectations which reflect the societal norms.
These norms are reaffirmed in other ways, as the later development of the idea of functional literacy shows. While the principle of adequate functioning was argued initially during World War II in the U.S. Army, it had an immediate application, after the war, as the primary criteria of employability. It became associated with the idea of Human capital which replaced knowledge capital as the shibboleth of education and training. It provided the justification for investment both in adult education and in primary/secondary schooling, because the product of such outlay, in terms of skills, attitudes and behaviour, would result in greater economic profits. It represented a centrifugal force, pushing literacy out from the centre to the margins of society, and was explained in terms of initiatives aimed at integration, reinsertion and rehabilitation.

The effect of this redefining of functional literacy from the centre is not just a reaffirmation of literacy in terms of holding down a job and living with dignity and pride. It acts as a device to create an important demarcation within the zone of literacy exploitation. On the one hand, it defines only the minimum competencies required of an individual (that is, the individual as worker and citizen) in a print society. In Kozol’s words.

(1985:185), it is "mean minded" because it concentrates on coping, on survival. It prefers an antihumane, subsistence literacy to that creative literacy which would enable people to discover, express and develop their humanness.

On the other hand, the aesthetic or more than minimum literacy that Kozol seeks has never been part of mass literacy. Despite the fact that functional literacy is seen as a target standard for both educational and economic development in the Developed World but particularly in the Third World, experience has shown that the more it moves beyond defining the criteria for employment towards defining the criteria for the quality of human life, then the more it is used to assess social and life skills, health education, the family, the community environment, health and nutrition, etc. The result justifies Kozol's criticism because such functional literacy does not produce greater democratisation, freedom of expression, or a more genuine realisation of the power of citizenship. On the contrary, it encourages a move towards the readjusting of the hierarchies of literacy, a realigning of the positional economy which hinges upon literacy.

The positional economy (Hirsch, 1977) is based upon the maintenance of differentials, the process of contrived inflation that occurs in a situation where a once scare

resource becomes common and hence devalued. Thus, in the situation where mass literacy or functional literacy becomes the norm, those with more than the basic competencies seek to revalue their own skills, diplomas and qualifications.

Functional Literacy provides the base line on which is built the pyramid of literacy that ultimately defines the various echelons of power in a society. That is one of the major themes of Graff's *The Legacies of Literacy* - a view with which Gee (1988:204) concurs:

"It has stressed behaviours and attitudes appropriate to good citizenship and moral behaviour, largely as these are perceived by the elites of the society.

"Literacy has been used, in age after age, to solidify the social hierarchy, empower elites, and ensure that people lower in the hierarchy accept the values, norms and beliefs of the elites, even when it is not in their self interest (or class interest) to do so."

This is more than a Labovian conditioning of what is acceptable language. It is the functioning of Literacy as an expression of hegemony. Like subsistence poverty, with which it has much in common, functional literacy is a relative concept, but relative not primarily to the experience of total poverty or destitution, but to the experience of the difference between being "really wealthy"

154. An interesting study of "qualification inflation" can be found in Dore, R. *The Diploma Disease*, London, Unwin Educational Books, 1976. He shows how the social justifications for schooling changed through the process which related quantitatively measurable educational achievement to both social mobility and employability.
and being "comfortable".155 As there are those who are rich, "less well off", and poor, so there are those who are highly literate, functionally literate and illiterate. But, as shown by that relativity, functional literacy is a category of literacy (and hence is located above the axis of superiority;156 p.336) and not of illiteracy.

(fig.a)

axis

the poor | those able to cope | the rich
illiterates | those able to cope | those highly literate

of superiority

This, at least, is the conclusion that is to be drawn from the rhetoric which surrounds functional literacy and the objectives which are directed to the integrated functioning of an individual in his or her society.

However, if we move beyond the discourse analysis proposed, for example, by Heath to an analysis of the functions incorporated in functional literacy, then we uncover the reversal of its significance and find what I


156. What I have described as the superior axis of literacy, Esperandieu (1984:102) describes as the social cleavage of illiteracy. The very word "illiteracy" connotes the existence of extreme social inequality. "Dire illettrisme c'est nommer l'un des clivages qui traverse notre société, c'est designer une forme extrême de l'inégalité entre les citoyens."
have called symbolic literacy. This results not from a simple, verbal hypallage but from a real relocation of the axis of power which can be represented schematically as:

(fig.b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the poor</th>
<th>those able to cope</th>
<th>the rich</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>illiterates</td>
<td>those able to cope</td>
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Symbolic literacy then becomes an uncoded term which signifies that functional literacy is actually dysfunctional for illiterates or non-literate but functional for those who are more highly literate and who, in the positional economy, are able to define the cartographic principles, socially, morally, economically, which those wanting to function in a literate society must accept.

The evidence for this claim is not just the general fact that functional literacy has rarely lived up to the claims made for it, e.g. in terms of employability, social relations or national, economic development. There is the further, specific argument that, within functional literacy, WRITING has only a minor and very limited role. The project REALISTIC is not untypical in its prioritising of REading, LISTening and arithmetic (Sticht, 1972) and the influential programme Right to Read in the United States.
(Allen, 1970) which spawned many other functional literacy initiatives in the 1970's and 1980's, clearly made the diagnosis that the dysfunctioning of the society was related to the large numbers of people who could not read. It was not considered necessary for them to be able to write:

"A person is functionally literate when he has command of reading skills that permit him to go about his daily activities successfully on the job, or to move about society normally with comprehension of the usual printed expressions and messages he encounters."

Reading creates the possibility of consensus or convergence: only Writing can create the possibility of dissent. This is more than mere disagreement, which obviously can result from reading: it is the creating of a response which is counter hegemonic. The paradox of Writing, which is one of the most refined symbolic systems created by humankind, is that it has the potential to be anti-symbolic: it is fundamentally iconoclastic.

For the elites, iconoclasm creates the challenge which is experienced by all orthodoxies in that it encourages heresy, even deviance. For them, a literacy which produces writing of, or a rewriting of, knowledge-power relations is dysfunctional for it does not educate the citizen into orthodoxy, into that governability, even that vulnerability to governaunce, to media and myth, which

157. British Association of Settlements, A Right to Read. London, Association of Settlements, 1974, quoted in Levine, (1982:256). The inherent sexism also betrays the importance of making literacy accessible to "the working man" or the unemployed - the nonworking man.
are the signs of an "educated person".

It is in that sense that such Symbolic Literacy is also symbolically violent, for it is forced to kill at birth the possibility of that Writing which is creative, actionable and revolutionable. In Freire's terms, Reading is the currency of Banking Education, Writing is the currency of Dialogue. The former creates imitation, the latter innovation.

For him, functional literacy is a contradiction in terms. It creates the silence of the passive reader, the silent receiver who has found their place in society, who has been given entry into the elite's library of knowledge and who therefore may be seen there, but who cannot, or must not, be heard. Such literacy creates the oppressive Culture of Silence but not the liberating Silence of Culture.

This is not a malapropism, a further figure of speech from the Rhetoric of Literacy. Literacy is its own figure of speech, its own symbol, within which the expression "the silence of culture" is meant to draw attention to Literacy and the Writer as opposed to that (functional) literacy which concerns only the reader. It explains that "writing the word" and "reading the world" remains the ultimate contradiction of Freire's pedagogy.
CONCLUSION

When we pose the dialectic between powerful literacy and literate power, and then make that single plane three dimensional by adding the element of knowledge, it is easy to overlook the fact that this trinity of force/violence (Literacy-Power-Knowledge) is itself a superordinate construct of Literacy. The discovery of this Derridean trace has been one of the underlying themes of this study:

"Whether in written or in spoken discourse, no element can function without itself relating to another element which itself is not simply present. This linkage means that each "element" -phoneme or grapheme- is constituted with reference to the trace within it of other elements of the sequence of the system. Nothing in either the elements or the system is anywhere entirely present or absent." (Sturrock, 1979:164).

Thus the difference between literacy and power-knowledge is that the latter must differ to the former. The difference between them is that, while a sociology of power or a psychology of learning may describe a system of education or a pedagogy, neither of these elements can prescribe the Pharmakon which is Literacy. Literacy is both the prescription which constructs the sense of power and knowledge in a textualised society (in the Now, there can be no other Society), and the prescription which administers to the excesses of such power and knowledge as they are expressed in control, oppression and domination.

Where Literacy is not present, but not absent, is where it is not Literacy but a meta-Literacy, a prerequisite of being literate. So it is that we have to
be able to speak, think in a literate way before we can become "literate": "Although the fact of writing historically follows the fact of speech, nonetheless the idea of speech depends upon the idea of writing" (Harland, 1987:129).

At the level of Literacy, Freire is an object of contradiction. We have seen how the very idea of writing the word, reading the word are not two sides of the same literate coin. They represent quite antithetical skills and competencies, and we have seen how the attempt to forge a synthesis results in the blatant contradictions of, for example, functional literacy. In this latter case, we found that Literacy was dysfunctional for the non-literate and for those people becoming literate precisely because Literacy has both constructed the status quo, i.e. the dominant classes, and it is the means by which those classes express their status.

We have to ask: did Freire enable the peasants with whom he worked to achieve a sufficient level of literacy so that they could be assimilated into the/their Society? While they stood to gain through claiming the right to vote, the means for so doing that have meant, in the absence of any proof to the contrary, that their self-preparation for citizenship through their involvement in the literacy campaign has already circumscribed, culturally and politically, any potential room for fundamental change. No radical change has ever been ushered in through the
We have seen that the Freire had codified the culture of the learners, but he seems never to have codified the culture of the literate educators. As the analysis of his literacy programme showed, the rhetoric that sought the development of dialogue, engagement, equality, did not match the subliminal messages and modes of a Banking method. Albeit benign, Freire’s approach differs only in degree, but not in kind, from the system which he so eloquently criticises.

Maybe this is because Freire is at heart a very traditional pedagogue. We have seen how he repossessed Aristotle and Hegel in order to find a language in which he could re-state his own pedagogy, yet behind that, there remains the classic teacher. The learner is not just someone who needs to learn: he or she is also someone who needs to be taught. Freire’s faith in humankind, perhaps like all faith, blinded him to that reality.

The tendency to think of Freire as an abstruse, Latin American educator who was propelled by events to the world stage of education but who there found himself out of his depth, unable to communicate with anyone other than his own North-eastern compatriots, is wholly contradicted by the events. Freire has occupied a pivotal place in the formulation of education campaigns throughout the Third World, and his influence on other European and North
American educators has been considerable.

Yet he was, and still is, fiercely Brazilian. Having now returned to Brazil, he has begun perhaps to come to terms with his own history and his own achievements. On the face of it, he does not have the profile of a radical, revolutionary educator. Born into a middle-class family, he took the career route through Law, but with little direction until influenced by his wife, perhaps more than he has yet admitted, to follow his evident aptitude for teaching.

So emerged the "metodo Paulo Freire" and a problematising of the obvious, and therein lies the genius of simplicity. Too many people have considered Freire as a tutor of literacy, whereas in fact he is a politician of pre-literacy. What he may not have admitted to himself is that, while he offered "Literacy in Thirty Hours" to meet certain felt needs on the part of the peasants, what he was actually doing was confronting the underlying real needs of those individuals and of the society.

In that sense, his pedagogy is radical, a learning iceberg where what is most important is invisible to the eye. The final contradiction, which is the first contradiction, is that his pedagogy is not at all about literacy, but rather about pre-literacy. It is about meta-linguistics, a meta-writing or arche-writing, which is the pre-requisite of literacy.
Freire is himself Literacy's Pharmakon. He can be dismissed for idealism, utopianism, mysticism and irrelevance. Yet beneath that, beneath the cooperative banking system which he has made his own, there is a pedagogy of contradiction, which is contradictory because it engenders contradiction. To be able to want to write the word (pre-literacy) and so learn to read the word (first literacy) and then to write it (second Literacy) is the goal of his teaching. That does not appear to be the case at first glance, and that this might only appear through intense analysis of this kind of study, is Freire's way of gainsaying, contradicting his critics. In the end, the fact that all contradiction is now clear is Freire's ultimate success. At least now the right questions can be asked.

Part A: This bibliography is a selection of Freire's main texts, books and published papers, noted by year of publication.

Where the text is a republication or retranslation of an earlier document, the original is noted in a parenthesis.

Part B: This is the General Bibliography comprising the references made in the substantive text.

I have followed, in principle, the Harvard System of Referencing, viz. identifying Author, Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, Date of Publication.

Articles have been referenced as Author, Title of Article, Journal, Volume, Part, Year and Page.

Two further Conventions need to be noted. First, in quoting French texts, I have maintained the French system whereby the majuscule is not normally used for all nouns or adjectives.

Secondly, in classifying the Bibliography in alphabetical order, I have adopted the proposed International Convention whereby authors with composite names or prefixes (e.g. de, del, las, los, van, von, ) are ordered by national usage.

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APPENDIX: TRANSLATION OF QUOTATIONS

"The enunciative homogeneities / heterogeneities interweave with linguistic constants and variables and with logical similarities and differences without all of them falling into line or necessarily all linking up.

Dans le débat...
"The analysis is not limited to the discussion about structure with a beginning, a middle and an end. It must progress into that domain where questions concerning the person, conscience, antecedents and individuality become revealed, interweave even interfuse, and are clarified."

Page 19: Note 12. Las apparencias...
"The appearances and trappings which are associated with a position of financial security."

Page 22: Ses aspects vénitiens...
"Recifé, not unlike Venice, with its magnificent colonnades of palm trees beside an incredibly green sea - on which in times past was witnessed the procession of so many ships heavily and pregnantely laden with plunder from the East that the Sugar Barons came to blows over them - Recifé and Olinda which rises about it, nestled among the churches."

Page 25: Er steht...
"In that way he found himself within the Brazilian, intellectual tradition where Law laid claim to be the key discipline."

Page 33: Cuando su filosofía...
"When his philosophy and his educational programmes had made him famous in most parts of Brazil, the University of Recifé conferred on him the Degree of Doctor Honoris Cause in Education. Since then he has taught Philosophy of Education at that University."

Page 39: Les premières campagnes...
"The first literacy campaigns based on the Freirean "system" were conducted in the North-east of Brazil (1961-1964). They show how far the educators had espoused the political objectives of the organisers, viz. of the reformist provincial government. It is quite clear that the goals of these campaigns were political."
"Seventy days later they set him free and they "invited" him to leave the country."

"Seeing the letters impedes reading. The alphabet was not made to be read but to be heard and spoken."

"I can therefore I am"  

"These problems can be summarised in a word: the questioning of the text. The text is no longer inert matter which History uses to try to reconstruct what people have done or said, something which is of the past and of which only a trace remains. History seeks to describe in this tissue of texts elements and compositions, links and relationships. History is the study and the bringing into play of these documented materials (books, texts, accounts, registers, acts, buildings, institutions, rules, techniques, objects, customs, etc.)."

"The transformation of reality takes effect automatically."

"It is precisely because it prepares for life that Education should be a way of life. If Education proposes to be a preparation for life, but is itself not a way of living, then it cannot achieve its end."

"The rupture of equilibrium is the motor of all activity."

"Education is a function of existence as original and powerful as life itself. As such, it makes possible the spiritualisation and the emancipation of humankind."

"A pedagogy of teaching."

"The core group is a social entity which, under the leadership of an adult teacher, develops purposefully."
Page 82: Le cercle permettait...
"The Circle allows for the raising of general questions or topical issues proposed by the children, or of facts relating to their experience or observations.

The fact of being in a Circle should be beneficial: each communicates with the other as an individual."

Page 104: Verum at...
"What is true and what has been made are interchangeable."

Page 106: Note 72. Si la Phénoménologie...
"If the Phenomenology of Mind is the voyage of a natural consciousness which attains to authentic, scientific knowledge... so that, being fully conscious of itself, it can achieve an understanding of what it is to be itself."

Page 131: Note 84. Qu'aujourd'hui encore...
"Even today, the term subject does not exist in arabic terminology."

Page 287: Note 115. Si la réalité...
"If the instrumental fact of writing counts for less than that which it symbolises, it is because the latter has an effect within the political relations between people and between groups."

Page 288: Non minima pars...
"Not the least important element of learning is the knowledge of good books."

Page 292: Illettrisme...
"Illiteracy is the state of those who are illiterate. Illiterate is someone who is partially unable to read or write."

Page 294: Le français...
"The French language did have a term to denote the ability to read and to write: lettrure. The word can be found in twelfth and thirteenth century texts, but it fell into disuse."

Page 329: Note 139: Nous passons...
"We spend our time objectifying other people. Materialism has a particular propensity to fall into an economism which, reflecting the automatic inclination in the daily struggle for differentials, consists in reducing the other person to some objective truth. The most elementary reduction is in reducing them to their economic value."
Page 332: Similia similibus...
"Like is treated with like."

Page 360: Note 156. Dire illitarisme...
"To speak of illiteracy is to identify one of the divisions which cuts across our society. It points to an extreme form of social inequality."