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# Paulo Freire: implications for a theory of pedagogy.

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PAULO FREIRE: IMPLICATIONS FOR A  
THEORY OF PEDAGOGY

A Dissertation Presented

By

Maryellen Harmon

In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Graduate School  
of the University of Massachusetts for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

June 1975

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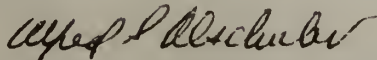
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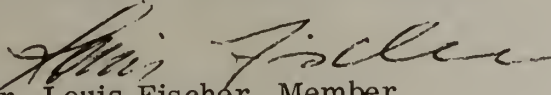
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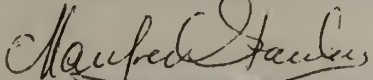
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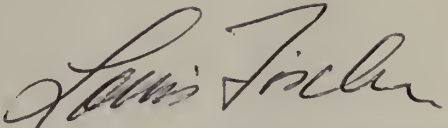
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June 1975

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my father,  
Dr. Daniel Lewis Harmon  
scientist, teacher, and great human being  
and to my brothers and sisters  
who share with me his legacy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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-My community: Louise, Anne, Alice, Gertrude and Catherine,  
for their patience, support and help in a thousand ways that  
made possible the completion of this dissertation.

PAULO FREIRE: IMPLICATIONS FOR A THEORY OF PEDAGOGY

(June 1975)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide an exegesis of Paulo Freire's writings and of currently available critiques, to examine his philosophical assumptions and to attempt to identify their implications for a theory of pedagogy applicable in the United States of America.

Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and philosopher, is known in the United States chiefly as an adult educator whose psychosocial method of literacy training may have applicability outside the Third World. However, data to put his thought into historical and philosophical perspective has not been readily available, nor a comprehensive exegesis of his writings. This study attempts to fill this need. It then describes his methods for literacy training and lists the basic postulates of his philosophy: his theories of consciousness, of knowledge and of person.



The study is significant because it addresses issues that are currently important in education: the role of education in sociolization of the individual, in changing societal structures and in promoting humanization of peoples, particularly oppressed or marginal peoples, and their incorporation into the decision-making processes of their society. It then explores, through the lenses of Freire's philosophy, the dialectic between changes in consciousness and changes in the existential situation, and the dualisms that are still prevalent in education and promote dehumanization.

The second part of this study compares the philosophy of John Macmurray with Freire in an effort to provide a systematic grounding for the philosophy of Freire. Macmurray bases his philosophy on the fact that persons are not primarily thinkers but rather agents who develop only in relation with other persons. Macmurray defines the form of the personal as a positive which includes and is defined by its negative. He carries this schema into all the activities of the human person. The centrality of relationships in personal development and action is extrapolated to explain the forms of fear-oriented and love-oriented societies.

This schema has many points in common with Freire's thinking and provides further clarification to Freire's concepts of dialogic and antialogic communities. It also indicates the dangers which flow from a dualistic perception of the human person and provides a means of examining some of the contradictions in Freire's work.

The third part of the study examines in detail Freire's published works, establishes the concepts of praxis, of the nature of oppression as prescriptive, or outside decision-making, of the various levels of consciousness, of the nature of knowledge, and learning versus "banking" education, of the non-neutrality of education, and of dialogic or love-oriented community. The study then examines the mechanistic and organic metaphors in American education, and the centrality of the dialectic as resolution in Freirean notions of person and society, knowledge and education. Finally, assumptions and guidelines for content and process are offered as a first tentative step toward theory of pedagogy. It is suggested that this theory of pedagogy be based on dialectical humanism and have a two-fold goal: to prepare persons to take a self-determining part in a free (non-oppressive) society, and to enable the future adult to help create a humanizing society: one which promotes the humanization of persons. This implies an education which will promote awareness of what is dehumanizing, commitment to change at a radical level, and skill in creating that change.

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## INTRODUCTION

Paulo Freire is an educator and philosopher of the Third World. He is one of the most important influences on the Latin American scene (Perez, 1971) both for his use of conscientização and for his thought about the role of pedagogy in perpetuating, or changing, economic and political structures. In the United States there is an increasing interest in that thought, and partial imitations of his methods.<sup>1</sup> But there is a lack of clarity about both, a tendency to generalize from his ideas without adequate regard for their situationality (Coutinho, 1968) and a superficial use of his statements to attack concepts of institutionalized education. These statements become superficial when they fail to read the meaning of liberation which inspired the original statements of Freire.

### Statement of the Problem

The problem underlying this situation is the lack of easy availability of data to put his thought into historical and philosophical perspective. Recently three dissertation studies have addressed these needs, from the perspective of a comparison of Freire's and Illich's thought (Elias, 1974), from the perspective of andragogy and social literacy (DeWitt, 1971), and from the standpoint of applicability to early childhood education (Sherwin, 1974).



What has not been done in the publications available to date is a serious systematic study of the philosophical assumptions underlying the pedagogy with respect to their coherence and adequacy as a system on which to build a theory of pedagogy, applicable in other cultures.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide an exegesis of Freire's writings and of currently available critiques, to examine the philosophical assumptions of his positions and to attempt to identify their implications for a theory of pedagogy applicable in the United States of America.

### Significance of this Study

This study is significant at this time because it surfaces and attempts to clarify Freire's position on some of the most critical issues that education faces today. For the sake of organization, I shall call them the issues of ends and means. The ends involve us in the moral issue, the literacy issue, the philosophical issue, and the political issue; the means, in questions of content and method. The division is artificial, and for the sake of organization only, for ends and means are everywhere in dialectic tension.

The moral issue is, par excellence, the question of ends. Education in the United States has been assigned the task of education anywhere: to socialize the child<sup>2</sup> into the existing mores and values of the culture in which s/he is to live and to provide him/her with the tools to achieve what that

culture values. Today American education is being widely criticized. The core of criticism (Silberman, 1970) seems to be that it has done the task too well: enculturating the student to what the surrounding society values, rather than to what society ought to value, says it values, or would like to value.

Because schooling is, in fact, the arm of society which herds to conformity the marginal people: the young, the poor, and the adult illiterate, it becomes the whipping boy for the sins of society. It is criticized for not being the agent of change. But can a society change itself? Can persons, entrapped in institutions, change institutions? What Freire has to say about the stages of consciousness is particularly relevant here. And if institutions can be so changed, can education in particular become the means of value change, while still performing its socializing and tool-providing role?

DeWitt reminds us:

. . . were schooling in our country actually doing the job of democratic socialization then the "products" of the schools would have a feel for the general contours of knowledge and human experience and the possibilities of undetermined futures. School graduates would re-create, participate in and deepen the social rationality of the American public. But even as respected an educational critic as Christopher Jencks suggests that to entertain such notions as though they were realities is sheer dream-talk for. . . (the schools) 'are part of the system which produces the disorders.'

. . . In short, it is the schools themselves, the most prestigious and most elitist in particular, that engender and foster the 'society-managers' of today and

tomorrow, the very ones who are convinced of the rightness of their deciding for others--for all the others--how an entire people should live. (DeWitt, 1971)

Freire says that people, and societies, can change themselves--but only within the limits of their stage of consciousness. He provides a methodology for opening consciousness to higher and more critical stages of development. His critics say that the method is politicizing and ideologizing.

But the moral issue in education goes deeper. What are the values toward which education leads? Who chooses these values? Are they the ones we want? Are they overt and explicit? Are the means to achieve them, the means of education, neutral?

Freire's response is that educational ends are unexamined on the grounds that it is not necessary to examine them, since the means are assumed to be neutral. But he argues that means are never neutral. They inculcate values and views of men and women, which perpetuate false thinking and oppressive-submissive actions. If we accept that education is a means of preparing and motivating for change, as well as a means of development of individual potential, we cannot leave the values guiding educational practice unexamined.

Morality is the theory and practice of relationships. This is the central issue of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970) and one of Freire's most significant theses. Moral issues in education have little to

do with prayer-in-schools, and much to do with the quality and furtherance of dialogic human relationships, or with their frustration and death.

The literacy issue. Freire is primarily identified in the United States as an adult literacy trainer. Here we are confronted with the moral issue on another level. The concept of literacy is fundamental to education and to the study of Freire. In literacy Freire includes the common meaning: the ability to read, write and compute. But this is at a technical and derived level of meaning. The UNESCO definition is closer to literacy in the usual pedagogical sense:

A person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community and whose attainments in reading, writing, and arithmetic make it possible for him to continue to use these skills toward his own and the community's development and for active participation in the life of the community. (Freire, in Stanley, 1972)

In line with this definition was the perception of the Ação Popular and the Basic Education Movement (MEB). These were two groups in Brazil of the '60's who directed their literacy efforts to consciousness-raising as a means to provide the essential knowledge and skills for participation in democratic processes.

But Freire goes further. Literacy to him is primarily a quality of consciousness by which men and women, together, critically perceive, name,



and transform their reality. It stands in contrast to illiteracy, which ranges in meaning from unconsciousness of the "internalized oppressor's presence," to silence (robbed of one's power, right, opportunity or desire to speak and interpret one's world), to a lack of realization that the actions of the human person are "transforming, creating, and recreating." (Freire, 1970; Stanley, 1972)

This conceptualization of literacy is related to the ability to read and to write but it is far from mere phonics instruction. Nor is Freire's first concern that of creating a relevant decoding technique, as has been, wrongly, assumed. (Griffith, 1972) The means of becoming literate, given these kinds of ends, assume serious moral significance. Stanley notes the implication that a "properly literate man is immune to political oppression." (Stanley, 1972b) He asks whether we in North America, who are ordinarily in the role of the "haves," or even "the dominators" can export education--even at the minimal literacy level--without exporting our value set, i. e., without cultural imperialism. Further, "have we ourselves learned what we ought to have learned in an institution that engages our undivided attention for up to a quarter of our lives." (Stanley, 1972b) Are we ourselves literate? Thus literacy, as well as the means to achieve it, is a moral issue in education. Although the moral issue concerns primarily the end product, it impregnates all the content and process means to that end.



Integral to both ends and means in education is a perception of the nature of the human person, the nature of knowledge and knowing, and the relationships of men and women to each other and to their world. These are philosophical issues.

Freire denies that human beings are organisms to be nurtured, or high level computers to be programmed. He holds them unique in their humanness, and situates that humanness in their intentionality and their ability to distance, objectify and name their reality. But these things are done only together, in dialogue, and only at the level of consciousness which their history and political conditions allow. Knowledge itself, is not static reified contents. There is no knowledge except between persons, Freire maintains, persons in relation, reflecting together upon action. Similarly Freire denies that a true educational process can be based on an inequality in the teaching-learning pair. In his insistence upon respect and co-learning dialogue, he negates the superior-inferior relationships of teacher and pupil as well as the dichotomy between knower and world. He proposes instead the dialectic unity of the "man-world entity" and the continual tension between subject and object, theory and practice, co-learners in dialogue.

The political issue: Education, and the means of education, as we have said, are not neutral. To Freire education will either be for domestication or for liberation. By liberation he means the enabling of human persons to define and determine their world. At its surface level the Pedagogy of the

Oppressed deals with adult literacy within a context of political relevancy. On the surface, the method is not too unlike the contextual methods of Ashton-Warner (1963) and Dewey (1916) who draw the content of learning from the life situation of the learners. But the Pedagogy of the Oppressed spends very little time on details of methodology and a great deal of time on consciousness-raising with respect to socio-political reality.

It is this aspect that has given the book its appeal to the oppressed, or the self-styled oppressed, throughout the world. Questions have been raised as to the weaknesses introduced by dichotomizing the world into oppressors/oppressed (Griffiths, 1972; Boston, 1972; Woock, 1972) and by the apparent redefinitions of the word "revolution." (Woock, 1972) As we shall see, revolution is, increasingly, a central concept in the Pedagogy.

The issues of freedom/determinism, oppression/liberation, and their relationships to pedagogy cannot be avoided. I believe that clarifying the philosophical assumptions of Freire's writings and the place therein of agency and inter-relatedness of persons permits a rigorous development of these concepts with respect to their educational implications. This is the major focus of this study, as well as an examination of the political implications of such education.

The question continually teases the reader of Freire's writings: "What kind of revolution is he talking about?" Is the Pedagogy meant to be a revolutionary handbook? This is, I believe, still an unresolved question for

Freire himself, part of the life-tension in which he lives.<sup>3</sup> But there can be no question that the scope and purpose of education as he sees it, is political. By political I mean concerned with ends determined by human beings for human beings in their social, legal, and governmental structures, and with the means to achieve them efficiently.

The pedagogical issue: Although educators today evince much greater interest in processes and values, and the self-image of the learner, than in years past, the "content" to be disseminated is still the dominant concern in pedagogy in most secondary, and almost all university, classrooms. The methods of handing over those contents (called knowledge) are still primarily verbal: lecture, discussion, and/or research papers to be handed in--and the goals of so doing are "possession of knowledge."

Freire's conceptualization challenges this. He will not accept as "knowledge" something which can be deposited by one person into another. To Freire, knowledge is not a static thing, but a continually changing dynamic process whereby two persons, mediated by the reality under scrutiny, together analyze and name that reality by acting on it.

Because of this view of knowledge Freire's only pedagogical method is praxis. He relates praxis to the stage of developing consciousness the student has reached, and bases it squarely on his philosophical views of what it means to be a person in the "man-world dialectic." The dialectic tension between theory and action is the tension of his own life and the driving force of the

methodology of conscientization. The pedagogy is dialogical, respectful, and demanding of collaborative action; action as both fruit and means of learning. Praxis can be summed up in the ongoing cyclic processes of naming, reflecting, acting, and re-evaluating.

Freire himself uses a variety of techniques to arrive at the end, but all within the context of praxis. In the United States, where the method is often confused with the message, this seeming paucity of methods is a subject of criticism.<sup>4</sup> However, the theory-practice unity which is praxis, is a larger life-issue, and perhaps more central challenge to the validity of the whole concept of an educational community. A valid and adequate praxis incorporates both the method and the message.

The metaphorical issue: A key issue of Freire's writings for North American educators is the metaphorical issue. In Freire's method the usual categories of teacher/pupil, content/process, time rate/evaluation, must be redefined. Two metaphors have, historically, dominated American education: that of the machine and that of the organism. The machine metaphor sees the student as a mechanical entity, whether like to an empty vessel, a machine, or an electronic computer. As already implied, the input is itself a thing: "knowledge", programmed into the machine in some useful and convenient way. The decisions as to content and process are outsider decisions; the control is from outside. The mode of thinking is scientific; that is, a continuing search for generalizable prescriptions--and it is assumed that



this goal inevitably is reached. Problems of education then become problems in systems analysis: Where is the mechanism breaking down?

The machine metaphor is an unquestioned assumption under most compensatory and behavior modification approaches, as well as competency based teacher education method, standardized testing, and a host of programmed materials.

The other favored educational metaphor is the organic metaphor. From this viewpoint, the child is an organism, growing according to internal laws and timing. The growth can be stunted or deformed by improper environmental conditions. But where these are warm, nurturing and stimulating, growth will inevitably occur and will be directed toward the desired goal. The role of the teacher is to study the stages of this development and to arrange the environment to nurture it. The control is within the child, according to "Nature" and again, where the proper nurturance is present, the outcome is inevitable and predetermined.

Freire criticizes both metaphors as dehumanizing. The person is more than machine; more than plant. He offers us instead a view of the person as intentional, and a psycho-social methodology requiring choice and social action.

However, in his focus on literacy, his methods of decoding a situation, and his analysis of language, he also reaffirms the leading power of metaphor. By this I mean, that the language we use leads and forms our thoughts. We



cannot with impunity use metaphors inappropriate to human beings, with the casual assumption that we, and everyone, understand their limitations. When we begin with the proposition that there are certain ways in which children are like subhuman animals or things, we are likely to act as if learners were indeed merely vessels to be filled or animals to be trained.

It will be beyond the scope of this paper to pursue these linguistic metaphorical issues with the thoroughness that they invite, but Freire continually reminds us of the danger of carelessness in the words we use, and of the perniciousness of actions that rob the people of the right, or the power, to "say their own words." This notion is at the heart of Freire's critique of the "culture of silence." (Freire, 1969, 1970)

To conclude: the metaphors in which we clothe our pedagogical processes are expressive of our concept of the person: Mechanistic, organic, cybernetic, or human. But they can lead our thought: to certain views of the person, and thence to the structuring of educational experiences based, not on examined positions, but on metaphorical implications. We can be subjugated by unexamined metaphors. A part of the process of situating Freire in the matrix of American education must be to examine its organizing metaphors.

### Conclusion

The questions that will guide this study of Freire will probe his pedagogical method, his underlying philosophy of the person, his moral

stance, his political goals, his analysis of consciousness, knowledge, and learning, and the challenge or irrelevance he presents to the educational community in our country.

The study needs to be done since many of the objections to Freire's views seem, to this writer, to result from partial knowledge, basic disagreement on the nature of education, or an inversion of ends and means.

The thesis of this study is that Freire has identified the key issues of education and integrated them into a coherent philosophical position; that his goal is the total, basically non-violent, revolution of the present order in oppressed societies; and that his psychosocial method can only fully succeed in the work to which he sets it, there where the ideal of "Love your neighbor as your (other) self" is the societal and educational norm.

To provide the data, the background, the exegesis, and the analysis needed to demonstrate this thesis, I shall first present a brief overview of the biographical and historical situation out of which Freire's writings grew, a description of his method, and his own sociological analysis of that situation as he presents it in three of his works: Educação Como Prática da Liberdade, Education As Conscientization, and Cultural Action for Freedom.

I shall then attempt to define the implicit philosophical assumptions and statements about the human person, the nature of knowledge and of the process of knowing; of society, and of development, found in Freire's writings. These will be compared, for further clarification and philosophical

grounding, with the social philosophy of John Macmurray.

I shall examine individually three of Freire's most important writings to elicit the pedagogy for democratization which he developed, its relationship to his philosophy of the person and his critique of dehumanizing educational practice. This will lead us to the heart of his ideas, the life-word tension that is present both in the pedagogy and in his life, and to the unresolved questions raised.

In order to explore the appropriateness of the above theories to American education, I shall briefly attempt an overview of current practice in the United States, under the form of its guiding metaphors. The thought of John Macmurray, already discussed, will provide the guide to the inter-relationships of these metaphors, and their usefulness or harmfulness.

I shall then explore where Freire seems to fit into education in North America, with respect to his philosophy, politics, and sociological position, and the dilemmas he poses for us.

The essay will close with unanswered questions concerning the thought of Freire and my own attempt at some of the answers, an attempt which will lead us toward a Theory of Pedagogy.

## INTRODUCTION -- NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Since 1970 there have been one or two symposia per year and four lecture series or tours by Freire in the United States. The number of published articles has increased from 2 or 3 (1968) to about 10 per year, with notable increase in depth. There were 30 graduate level studies in progress in 1972, with 17 reported by author and title. (Ohlinger, 1972) However, with the exception of a very few publications (Stanley, 1972; DeWitt, 1971; Evans, 1971; Grabowski (ed.), 1972) the publications indicate that Freire is considered narrowly as a proponent of a new methodology for adult literacy training, or as a stimulus for an attack on institutions and schooling, an attack repeating many of the "what's-wrong-with-American-schools" cliché's. Only two articles spend significant time on what Freire himself identifies as the heart of his pedagogy: (Preface to Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1970 edition) i.e., the nature of oppression/liberation and its relationship to the nature of the human person.

<sup>2</sup>American Educational Studies Association Symposium, New York, 1972, particularly papers presented by Grambs, Raywid, Epstein.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with author, Detroit, 1974.

<sup>4</sup>Discussions at AESA meetings, Chicago, Illinois, February 1974.

## PART I

### Paulo Freire: Man of Brazil

#### CHAPTER I: Biographical Background

Paulo Freire styles himself a "Man of the Third World." He was born in Recife, in Northeast Brazil, in 1921, of a middle class family, which later came to know acute poverty in the Depression of the Thirties. Freire fell behind almost two years in elementary school. He later ascribed the retardation to hunger. The delay was quickly overcome when family circumstances improved, but the fact made a profound impression on the boy, and was causal in his adult dedication to fighting the causes of poverty. He attended the University of Recife where he studied law and philosophy. After graduation, he worked briefly as a labor union lawyer in the emerging trade unions (sindicatos) of the Northeast of Brazil. Here he became involved in the Popular Culture Movement. With others in the movement, he evolved the method of conscientização for adult education, in an effort to prepare the people to take their place in a nation which was rapidly industrializing and which had moved, almost without transition, from a feudal to a democratic structure of government. The method called conscientização, involved discussions, stimulated by visuals and schematic representations, by which



the people, in "culture circles" rather than in traditional classes, explored such themes as nationalism, remission of profits abroad, development, dependence, and literacy. The aim of the popular culture movement was the democratization of culture. The leaders hoped to raise class consciousness, and to provide some of the essential skills for converting an increased awareness into action.

The early 1960's also saw the beginnings of both urban and rural unions in Brazil. About 1,300 farm workers' unions were founded in twelve months (Elias, 1974) and in 1963 farm workers' strikes in Pernambuco involved 84,000 workers the first time, 230,000 the second. Central to all efforts at reform, however, was the movement to increase popular literacy, since literacy was a requirement for voting.

It was the striking success of conscientizacao that gave Freire the idea to apply the method to literacy training. Thus evolved the "Metodo Paulo Freire." (see Chapter 4, p. 52) Freire had been involved in adult literacy work since 1947, had received his doctorate at the University of Recife in 1959, and was at that time teaching educational philosophy and history there. Except for the brief period as a lawyer, his principal interests at this time were educational rather than political (Elias, 1971), and in fact, when the popular culture movement began to show pronounced communist leanings, he removed the base of his literacy training program to the University, where he continued to involve students in it.

The success of his program was such that in 1963 the Minister of Education of the Goulart government adopted the method for a Brazil-wide literacy campaign. Although only a "pilot program" was actually completed, this campaign proved so highly successful that 300 workers learned to read and write at the newspaper and paperback book level in 45 days (Elias 1974).

With the military coup of 1964 this, along with almost all other consciousness-raising literacy efforts, was suppressed as subversive.<sup>1</sup> After seventy days in jail, Freire was invited to leave the country, and moved his wife and five children to Chile.

There he worked with the ICIRA (Agrarian Reform Training and Research Institute) and with UNESCO. Here he had an opportunity to reflect critically on the Brazilian experience and to publish the first edition of the book begun in prison: Educação Como Prática Liberdade. It contained his sociological reflections on societies in transition.

In 1968, he published Education or Conscientization, his reflections on his own experiences with the educational arm of the agrarian reform movement in Chile and on its underlying assumptions. In it he describes an already mature view of the role of education in the liberation of the peasant, as opposed to education for modernization, or mere technological training of the peasants. In the same year, Pedagogy of the Oppressed appeared in Portuguese. It was later (1970) published in English. Obscure and awkward in translation, the Pedagogy nonetheless represents a much

deeper reflection on the key philosophical components of conscientization and on the revolutionary praxis it implies. It is not primarily concerned with literacy in the "literal" sense but with a metaliteracy of cultural revolution. Here are foreshadowed, in the last chapter of the Pedagogy, the concepts of conversion and commitment found in many of Freire's more recent statements.

In 1969-70 Freire was visiting scholar at Harvard. There he published two essays: "The Adult Literacy Process as Cultural Action for Freedom," and "Cultural Action and Conscientization." These contain many of the ideas which had appeared in papers delivered each year, and especially in 1970 and 1971, at the CICOP Conferences. (Catholic International Cooperation Program, sponsored by the Latin American Bureau of the United States Catholic Conference.)

Freire is now a consultant for education with the World Council of Churches in Geneva. In addition to shorter articles, there exist a rather long taped talk given in Rome in 1970: "Conscientizing as a Way of Liberating," an article appearing in October 1970 on "The Educational Role of the Churches in Latin American," one on "Education, Liberation and the Church," and an important interview: "Conscientisation and Revolution." These carry further the notions of revolutionary conversion and commitment foreshadowed in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed. There is also a 1973 article on the "Demystification of Conscientization" in which Freire clarifies notions on

various kinds of false consciousness, and the price of critical consciousness. In all of these it is possible to see an evolution and development of his thought which he is constantly re-thinking and refining. By his own word<sup>2</sup> he seems to have moved through several levels of naivete to a critical consciousness in a path paralleling that which he traces for societal stages of consciousness. (See Chapter 3.)

Freire's position with the World Council gives him an important opportunity to influence educational and political thinking on a broad scale. It makes concrete his own commitment to liberation, for he admits that accepting the position meant rejecting more lucrative offers. But it continually confronts him with the dilemma of his personal life: the contradiction between the call to active involvement among the oppressed and the "ivory tower" reflection of a life of writing and speaking. He is committed to praxis, yet forced by the medium of writing to some measure of "banking" or depositing information.<sup>3</sup> However, the contradiction goes deeper than a mode of educating. The dilemma: to continue writing, speaking, thinking, from afar, or to leave Geneva and become wholly involved in action. The dilemma is precisely what he means by praxis: a dialectic of theory and action whose resolution lies at neither extreme. This is the tension with which he presently lives. The contradiction is not resolved by the fact that he spends a portion of each year in the Third

World<sup>4</sup> although he verifies his hypotheses there. Action or Theory: a superficial solution opts for one or the other. Freire is more faithful to the dialectic process, and holds both in tension until a synthesis emerges.<sup>5</sup>



## PART I - Chapter I - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>MEB, Movimento Educação de Base, was not suppressed but according to DeKadt (1969) and Perez (1971), greatly changed its nature.

<sup>2</sup>Talk with students of New School of Religion, St. Basel's Institute, Pontiac, Michigan, July 1974.

<sup>3</sup>By praxis, Freire means the integral interaction and dialectic unity of theory and action; a method of learning and of action which involves a group of persons who analyze a situation, name its contradictions, develop and act upon strategies to change it, and reflect on the new situation thus created.

By "banking education" Freire means a mode of education where the "contents of knowledge" are treated as a thing and the student as a bank vault or spatialized container into which this "thing" is deposited.

<sup>4</sup>The 1973 "Third World Experience" was a walking trip through the southern United States, and in particular Appalachia and other migrant worker sections. In July 1974, speaking in Pontiac, Michigan, before a seminar sponsored by the Institute for Justice and Peace, Freire expressed astonishment that American graduate students go to Latin America to study the problems of the "Third World" when they have so depressed, and oppressed, an example on their doorsteps.

<sup>5</sup>Personal data in this, and the following chapters, was received, or confirmed in a series of interviews with Paulo Freire, in the summer of 1974 in Detroit and Pontiac, Michigan.

## CHAPTER 2: Historical Background: Brazil

Emerging into the arena of world democracies in this century, Brazil carried forward from its past two significant, and related, characteristics: dependency and silence. It was in no way prepared for participatory democracy. This is the thesis of the essay: "Closed Society and Democratic Inexperience" written by Freire from Chile, in 1968.

In the colonial period the plantation was the economic unit, the family unit, and the political unit. Economically, it was the unit of production, based on slave labor. Socially, it was organized as the clan, or extended family, with blood relationships extended and tightened by an extensive network of godparents and ritual kinships. Politically, there was no effective external agency to exercise power or to dispense justice except the landowner. (Freire, 1964) DeKadt characterizes the relationships that developed, at every level, as "patron-dependent."

All who operated under the Senhor were bound to him by the principle of personal loyalty, accepted and internalized by all involved, thereby bestowing a quality of legitimacy (emphasis not in original) on the Master's exercise of power, despotic though it may have been. (DeKadt, p. 12)

The Master's commands and position of authority were generally seen as proper "within a framework of values accepted by all." DeKadt cites Blau

that "authority entails voluntary compliance in contrast to coercion, since the influence of the superior on subordinates rests upon their own social norms," and sees this as one of the critical bases of the dependence relations. (DeKadt, p. 37)

For the dependent, as well as for the master, this relationship entailed certain goods, reminiscent of those of feudal times: protection, land, education, sometimes privileges. But

the exchange is (always) asymmetrical: the benefits for the dependent are conditioned by the very existence of the system of unequal distribution of power and resources which operates to the advantage of the Master.  
(DeKadt, p. 13)

The authority and feelings of personal loyalty engendered were not based on free consent, for it was, de facto, the Master who controlled economic resources: land, capital, and slaves.<sup>1</sup> Further, the widespread polygamy practiced by the masters engendered a large mestizo population and added a biological, to the psychological foundation for what we will later hear Freire naming "the internalized oppressor." (Chapter 3)

The dependency that was evident from the beginning within the social and political units inside Brazil, was also evident in its external relationship to the Portuguese crown which claimed full personal loyalty and patronage relationships. However, in practice, except for draining off resources, the power of the central government was minimal, and the powerful plantation owners were not interfered with.

When independence came, a few of the functions performed by the patriarchal units were taken over by new organs of government, some of whose members, "usually from the large landholding families" were used by the Empire to strengthen its centralizing power. In practice, the power base--in spite of the existence of newly created political parties--had shifted very slightly.

Outside the urban centres--and even to a large extent in the towns--these political parties were, from the start, vehicles for the expression of the personal power and the fulfillment of the personal ambitions of the heads of particular clans. (DeKadt, p. 15)

Thus Brazil developed an intensely personalist political system which it retained throughout modern history, a system characterized by principles taken straight from the patriarchal plantation, i. e., the principle whereby authority is upheld and legitimized by the expectation of personal loyalty, and the principle that new functionaries would, and should, reward personal loyalty from those beneath them. The stage was set for a spoils system.

Although voting power gradually increased and other democratic structures were established, the patron-dependent relations remained unchanged. What was new was that peasants no longer "gave" their vote to their own landlord. They had discovered the commercial value of the vote and gave it to those patrons who promised the greatest favors--in the form of roads, or medical assistance, or housing. The dependency relationship

might now be called a "patron-client" relationship. But one could still not speak of any kind of peasant or worker "class," or "class interest" nor of any widespread "class consciousness" among the rural peasants, not even among those in areas where they were free from coercion in voting. (And this was by no means universal.) Rather, an enlightened self-interest replaced the loyalty motivation of the extended family, and gradually led to party bosses, machine politics, and favors, without having changed at all the basic pattern of dependency and ignorance of rights.

The basic mechanism on this level. . . remains that of exchange of support for favors, for a reciprocation to which no rightful claim exists.  
(p. 32)

Accompanying dependency and nurtured by it was the "culture of silence"--a term Freire applies to the situation of those who have no voice or control over their socio-economic situation, and are, most often, unaware and undesirous of such control. On the large landholdings, the social distance between peasants and masters, even the most humanistic, prevented dialogue.

The proper climate for dialogue is found in open areas where men can develop a sense of participation in a common life. Dialogue requires at least a minimum of transitive consciousness,<sup>2</sup> which cannot develop under the closed conditions of the large estate. Herein lie the roots of Brazilian 'mutism'; societies which are denied dialogue in favor of decrees become predominantly 'silent'. (Freire, 1973, p. 24)



In the urban centers, the colonial municipal councils were controlled by the privileged class. Common men were excluded from the elective process and had no voice in their destiny. (p. 26) The arrival of the royal court in 1808, and the ensuing reforms in urban industry and education, promoted the power of the cities but not the participation of the common man in the life of his community. Instead it promoted importation of European ideas into universities and urban centers and further silenced those who were rural, native, or backward. According to Freire in the essay "Closed Society and Democratic Inexperience"

It was upon this vast lack of democratic experience, characterized by a feudal mentality and sustained by a colonial economic and social structure, that we attempted to inaugurate a formal democracy. Acting in accord with our state of cultural alienation, we turned to societies we considered superior to ours in search of a prefabricated solution for our own problems.<sup>3</sup> And so we imported the structure of the national democratic state without first considering our own context, unaware that the inauthenticity of superimposed solutions dooms them to failure. Not only did we lack experience in self-government when we imported the democratic state; more importantly, we were not yet able to offer the people either the circumstances or the climate for their first experiments in democracy. (emphasis not in original) Upon a feudal economic structure and a social structure within which men were defeated, crushed, and silenced, we superimposed a social and political form which required dialogue, participation, political and social responsibility, as well as a degree of social and political solidarity which we had not yet attained. (We had reached only the level of private solidarity, demonstrated by such manifestations as the 'mutirao'.<sup>4</sup>

. . . Before it becomes a political form, democracy is a form of life, characterized above all by a strong component of transitive consciousness. Such transitivity can neither appear nor develop except as men are launched into debate, participating in the examination of common problems. (Freire, 1973, pp. 28-29)

For one hundred years the patron-client relationship between the people and emerging municipal councils, or later, populist leaders, remained. It was to receive an important new twist during the Vargas regime of the 1930's. One of the "favors" by which Vargas won the support and loyalty of the urban workers was the passage of labor and social security legislation.

Gradually the meaning of the rights they had acquired through labor and social security legislation was apprehended by the urban working class. And it was this changing consciousness which led to the transformation of the urban masses at least into a potentially autonomous force on the Brazilian political scene. (DeKadt, p. 37)

Once the conception of rights begins to spread, other things can happen:

1. People can insist that the gap between the rights acknowledged on paper and the actual practice be closed;
2. Further rights can conceivably be won.

Out of this legislation was to emerge, for some at least, a sense of citizenship, and the overthrow, in principle, of the patronage system. The potential was present for a new consciousness. The members of the popular culture movement set themselves to actualize this potential in urban areas

and to generate awareness in the "submerged" people of the rural backlands.

Another movement pregnant for consciousness-raising was the appearance, in 1955, of the first peasant league. Originally, it was a modest association of peasants on the Fazenda Galilea, which was threatened with dissolution and eviction from their land by the landowner. It was defended through the courts and in the State Assembly by Francisco Julião. Eventually, in 1959, a decree was won, expropriating the land in favor of the peasants. Use of the courts and legal structures in this way "was a step in the direction of getting the peasant to shift from thinking in terms of privileges and favors granted by the patrão, to seeing themselves as citizens with rights under the law." (p. 27) Leagues (ligas) of peasants began to be organized elsewhere. At first these had limited objectives such as the right to land tenure, the right to organize and to vote, but later they developed a much stronger ideological position under the leadership of Julião, and demanded wholesale land reform. However, DeKadt cites several sources to show that Julião "acted like a new style 'coronel' (petty political leader) whose political power rested on the support of his followers" and who was primarily interested in furthering his own political career.<sup>5</sup> In response to the question: "Was this a traditional 'following' on the part of the peasant, or did they act as a class?" DeKadt and the sociologists he cites, say no.

The peasant behavior in the emerging peasant movements should be considered as essentially continuous with their behavior as dependents. . . they saw these organizations-- and the sindicatos--fundamentally as providers of personal services: medical, legal, economic, even educational, and hardly as entities which promoted their collective class interests. (DeKadt, pp. 27-29)

The people, by and large, even in the 1950's, were dependent on external, paternal caring. The lack of critical awareness of their dependency, of the political structures which maintained it, and of their own contributions to a uniquely Brazilian culture became the focal point for efforts of conscientização.

Alongside this system of patron-dependent, or patron-client relations, with their orientation to privileges, favors, and donations rather than rights, there existed a parallel dependency relationship. From colonial days to the present, Brazil has been a being-for-others. It was exploited as a source of raw materials and taxes by Portugal during the colonial period. Its resources were developed by foreign capital for a foreign market from the days of independence onward. Today it is a market for foreign consumer goods manufactured in the United States and other Western nations. Thus, Brazil has developed only in dependence on, and for the advantage of, others outside her borders. Often local leaders within Brazil have served as agents or branch managers for the foreign power. In order to change its state of economic underdevelopment Brazil has to rupture simultaneously



two kinds of dependency relationships: at home, those of peasants to leadership, and underdeveloped backlands to the metropolises; and abroad, the economic ties that bind her as a dependent people to First and Second World countries. In both cases consciousness is conditioned by the economic dependency.

We will examine in greater detail the culture of silence already referred to. With respect to the international situation, DeWitt comments

The fact that First and Second World powers provide competing centers of attention for Third World intellectuals only sustains the pattern whereby the intellectual and spiritual dependence on the so-called developed countries is sustained. . . . This intellectual distortion of perspective has a concomitant atrophy of social imagination that goes along with it. (DeWitt, 1974, p. 9)

DeWitt goes on to show, quoting DeTela, that where intellectuals react against "cultural invasion by imperialist powers" they are influenced by contents put forward by the mass media even when they rebelliously take the logical extreme opposite view.

This logical opposite is usually as little suited to guide action intelligently as the platitudes coming from the international news agencies. (pp. 31-32)

Brazil was in 1959, and in many ways is today, a dependent people.

Both the internal and external dependency relations became the target for radical thinkers in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The movement of protest was spearheaded by the student group: JUC (Juventude Universitaria



Catolica), the AP (Ação Popular), and the Catholic clergy of the Northeast. They rejected dogmatizing and imposition of ideologies and began meeting with the workers and rural peasants in culture circles where various aspects of culture were discussed, out of the everyday reality of the people. Thus the people's consciousness was awakened to the fact that they themselves were creators of culture every bit as much as the foreigners whose models they had indiscriminately imported. The first aim of these culture circles was consciousness-raising, but integral with that aim was that of literacy. This goal was also that of the massive efforts made by the Goulart government through SUDENE (Superintendency for the Development of the Northeast) and by the Catholic Bishops through MEB (Movimento de Educação de Base). All these efforts were primarily consciousness-raising efforts, and by this fact were subversive to any governmental regime which depended upon keeping people unaware and manipulable. This fact was clearly recognized when they were abruptly suppressed at the time of the military coup in 1964. Further,

All these efforts were going to reveal themselves (in retrospect) as too young and fragile for their purpose of an effective integration of the Northeastern peasants into Brazilian society, to which they had been kept marginal for years and for centuries. (Perez, 1971)

Hence repressive action quickly returned the peasants to their former state of "silence."

In summary: Brazil had been from colonial times a dependent and relatively silent people. The apparent need for political consciousness-raising was perceived by the members of the popular culture movements of the 1960's. But life attitudes and patterns of thought are less susceptible to mass education techniques than are technical training, including literacy training. Political literacy requires time, and experiments in real action; without these, discussion circles effect little at any depth. DeKadt observed in 1966 and 1968 the same dependency patterns among peasants with whom MEB had been working, as had been observable four decades before. (DeKadt, Ch. 10, 14) Against this historical background, the following review of Freire's sociological reflections on societies in transition and the stages of consciousness associated with them, can be evaluated.

*where  
where  
...*

## PART I: CHAPTER 2 -- NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See also comments by Freire in "Cultural Freedom in Latin America" a paper delivered before the CICOP Conference in 1969, published in Colomese, Louis M. Human Rights and the Liberation of Man in the Americas, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup>Transitive consciousness is a term used by Freire to mean the accurate though superficial perception of their reality that persons have who are beginning to realize the nature of their situation, to see that its limitations are not absolute but can be transformed, and that they have certain powers and rights. They have not, however, yet penetrated to the causes of what they perceive. For example, a person formerly unaware of the racism within his social group, and now becoming aware of it, often enters a period of transitive consciousness and naive activity. He/she does not perceive the real causes of racist behaviours, but does begin to name the situation at a superficial level. Transitive consciousness is a middle stage between complete unawareness ("submerged" or intransitive consciousness) and true understanding (critical consciousness).

<sup>3</sup>See also DeWitt, 1974, pp. 31-32.

<sup>4</sup>A common work project, such as roof-building.

<sup>5</sup>See also DeWitt, 1974, ch. 2.

### Chapter 3: Sociological Considerations: A Society in Transition

In Education as a Practice of Freedom, Freire tells us that a society in transition is a society moving from one historical epoch to another, from an epoch characterized by one set of aspirations, concerns and values, the themes of that epoch, to another where these are being superseded by a different set of values and aspirations. In this chapter I shall review Freire's analysis which he presents in the essays "Society in Transition," and "Education versus Massification" in order to further solidify the perception of the concrete situation in Brazil out of which his theories were born, and to clarify the most significant of the analytical tools he gives us: the developmental stages of consciousness. This will also be an introduction to Freire's own writings, while we are still at the stage of establishing the sociological and historical backgrounds of his work. These writings will be treated in greater depth in Part III.

Freire reminds us that it is a mistake to believe that the transition stage by which a society emerges from "silence" to full critical consciousness is a short one. Nor is the ebb and flow of retreats and advances a cause for distress: it marks a normal interplay while old values, ways of being and understanding, which have still not exhausted their validity, clash with new ones coming onto the scene.

The important thing, Freire says, for those who would take their place in making history, and not be merely swept along by it, is that they perceive the marked contradictions occurring, the themes and tasks emerging. For this they need a critical kind of consciousness. By critical consciousness Freire means an awareness which penetrates beneath the surface of a situation to discover the contradictory elements hidden in it, and the structures (economic) which maintain the situation as it is.<sup>1</sup>

Brazil in the 1950's was moving out of the situation of a closed society. A closed society is one where all decisions relative to economic and political development are outsider decisions, made to the advantage of outside nations, business agglomerate or Church, or made by the metropolis with respect to underdeveloped backlands. Closed societies are

"totalities in themselves" but also "parts of a larger totality in which they find themselves dependent upon central, manipulating societies."  
(Freire, 1970c)

Within a closed society there is a total lack of popular participation in public affairs, a lack, as we have seen, which characterizes the "culture of silence." In "Cultural Action and Conscientization" (1970 ) Freire expands the description:

Latin American societies are closed societies characterized by a rigid hierarchical social structure; by the lack of internal markets, since their economy is controlled from outside; by the exportation of raw materials and the importation of manufactured goods, without a voice in either



process; by a precarious and selective educational system where schools are an instrument for maintaining the status quo; by high percentages of illiteracy and disease, including the naively named 'tropical diseases' which are really diseases of under-development and dependence; by alarming rates of infant mortality; by malnutrition, often with irreparable effects on mental faculties; by a low life expectancy; and by a high rate of crime.

In the Third World all of these are the effects of closedness in the Freirean sense. He reiterates that the essence of a closed society is the lack of internal decision-making and the unawareness that the situation can be otherwise: i. e., the lack of perception of the structures of domination.

Corresponding to the state of a closed society is a semi-intransitive mode of consciousness. Semi-intransitive consciousness is dependent on the ideas of the master; it is dominated, having internalized, without realizing it, the prescriptions of another. Freire calls it "submerged," unable to perceive the challenge of the situation in which it exists, nor its structure, unaware of causality; hence given to magical explanations and to fatalism. (1970d, p. 35) Models, values, consumer goods and education are imported into a closed society because what one has, and what one is, is considered inadequate.

The oppressive presence of authority, heartless or paternalistic, makes these people introject the image and myths of domination. This is one of Freire's most powerful insights: submerged people 'house the oppressor' within themselves. (Perez, p. 33)

But the Brazil of the '50's was what Freire calls a splitting society:  
a society in transition.

The particular meaning and emphasis given by a closed society to themes like democracy, popular participation, freedom, property, authority, and education were no longer adequate for a society in transition. (Freire, 1973, p. 8)

Societies begin to split open due to economic changes. Freire believes that the beginning of the split for Brazil was the abolition of slavery, which diverted capital to industry and stimulated German, Italian, and Japanese immigration. (p. 30) The industrialization trend became even stronger in the 1920's and the period following World War II. With this crack in the structure of the closed society, people began to emerge and demand a presence in national life.

Culture, the arts, literature, and science, showed new tendencies toward research, identification with Brazilian reality, and the planning of solutions rather than their importation. (Freire, p. 31)

Suddenly, at least to the intellectuals and students,

the different evidence of underdevelopment  
and oppression became unbearable irritants.  
(p. 40)

People were beginning to be aware of the contradictions in their situation, of myths that they had introjected, and which had served to keep them inactive. They became noisy, demanding, and rebellious. These characteristics are typical of people emerging from a closed society and

Freire calls this a positive intermediate phase in the transition toward critical consciousness. However, their awareness was only emerging. There was no assessment, at this point, of the degree to which they had been conditioned by old ideas and values, nor of the price required to bring new perceptions to full practice. And so they were particularly vulnerable to manipulation by populist leaders and to "massification." A massified society is one which is manipulated by its leaders, given answers rather than stirred to question, and which accepts slogans and propaganda.<sup>2</sup>

Brazil was both open and closed: open in the urban centers, still closed in rural areas. Such is the ground from which popular leaders spring. The politics of populism is a "response to the emergence of the masses and their yearning for justice and participation. (Freire, 1967, p. 33) They are allowed to vote and participate but the choices offered them are not real choices. Whichever leader they elect, the same economic and social conditions will obtain.

As DeKadt indicates, the patron-dependent relationship continues in a populist period. It is symbiotic: populist leaders use the masses in their own rise to power. But to rise they must preserve the semblance of participatory government. Hence the masses gain some voice and economic favors. And because of this minimal participation in the action of government, educational changes take place in the people. Action

creates conditions for the masses to further unveil reality, furthers their knowing, and becomes a factor in their democratic mobilization. (Freire, 1971, p. 465)

In spite of the fact that they are largely manipulated by populist leaders, the people begin to discover that they can have power. Effective action becomes conceivable only after there has been some action. This is what occurred in Brazil during the Vargas regime. And Brazilians here reflected in miniature what was taking place throughout the world: the phenomenon of emergence of Third World people from silence, in juxtaposition with the phenomenon of domination. Although the structures of external dependence still exist

the total phenomenon of emergence in this transition period consists, on the one hand, of the emergence of the Third World from the whole world, and on the other hand, of its underprivileged sectors from their own totalities. (Freire, 1970c)

The mode of consciousness corresponding to societies in transition (splitting societies) Freire calls naive-transitive, or "emergent." Members of transition societies have greater ability than formerly to perceive the sources of the ambiguous existence of their society in objective conditions. (Freire, 1970, p. 463) For example, they begin to recognize that there is a profit being realized on the mines, and to ask why workers should not own the fruits of their labor (although they would probably not use such words).



One of the characteristics of this stage of consciousness is the presence within it of the residues of previous conditioning--in the forms of myths, naivete, and a continuing tendency to magical explanations and solutions. Examples of myth-making are found in convictions that they (the peasants) are less capable of learning, or that "God wills them to be content with their lot."<sup>3</sup>

While there is an almost automatic transition from semi-intransitive to naive-transitive consciousness as societies begin to open, there is no automatic development to the next stage: that of critical consciousness which is characteristic of an open society. Education is needed.

An open society resembles closely the ideal of a full participatory democracy. It exhibits characteristics of sharing and public solidarity: involvement of the whole group in the common problems of all. There is a more even distribution of property; thus the structural support for social distance is removed. There is also a tendency to demystify authority, a healthy critical attitude, and openness to change. The mode of consciousness corresponding to an open society, Freire calls critical-transitive, or "inserting" consciousness. It is characterized by depth rather than superficiality in the interpretation of problems, by substitution of causal explanations for magical ones, by dialogue instead of polemics, by testing and revising insights, and by detachment from preconceptions. Rejecting irresponsibility, immobility, and the closing of options, whether new or



old, it makes the perception of the reality itself an object of knowledge. The movement from a naive to a critical level of thinking is effected by "perceiving one's former faulty perceptions," and replacing them. The critique is of self and of knowledge as much as of society.

Critical consciousness. . . implies a questioning of the relationships between men and the structured world. . . a heightened sensitivity to sloganizing, mythologizing and ideologizing, that is, to any kind of manipulation. (Perez, p. 35)

✓ But not all societies achieve the level of critical consciousness, nor do all members of a society achieve it simultaneously. The transitional stage characterized by naive transitive consciousness, is peculiarly susceptible to being diverted to that of a massified society, with a fanaticized consciousness. As we have seen, a massified society is one which allows the leaders to do its thinking and accepts manipulation in the form of slogans and propaganda. A massified society is one which makes its myths those of production, technological development and consumerism. It espouses law and order, but without justice or real exercise of freedom. (Perez, 1971) The common people are excluded from the realm of decision-making. Massification is a natural development of populism, wherein dependency of the many is nurtured for the sake of political and economic gains of a few. Not infrequently revolutionary leaders for the sake of quicker gains in solidifying the revolution, use dependence-creating educational techniques

which contradict their ends. See for example, the highly effective educational program in Castro's Cuba, and the direction taken by the Ação Popular in Brazil in 1963-64. In the short essay, "Education versus Massification" (1973) Freire outlines both the direction and the danger of such development.

The ease with which emerging societies can be massified is related to their extraordinary and irrational fear of freedom, a fear based on generations of dependence. They evidence what Freire calls a fanaticised consciousness: sectarian, mythologized, and frightened, which rigidifies positions and restores the people to the "culture of silence" without their realizing that they have lost any real voice in their destiny.

### Summary

All consciousness is awareness of the surrounding world but the modes described above differ in the degree of responsibility or agency they assume. A semi-intransitive consciousness is incapable of passing beyond considerations of survival or biological necessity, of seeing causality, or of assuming a place in a causal chain. As people begin to get some perspective on their context and transcend the immediate, they perceive and respond to questions arising from the world--to dialogue with it. But their naivete leads them to over-simplification, underestimation of the common man, and gregariousness (which is a clustering but not formation of a "class"). Their arguments are fanciful, fragile, emotional polemics rather than dialogue, and they

show little interest in scientific investigation. (Freire, 1973, p. 18)

Rebellions rather than responsibility characterize their action, but rebellions quickly palliated by "bread and circuses."

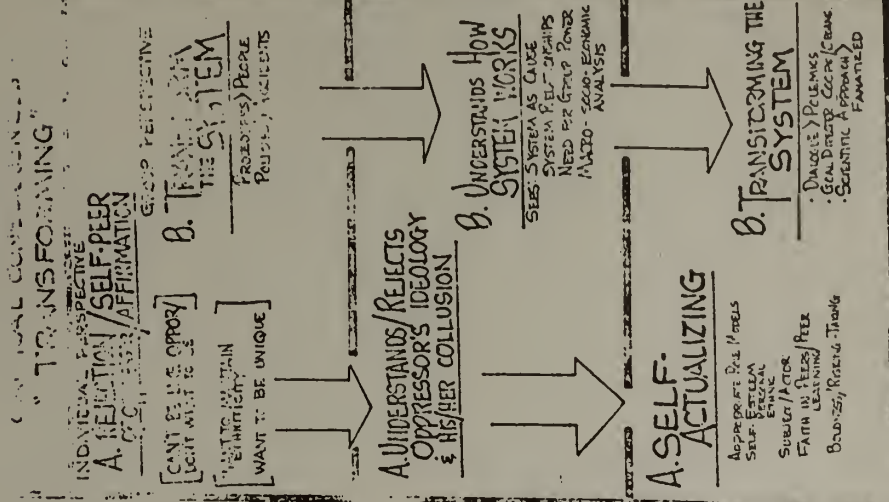
### Stages of Consciousness

The schema reproduced on the figure which follows, summarizes the modes of consciousness described in the preceding section by orienting them around the three generalized activities of praxis: naming, reflecting and acting. Persons functioning in the semi-intransitive or magical mode avoid identifying, or misidentify, the problems of their situation. Instead of naming causes, they identify effects or symptoms as the real problem. Example: "We are poor because we have poor health. . ." When asked to go deeper, they ascribe causality to fate, luck, or divine powers, and accept fatalistically that "nothing can be done." They have internalized the notion of their impotence and inadequacy, and acquiesced in dependency and conformism.

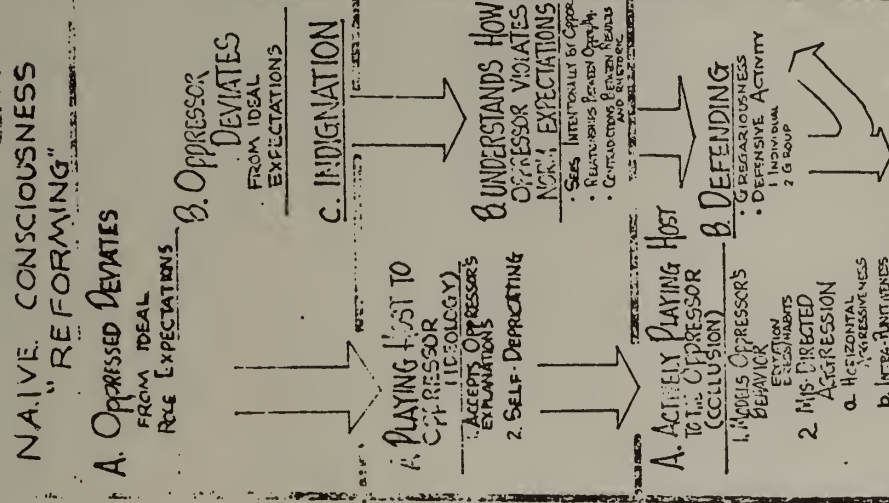
Persons functioning in an ingenuous, naive-transitive model also misidentify the problem and reduce complex situations to a "good guys-bad guys" pattern, blaming individuals or groups among their fellows, or superiors, for oppressive conditions. (For example: a slumlord or a chief of police, or the president.) They operate on the level of doxa<sup>4</sup> and have not yet seen that the structures of the system are oppressive. If they place

# CONSCIENTIZAÇÃO CODING CATEGORIES

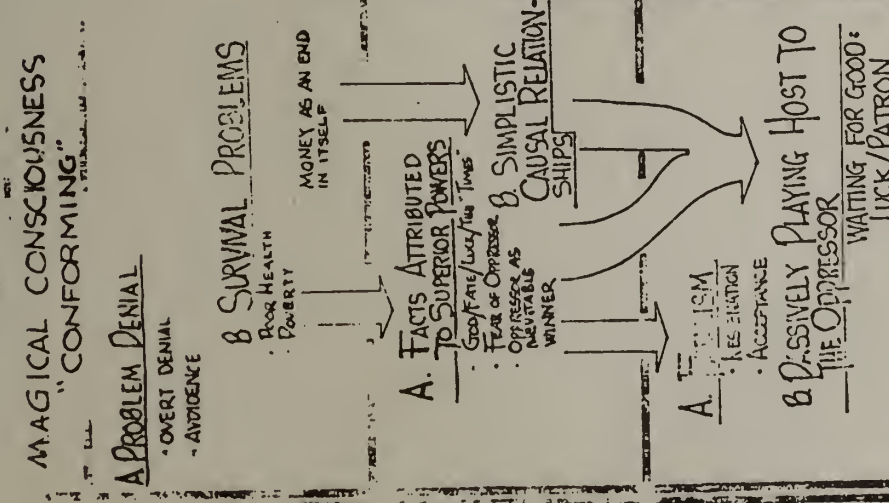
## III



## II



## I



- I. NAMING**
- WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?
  - SHOULD THINGS BE AS THEY ARE?
- REFLECTING (UNDERSTANDING)**
- WHY ARE THINGS AS THEY ARE?
  - WHO/WHAT IS TO BLAME?
  - WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THIS?
- ACTING**
- WHAT CAN BE DONE?
  - WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?
  - WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
  - WHAT WILL YOU DO?

FANATIZED CONSCIOUSNESS	
NAMING	• OPPRESSOR IS ENEMY • WANT TO BE SUPER-ETHNIC
REFLECTING	• PELEMICS • EMOTIONAL STYLE • ROMANTIC
ACTING	• CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP • FOLLOWING MASS MOVEMENT

Figure 1



the problem in their own ranks they blame their failure to live up to the ideal set by the rulers, and try to take the rulers and their way of life as models.

"To be a man is to be like the oppressor." Anger and violence are not directed against the causes of injustice but horizontally, against one another. If, on the other hand, they have identified the "bad guys" among the ruling group, they tend to cluster together and defend themselves, more by rhetoric than by significant action. Example: white liberals newly aware of racism tend to play a "Get the Racist" game.

When people functioning in an ingenuous mode, begin to discover the real extent of the problem and the cost of commitment, they often withdraw from it, as impossible of solution. Individually they may become "astute" and rationalize their lack of commitment. As a group, they are vulnerable to charismatic leadership, emotionalism, and empty rhetoric. They want to reform existing systems, not create new ones.

Unless they move on from this mode to that of critical consciousness, they fixate and become fanatized or massified: easily manipulated, they "follow the crowd."

Persons functioning on a critical level of consciousness are able to identify the problem. They penetrate below the surface phenomena to find causes in the nature of the system itself whose unjust evaluations and ideology they reject. They begin to recognize and eject values they had unconsciously



held, and to form their own explicit value system, and they attempt to understand the system, if necessary by trial and error, so as to begin to transform it. Action tends to be quiet, cooperatively planned, effective, and carefully evaluated. Key words are dialogue and commitment.

However, if the movement from ingenuous to critical consciousness is obstructed, the group begins to exhibit the rigid, polemical, gullible characteristics of a fanaticized consciousness. This identifies what Freire calls a state of massification. Psychically they have returned to the culture of silence even though they may be very vocal. For they have given up the power to "say their own word" and instead accept the words and slogans of another.

It is Freire's judgment that only a responsible leadership and a special kind of education can bring quasi-children to critical citizens of an ideal democracy, "highly permeable, interrogative, restless, dialogical" but also responsible, and determined to remain intentional.

It was with this goal in mind that he evolved the consciousness-raising literacy method for which he is famous and which will be described in the next chapter.

## PART I - CHAPTER 3 -- NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For example: In Chile three years ago, critical consciousness would have perceived that the power of external nations to control the economy would necessarily destroy the effectiveness of the non-violent (cultural) revolution in progress.

<sup>2</sup>DeWitt in an unpublished paper, 1970, makes a case that the United States of America is a massified society. Significant decisions, he claims, are made only by technocrats and at a level of technological information that excludes participation by the common people. Nor are the citizens aware of the degree to which their lives are programmed for them.

<sup>3</sup>Examples of mythmaking regarding the "disadvantaged" in American schools can be multiplied: "They have poor home situations, so they cannot learn." "They lacked early stimulation." "They have poor attention spans." "They are less capable, inferior genetically."

<sup>4</sup>Doxa is used by Freire to mean knowledge on the level of opinion without understanding of causality. See glossary.

<sup>5</sup>I am indebted for this schema to William Smith and Dr. Alfred Aischuler of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst who are engaged in developing a coding system for the stages of consciousness based on field experiences presently being conducted by Mr. Smith in Ecuador.

#### CHAPTER 4: Educational Methodology

To bring an ingenuous group of people to perceive the structures of their society and to perceive them in an entirely new way, without at the same time imposing outsider ideas on them, and without manipulation: this is the task Freire envisioned for education. The task presents a dilemma to the change agent, who sees the necessity

to achieve economic development as a support for democracy, thereby ending the oppressive power of the rich over the very poor. (Freire, pp. 18-19)

and yet is committed to follow the slow pace of a truly conscientizing education.

Such was the situation in Brazil: without opportunities to act on their reality, the Brazilian people could not reflect realistically on their state of massification nor move to a critical consciousness.

The special contribution of the educator to the birth of a new society would have to be a critical education which could help to form critical attitudes, for naive consciousness with which the people had emerged into the historical process left them an easy prey to irrationality. (Freire, pp. 37-38)

A conscientizing education is one which promotes growth toward awareness and provides stimuli and the analytical tools as the learner finds a need for them. However, the educator cannot bypass the process required of

the learners themselves: that of naming the reality and creating change, nor can the educator eliminate the dissonance out of which learning is born.

In this chapter I shall describe the "Metodo Paulo Freire" in order to show that the method had for its goal these awarenesses and activities in the learner. But it coupled this goal with a phonetic approach to literacy training, since literacy was a functional need peculiar to the socio-political reality of the people.

According to Freire's analysis (p. 36) the education required by Brazil and by other societies in transition would have to provide a way of seeing the significance of the rapid changes in society and of participating in them in ways more sophisticated and effective than rebellion. The traditional education, given to irrelevant content, abstractions, and high-flown phrases, was simply not adequate to the task of bringing men to confront their problems and attack them scientifically. Above all, the education Freire sought would have to be based on faith in people.

I was concerned to take advantage of that climate (of transition) to attempt to rid our education of its wordiness, its lack of faith in the student and his power to discuss, to work, to create. Democracy and democratic education are founded on faith in men, on the belief that they not only can, but should discuss the world, their work, the problems of democracy itself. Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage. It cannot fear the analysis of reality, or under pain of revealing itself as a farce, avoid creative discussion.  
(pp. 18-19)

Education like this is slow and difficult of development. It is based on a view of the learner as one capable of self-determination. It is a view not shared by those who unilaterally judge a nation or group "backward," "underdeveloped," "in need of modernization," and who correspondingly give the techniques and information for modernization.

Freire contrasts education, massification, domestication, and modernization. He claims that mass production, while greatly increasing man's sphere of participation in production, so narrows his field of specialization, requires him to behave mechanically, and separates his activity from the total production, as to be a major instrument in his domestication, or massification. (Here he seems to equate domestication with "made one of the herd, conformed to the masses.") Yet the dilemma of the absolute need for improved technology is not solved by "turning back the clock" but by confronting the contradiction: "not by rejection of the machine but by the humanization of man." (p. 35)

Freire demands that critical education not discount the paternalistic cultural roots of Brazil, nor the activist mental attitudes being generated by rapid advances in technology. He considers the confusion and rebellion of the emerging masses positive. He challenges education, through the medium of social and political experiences, to further the passage from naive rebellion to critical consciousness. Instead of the traditional curriculum,



disconnected from life,

we needed an education which would lead men to take a new stance toward their problems--that of intimacy with those problems, one oriented to research instead of repeating irrelevant principles. . . vitality instead of insistence on the transmission of inert ideas--that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations. (p. 36)

Freire's answer to the need was the "Metodo Paulo Freire."

### The Pedagogical Method

Freire's literacy method integrates consciousness-raising about the social and political situation and literacy instruction. The aim is consciousness-raising; the immediate vehicle literacy, but a literacy whose mode of instruction attempts to avoid imposing values or cultural content on the people.<sup>1</sup> Originally in his method Freire distinguished between a pre-literacy phase, a literacy training phase using generative words, and a post-literacy phase where the focus was on generative themes. In Brazil, he had been accustomed to precede the literacy phase by several discussions on the theme of culture in general, the difference between what the earth produced without people, and what people produced. The aim of these sessions was to bring the people to recognize themselves as creators of culture, to progress from a magical toward a critical consciousness, as they distinguished the world of nature from that of culture, and to see culture,

not as the property of the learned who bestow it on the unlettered but as the prerogative and possession of all men who work, and by working, modify their world. (Freire, 1971)

In Chile, at the request of the people, Freire's followers collapsed this culture exploration into the first stages, and indeed throughout the literacy training, using codifications for the generative words that plunged the people into discussions of the whole cultural as well as political situation.

(See Appendix II)

The literacy phase consists of the following steps:

1. An intense hearing of the thought-language of the people in their day-to-day living situation.

-A team of people move into the area and live with the people there, identifying those natural leaders who would like to work with them on an educational project, and building trust and commitment with and to the people.

-Both these "experts" (sociologists, psychologists, educators) and the volunteer "coordinators" from the area begin to "decode" the situation: listening to the conversation: syntax and idiom of the people, observing interaction patterns, typical moments of life, life-style, behaviors and metaphors.

2. An analysis by the experts and their collaborators of the recorded data to begin to identify the generative themes which seem to hold highest priority in the life of the people.

-The team discuss the themes and key words and then return to the area to recheck what was perceived; gradually the nuclei of contradictions begin to emerge and be identified.<sup>2</sup>

-They also study the inhabitants' level of awareness of these contradictions which

- a) constitute limit situations (conditions which limit the peoples' growth or freedom)
- b) involve themes
- c) indicate tasks

An incident from another context may serve as an example to clarify some of these concepts. Generative themes are contained in what Freire calls limit-situations: situations which by the contradictions they contain impose limits on human beings, and imply tasks opposing them: limit acts. Limit acts are acts which challenge or test the limits of the present situation. Because the situation contains contradictory realities, people respond to them in contradictory ways--some to preserve the status quo, some to oppose it by limit acts.

For example: An urban community is faced with the fact that their teen-age children are not going to school, not wholly because they do not want to learn, but because they have experienced rigidity, abuse, failure and irrelevance. The alternatives of the parents are to continue to try to coerce their children to attend, or to do nothing and see their children sent away to training schools, or to try to establish a school their children find more compatible. This is a limit situation. The dominant group, in this case the school system, will try to maintain the schools as they are, and only these; to reject any implication of fault in the system itself, and to prefer that the "misfits" be sent away. As the community attempts to establish another alternative a new problem emerges: money, constituting a new limit situation, and calling for its own action: on the part of the system, to maintain the status quo and disburse funds only to standard programs; on the part of the community to raise funds from other sources or find legal means of obtaining it from the system.

The limit situation described contains contradictory realities: to those in power the original "crisis" was "normal" and any effort to change it is seen as a threat to their dignity, professional competence, or pocketbooks. To those suffering from it, it seemed unjust and unnecessary; effort to change it is work for justice. Thus people respond to limit, or boundary situations, in contradictory ways depending on which side of the boundary they are on.

The inhabitants' awareness of contradictions can bring them in this way to an awareness of a task. But the team of experts may also find the inhabitants of a region so "submerged" that they are unaware of the contradictions in a situation. For example, if the people are totally unaware of the oppressiveness and lack of the freedoms to which they have a right in their present situation, the most evident theme is fatalism. Instead of a task they see no alternative; there is no task. If however, the people are aware of the situation and their place in it, and have begun to get a little perspective on it (to objectify it), the theme may appear as domination, and the task before them: liberation.

3. A selection by the team of the generative words. These are words charged with emotional content and existential meaning, recurring in the language of the people. They contain the central themes, concepts which are significant in the culture and in the political subjugation of the people. They are called "generative" because they can generate other words, the themes, and the whole political context.

The words chosen are tri-syllabic, capable of being broken into syllables. Because of the syllabic nature of the Spanish and Portuguese languages these syllables can be built into



whole families of words. For example: the word FAVELA (slum, in Portuguese) gives rise to syllables: FA, FE, FI, FO, FU, LA. . . . which in turn build into other words.

The method is deeply contextual: Freire developed different lists for rural and urban groups, and for Brazil and Chile.<sup>3</sup>

The choice of words is also influenced by their capacity to include the basic sounds of the language, to enable the pupil to move from simple letters and sounds to more complex, and most importantly, to confront the pupils with their social, cultural, and political reality. Freire objected to standard primers on the grounds that they lacked emotional content in the vocabulary, were insufficiently contextual, and overly paternalistic.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. Codification of the generative words.

-These codifications may be pictures, slides, stories, dramatizations, or other materials which contain or "encode" both word and theme. (See Appendix II) The codifications become the stimulus for discussion in the culture circles: groupings which serve the purpose of classes, but are structured to

avoid implication of traditional teacher-student roles.

The codifications must

- a) represent situations familiar to the people, while encoding the contradictions in the situation
- b) be not too explicit of the theme (avoid sloganizing or propagandizing) nor yet too enigmatic
- c) be organized as a thematic fan: i. e., open out in the direction of other themes. This is essential for the perception of inter-relationships among themes.
- d) represent contradictions inclusive of others which constitute the system of contradictions under study.
- e) relate to the felt needs of the people.

The thematic characteristics of the codifications are the point of focus for those used during the post-literacy phase of conscientization but there is not a sharp difference between the two phases. The difference is rather one of complexity and the intensity of analysis. Although the educators attempt to avoid value imposition<sup>5</sup> and to listen only to the metaphors and themes they hear in the language of the people, it is undeniable that the choice

of themes and words, and the method and philosophy are all explicit ethical choices. The investigators are guided by a set of values relative to the socio-political situation and hence there is high potential for manipulation in the codifications.

5. Use of the codifications as stimuli for discussion groups:

"decodification."

-During the discussions, participants identify what is happening in the picture and how it relates to their own lives. They learn the key word, its syllables, and the words that they themselves form from these syllables. Most important, they become aware of the political and social reality represented. As they hear themselves stating the hitherto hidden themes "and thereby make explicit their real consciousness of the world" they also review what they had thought about this situation previously and how their perceptions have changed. Thus they increase in consciousness of the facts, and, slowly, of the structures which cause the oppressiveness of their situation, while making their sortie into reading. With this method, Freire found that 16-20 words were sufficient to teach a group to read and write.

## Summary

The analysis of what Brazil needed in education, coupled with the statistical evidence of widespread illiteracy<sup>6</sup> shaped the famous Metodo Paulo Freire. Illiteracy was an obstacle both to development and to the creation of a democratic mentality. The development of culture circles where themes such as illiteracy and voting rights, democracy, development and the political evolution of Brazil were discussed, were the way the popular culture movement began to address the need. Out of the cultural discussions grew the literacy method.

From the beginning, we rejected the hypothesis of a purely mechanistic literacy program and considered the problem of teaching adults how to read in relation to the awakening of their consciousness. We wished to design a project in which we would attempt to move from naivete to a critical attitude at the same time we taught reading. We wanted a literacy program which would be an introduction to the democratization of culture, a program with men as its Subjects rather than as patient recipients, a program which itself would be an act of creation, capable of releasing other creative acts, one in which students would develop the impatience and vivacity which characterize search and invention.

We began with the conviction that the role of man was not only to be in the world, but to engage in relations with the world--that through acts of creation and re-creation, man makes cultural reality and thereby adds to the natural world, which he did not make. We were certain that man's relation to reality, expressed as a Subject to an object, results in knowledge, which man could express through language. (p. 43)

In the post-literacy phase, planned for but not executed in Brazil because of the coup, the aim was a widespread investigation of the themes of the Brazilian people (20,000 culture circles were planned). At the same time the investigators were preparing codifications to teach the people the "art of dissociating ideas as an antidote to the domesticating power of propaganda." (p. 57) From Freire's illustrations it is easy to see why this would be frightening to a regime whose stability depended on keeping people from thinking and choosing independently. He says today (July 1974) that it has always been his aim to defend, not subvert, democracy, but the defense Freire intends is to lead the people to the state of "militant democracy" (Mannheim), which is intelligent and critical, unafraid, without privilege, rigidity, or hate; that is, a democracy wherein the people make rational decisions which are effective for change.

To acquire literacy is more than to psychologically and mechanically dominate reading and writing techniques. It is to dominate these techniques in terms of consciousness; to understand what one reads and to write what one understands; it is to communicate graphically. Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, words, or syllables--lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe--but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context.

The educator's role is fundamentally to enter into dialogue with the illiterate about concrete situations and simply to offer him the instruments with which he can teach himself to read and write. (p. 43)



. . . I wish to emphasize that in educating adults, to avoid a rote, mechanical process one must make it possible for them to achieve critical consciousness so that they can teach themselves to read and write.

As an active educational method helps a person to become consciously aware of his context and his condition as a human being, as Subject, it will become an instrument of choice. At that point he will become politicized. (p. 56)

### Conclusion

From what has been said it is clear that consciousness-raising, politicization and a vision of men and women as creative of knowledge and of the world are inextricably associated with the concept and mechanic of literacy, are logically prior to it, and in no way are they merely motivational. For this reason, the next section will make explicit the important philosophical concepts that shape Paulo Freire's view of the person, the world, consciousness, knowledge, and education.

## PART I - Chapter 4--NOTES

1

This is not to say that values were absent. Freire argues cogently in Education for Critical Consciousness against the possibility of a neutral or value-free education. But he argues equally vehemently in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed against the right of any group to impose its value set on another by manipulative means. Cole S. Brembeck and others at the American Educational Studies Association Seminar on Freire, (New York City, February 23, 1972) raise the question as to whether Freire is not naive in thinking that it is possible to educate without manipulation and particularly without inculcating the values held by the educators.

<sup>2</sup>One example of a "contradiction" can be found in our American society's goal for the education of the so-called "disadvantaged." Compensatory education programs proliferate to "raise" them to the level of the rest of the society, bring them to conformity with the rest of the school population. The truth is, however, according to Freire (see Pedagogy) that the oppressed are not "marginal" people, living outside society.

They have always been inside--inside the structure which made them 'beings-for-others'. The solution is not to 'integrate' them into the structure of oppression but to transform that structure so that they can become 'beings-for-themselves.'" (Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp. 61, 65)

These are two different ways of viewing the problem, and lead to contradictory solutions.

<sup>3</sup>Elias, 1973; also, Freire, Seminar, Fordham University, New York City, 1972; Freire, 1973a.

<sup>4</sup>Freire in Colonesse, 1971, p. 118; Freire 1973a; M. E. B. (Movimento Educação de Base) is an educational organization developed by the Bishops and Catholic Action groups of Northeast Brazil. Refer to Part I, Chapter 1, note 3.

<sup>5</sup>Interview between author and Paulo Freire, July 8, 1974, Pontiac, Michigan.

<sup>6</sup>1964: 4 million school-age children lacked schools.  
16 million illiterates, 14 years and older.

## Chapter 5: Philosophical Assumptions and Postulates

In this chapter I shall list the philosophical postulates and assumptions culled from Freire's writings in order to bring them sharply into focus and to facilitate evaluation of their validity. From a clear understanding of the philosophical springboard, rather than a translation of culture-oriented methods, Freire's usefulness to us in evolving a theory of pedagogy will emerge. What follows in educational methods should be consistent with the philosophy. If we have today inconsistent and contradictory methods it may be that we have not elucidated their underlying philosophies, to own them or reject them. The following assumptions and postulates should be seen as implicit in Freire's method, are explicit in his writings, and grew out of his personal and historical context.

To summarize the philosophical concepts of Paulo Freire we can ask three kinds of questions:

What kind of being is the human person?

What kind of world does he or she live in?

What are the relationships of the human person with that world and with other persons who are part of it?

Out of these questions evolves the fourth: What is the task of education?

Although we separate the questions for the sake of clarity, the dialectic;

person-world, world-consciousness, person-person cannot be broken into

separate entities, except for the sake of analysis. They are unities, which can only be understood in relation.

### The Human Person: The Meaning of Full Humanness

Freire's image of the human person is of one becoming, perfectible, critically different from other forms of life and having the power and right to know and shape his/her world, while being to some degree shaped by it. The most important notes of humanness drawn from his writings can be listed as postulates:

1. The human person is essentially different from animals and from non-living beings.
2. The difference centers in human intentionality: the power of persons to anticipate, and to act for an end.
3. Intentionality implies and requires a second important difference: the ability of human beings to objectify or distance themselves from reality in order to reflect on it.
4. Intentionality implies the power of choice.
5. Choice takes place in action. Deprived of possibilities of significant action, one is deprived of choice.
6. Any treatment of persons which ignores, denies, or inhibits their power of choice from outside (an outsider decision) is dehumanizing. That is, the ESSENCE of being human is related to choice.
7. Dehumanization may occur through an attack on a person's
  - a) power of reflection: by silencing, mythologizing, denying education, voice, or action.
  - b) power of action: by coercion, manipulation, violence.



8. Human beings are incomplete, perfectible, "ever able to become more."

### The World Situation: Domination Dehumanizes

Freire is not concerned in his writings with the biological or evolutionary aspects of the world but with the sociological context of men and women.

With respect to both the Third World, and the "Third World contained in the First World": the world is characterized by

1. unequal distribution of goods, power, education.
2. structures which institutionalize and perpetuate inequities.
3. persons conditioned by their past experience to believe that the world they know is the only world possible, and that the way they have historically been treated is the way they ought to have been treated.
4. persons who have identified progress with technology and modernization;  
persons who are sincerely, and sometimes naively, engaged in efforts for human betterment;  
persons who are critically aware of inequities, economic, social and political causality, and of alternatives.

### The "Man-World" Entity: A Dialectic Unity

The dialectic unity of human beings and their world is a causal aspect of homeostasis in biological sciences and brings light to Piaget's theories of the development of knowledge in children. But Freire makes unity more integral still and strikes a decisive blow at dualism for those who can accept

his insight as valid. He states:

"Man-world are not two entities but one entity."

"There is no consciousness without a world and no world without human consciousness."

Elsewhere he expands on this.

1. Human beings are in-the-world, integral with it.
2. Human beings exist, stand out from the world, objectify it.
3. Human beings relate to the world by knowledge and action.
4. Human beings know their world only by praxis: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.
5. Human beings reflect effectively on their world only by dialogue.
6. Action to transform the world is possible.
7. Any significant change in the possibility of choice must be preceded by structural change in the environment.

### Interpersonal Relationships

The starting point for revolution is universal dialogical relationships.

1. Human beings exist, and grow, only in and by relationships.
2. Relationships with other persons may be:
  - (a) antialogical: between "unequals", based on a perception that some persons are intrinsically better than others. This perception seems to justify "banking education", manipulation, invasion, conquest, control, propaganda.

- b) dialogical: between "equals", based on a perception that all persons are intrinsically capable, self-determining, and worthy of respect. This perception leads to communication, cooperation, commitment, and love.
3. Only dialogical relationships are humanizing relationships.

### Knowledge and Reality: Where is Truth?

Freire has a great deal to say about knowledge. The way reality is perceived will condition not only what one is, but the way one acts; and hence the reality to be perceived. The whole of Freire's educational program called consciousness-raising is based on his theories of the nature of consciousness and knowledge. The postulates which follow express as concisely as may be his epistemology. As will be seen, it is not possible to divorce notions about knowledge from action.

1. Consciousness is not a mechanical mirroring of the world.
2. Consciousness is creative, but it does not create the world it knows.
3. There is a dialectic tension between subjective and objective; between consciousness and reality. Each continuously modifies the other. Reality is the object of consciousness, and also the determiner of consciousness.
4. Knowledge occurs in the interaction between persons; it is a process whereby two persons, mediated by reality, create a new reality: their perception of it. Their ultimate transformation of the reality is dependent upon this perception.
5. The cognizable object may be reality external to both persons, or it may be one or both person's perception of that reality.

One role of the teacher is to present his/her perception for the mutual reflection of student and teacher.

6. Past cognitions of reality (the "content curriculum") are not static. They also become the cognizable object for a process of knowledge. UNTIL THEY DO, THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE. That is: "contents" are not knowledge.
7. DOXA is knowledge of reality at the surface level: "prise de conscience", opinion, "knowledge about x."
8. LOGOS is knowledge of reality from within: understanding of the infrastructure (inner relationships) and super-structure (relationships to outside elements and structures). Without logos, one cannot be said to "know x."
9. LOGOS is critical consciousness.
10. LOGOS is achieved by praxis: conscientization: perceiving contradictions, naming, problem-posing, dialoguing, acting, and reflecting.
11. The WORD plays a key role in the development of consciousness. Words may clarify, lead, or mythify thought.

(Note: Words are necessary because there is distance. Lacking immediate contact, we need words to carry thought. Given body contact, eye contact, intellectual contact, the need for articulation diminishes but does not disappear. Only when each is "thinking with" the other does communication become communion.)

12. Reality consists of the unity of the objective datum and one's perception of it. Both constitute the object of reflection.
13. It is a normal functioning of human intelligence to see the whole in the part, hence from an examination of a fragment (codification) to reconstruct both the surface situation and the deep structure of reality.

14. Conscientization effects real-world confrontation, and cultural confrontation. In cultural confrontation, people discover the reasons for their perceptions.
15. People who wish to "control" the future "domesticate" it; i.e., make it an extrapolation of the present. However, if that happens there is no future, only more of the present.

### The Role of Education: Enabling Dialogue and New Consciousness

In various places Freire tells us that education is consciousness-raising; education is liberation; education is communication. Most pregnant is the tiny phrase: "Education is Revelation." His only educational method is praxis. His philosophy of method seems to be that persons become aware, conscious of reality not from hearing but from doing. Consistent action to change reality leads to awareness of its nature and causes.

1. Human freedom to act in the world is inhibited first from within. Hence education plays a key role in liberation.
2. The role of education is to enable persons to liberate themselves.
  - a) It must make them aware of their human powers and rights.
  - b) It must make them aware of what is dehumanizing in the situation.
  - c) It must enable them to see the inner structures of reality, the contradictions.
  - d) It must enable them to envision a different situation.
  - e) It must enable them to develop alternative routes to that vision, and to plan steps to achieve it.



- f) It must maintain hope in the possibility of internal and external change.
  - g) It must provide opportunities for people to achieve the technological skills necessary to effect change: literacy, agrarian methods. . . .
3. Education is not neutral: it operates to promote mechanization or liberation.
  4. Education is communication.
  5. The only educational mode that recognizes the subjectivity and dignity of the learner is co-learning dialogue. "There are no teachers and students, but co-learners."
  6. By dialogical knowing, a new thing is created for both knowers. In antidiological or "banking" education there is a transfer of the "knowledge already possessed" by one, to the other.

This mode of teaching implies that knowledge is a thing, static and spatialized, that can be packaged and given. It confuses the process of knowledge with the content of knowledge, and determinate (past) content with dynamic and indeterminate (present and future) content.

7. Dialogue, respect, and intersubjectivity demand faith, hope and love:
  - a) faith (non-naive) in the potential of others and of self to grow;
  - b) hope, that with growth men and women will take control of their lives and work together to change unjust structures;
  - c) love, that places the interests of others, individuals and the collectivity, ahead of one's own; and places commitment to achieve those interests ahead of self, family, or class interests.

This commitment is the demand which the great religions call sanctity, and recognize as a life project. Where it is unenlightened, disillusioned, or distorted, it leads to fanaticism, sectarianism, and inquisitorial repression.

But in small groupings, where it has historically been able to approach the ideal, very beautiful examples of communal growth and living have evolved, enduring for short periods of time. No one has yet succeeded in getting enough simultaneous sparking of this commitment to "full humanization" to establish a "classless society."

### Summary

In skeletal form these are the important concepts in Freire's philosophical stance. There are a number of them with which educators, philosophers, and sociologists in the United States may take exception. When this occurs, accompanied by an attempt to use his methods nonetheless, the result seems to reduce them to gimmickry and ineffectualness. For there is a remarkable coherence and consistency among the basic postulates listed above, which seems to require adhesion to the whole system or to none of it. Whether or not this is a requirement can only be determined by examining the remaining system while systematically denying each postulate. For those "essential" postulates which survive such a process, there still remains the need to probe their meaning and implications so as to arrive at one's own acceptance or rejection of his position. This analysis will be part of the task of Part III of this study.

Conclusion: Part I

Freire's sociology, politics, philosophy of education and methodology rest on his philosophy of the human person.

The human person, essentially different from animals, is a being capable of reflection, intention, and self-determination. This nature implies the right to exercise these powers. However, he/she is not omniscient nor totally free in his/her choices. Conditioned by a past, including life and thought-patterns, worldview, and education, he/she screens reality through the expectations generated by that past and chooses and acts accordingly.

The matrix of person-person and person-world relationships into which human beings are born is everywhere one of unequal distribution of goods, exploitation, and domination. Some persons are prescribed to, and decided for, by others without any conscious consent on the part of the dominated. Education is a tool, at present, for prescription and conditioning, for socializing an individual into the world of domination.

The solution, as Freire sees it, is to change people's consciousness, making them aware of the dimensions and effects of what they assent to, and of alternatives; and to organize (or teach them how to organize) their activities so that they may have power to carry their new awareness into act. To do so will further increase their awareness.

All knowledge and all education are subordinated to political ends in Freire's thought; and the political needs are subordinated to the changing of

socio-economic realities. The ultimate goal is a society in which there will be no institutionalized oppression; i. e., no dominant class, although there will always, presumably, be selfish individuals.

The weakness of the whole Freirean structure is evident when the goal is so expressed. Except for brief comments such as: the cause of alienation of the poor is "that their work does not belong to them," there is no systematic plan for a different economic model. Yet economics is the handmaid of domination.

There is likewise no explicit plan for a societal structure such that inevitable individual selfishness can be restrained from re-establishing a dominant class (assuming that the revolutionary leadership has not already become a dominant class).

There is no instrument for education save conscientization--with the implication that to know what is wrong is to change it, or put differently, to know the right thing will lead to doing the right thing. History, both before and after Paul of Tarsus, belies this.

These lacks indicate a certain naivete. However these lacks relate primarily to an ultimate goal. There is also historical evidence that striving for the moon catalyzes a great deal of profitable scientific progress even if one never expects to get there. And lo, the day the moon is suddenly within reach; more immediate logistics can be determined.

Among the things catalyzed by Freire, I would hope to find: a re-examination of our view of the human person: child and adult.

Macmurray calls the problem of the personal "the emerging problem of our time."

A re-examination of the process of knowing;

A re-examination of the nature and role of relationships;

A re-examination of education, in the light of the above.



## Epilogue to Part I

John Macmurray, the contemporary Scottish social philosopher, touches on many of the issues Freire raises, building them into a system which centers around the agency of the human person. Much that Freire tacitly assumes, Macmurray makes explicit and criticizes.

Freire assumes a particular definition of the human person and the universal theme of domination and defines domination (oppression) as a denial of the fundamental nature, and hence rights, of men and women. Macmurray states that the problem of the personal is the emergent problem of our time, that the Cartesian definition of human nature as 'res cogitans' is deficient and leads inevitably to dualism, but that the romantic correctives for this dualism involved misplaced application of aesthetic norms and led necessarily to the totalitarian state. Therefore it seems worth our while to look a little more critically at the philosophical definition of the person which is basic to Freirean argument, and which is expressed in fairly traditional, neo-scholastic terms, with its Cartesian premises vaguely assumed.

Freire also assumes the dialectic logic of Hegel, and refers to dialectic tension and synthesis, but without any clear precision as to what the poles of the contradictions are in the realm of knowledge, nor what the syntheses are. The discussion of knowing as process is vague and imprecise. Macmurray shows the historic difficulties with the universal application of

the organic (synthetic) model to human activity and emphasizes the role of choice rather than synthesis. A re-examination of illustrations of Freire's theory in this light seems called for, since the whole of the conscientizing model is oriented to action choices.

Freire seems to require a totalistic, quasi-religious assent to the need and mode for revolutionary action. The model as he describes it in the Pedagogy cannot be successful without such commitment. However, the concept of total commitment in a certain mode of action makes one uncomfortable since it implies a substitution of means for ends, and an ultimate valuation of one particular mode over others, which, dangerously, could lead to the imposition of that mode on others.

A comparison of the modes of knowing and valuing as given in Macmurray may put this aspect in perspective.

Freire postulates the possibility and desirability of dialogical, love-motivated, interpersonal relationships as the basis of cultural revolution. On a non-competitive societal level these are in opposition to the widespread, competitive, invasive, and prescriptive modes of operation which characterize schools, businesses, and governments. Macmurray concurs, arriving at the same point from a philosophical analysis of human relationships and their motivation.

Finally, Freire implies throughout his writings a moral stance. His judgments are made from an implicit (not necessarily denominational)

moral code. The question of the moral in education has been avoided too long, confused with denominational and establishment issues, and decided against by not deciding. Macmurray contrasts science, art, and religion as modes of knowing, and shows the moral realm as the expression of person-to-person relationships. This articulation is particularly apposite to our present day humanistic emphases, and to what Freire pleads for.

In the following chapters we shall examine in their context the Macmurray theses of agency and relatedness for the light they can shed on Freire's philosophical position and the position of educational theorists with whom we will compare him.

## PART II: Philosophical Framework: John Macmurray

The central idea in Freire's approach to knowledge--and his only methodology, is praxis. Praxis is more than the familiar concept of "learning by doing." It is an example of the Marxist dialectic, the unity of reflection and action: action informed by a reflection which accompanies, follows, and precedes action. According to Freire's system, even though it is a learned activity, this action-reflection is the proper action, i. e. , the distinguishing property of human beings. The power to objectify and name the world is the dividing line between the world of animals and that of men and women.

However, Freire does not build his concepts of person, action, and knowledge into a systematic philosophical schema. I believe that there are two reasons for this:

1. his primary purpose is political and educational, rather than philosophical; and
2. he assumes that the correlations have already been made.

He is acutely sensitive to the destructiveness of rupturing the dialectic: reflection-action, by a too-prolonged attention to either reflection or action alone. But he is not averse to intensive reflective activity using the tools of analysis available to him. Both the Pedagogy of the Oppressed and

Cultural Action for Freedom are examples of such reflection but they are not equivalent to a systematic critique of knowledge.

The contemporary Scottish philosopher, John Macmurray, helps to provide for this lack. He identifies the emergent problem for philosophy in our time as the "crisis of the personal." There is a remarkable closeness between some of his conclusions and the unstated, but implicit and necessary assumptions of Paulo Freire. This and the next chapters will examine these conclusions in an effort to provide a systematic philosophical grounding for Freire, and a matrix for comparison of some of the American educational philosophies into which we would like to insert Freire's contribution. Although some of Macmurray's material will seem irrelevant to the direct questions raised by Freire, it is necessary for cohesiveness and for its bearing on an evolving theory of pedagogy.

In this brief overview of Macmurray's system, I shall present

- Macmurray's identification of the emergent problem for philosophy today "The Crisis of the Personal"
- A brief history of the inadequacy of old solutions and their resultant dualism;
- A statement of Macmurray's postulates: Agency and Relatedness;
- A summary, in the form of a list of statements, or brief expositions, of the theory of knowledge, .



the theory of action, and the modes of relating which  
flow from these postulates.

Throughout this section illustrations from Freire's work will be used to show the similarity and dissimilarities in the thought of the two men. Thus, I believe that the emerging implications will point in two directions: backward to critique Freirean concepts already discussed, and forward to show the direction of new thinking.

CHAPTER I: The Problem of the Personal:  
Origin of Incomplete Metaphors

The thesis of Macmurray's analysis presented in the Self As Agent and in Persons in Relation (1961) is this:

If we are to have an adequate, coherent philosophical system, we must reject the definition of the human person as thinker: "cogito, ergo sum," which has come down to us from Descartes, and take as our starting point instead, a definition of the self as agent: an agent who is defined and becomes, only in relation to other human beings.

To substantiate this statement, we must look at the kinds of problems philosophers deal with. We are now at a critical point in history, he maintains, forced by rapid social change to break with the past. In such an era, the philosophers' first task is to discover the new problem for philosophy that emerges in their own time.

In revolutionary periods philosophy responds to the practical transformation of the way of life by a radical transformation of its central problem. . . . So long as the way of life remains viable, the philosopher works within a framework of thought which, in its general structure and its general concepts, remains stable. His problems are

problems of relevant detail and he finds them set for him by difficulties in the theoretical field itself. Their relation to the practical problems of his society is indirect and need not be noticed. But with a break in tradition. . . his criticism no longer touches this or that inadequacy or inconsistency in a continuing tradition but the basis of the tradition itself. He must find a new starting point and his success depends on the discovery of the emergent problem for philosophy in his own time. (Macmurray 1957)

The problem in Cartesian times was that presented by the new physics and chemistry, notions of substance and physical laws, and how the logic of mathematics applied to the world of men. The problem in the 19th century, which saw the rise of the life sciences, was how to think the organic. As we will see, Romantic philosophers evolved a new logic: Hegelian dialectics, and an almost universally applicable evolutionary model. Macmurray indicates that the emergent problem for philosophy in our time is to discover the form of the personal: how we are to think the human person.

Existentialism has discovered, with sensitiveness of feeling, that the problem of the present lies in the crisis of the personal; logical empiricism recognizes it as a crisis of form and method. Both are correct, and both are one-sided. The cultural problem of the present is indeed the crisis of the personal but the problem it presents to philosophy is a formal one. It is to discover, or to construct, the intellectual form of the personal. (Macmurray, 1957, p. 27)

Freire speaks in similar terms of periods of dramatic social change. In a society in transition, he says, the problem is to identify the themes of

the new epoch, (Freire 1973) which are superseding those of the old: to find a way to think the structures of society. This is the analytical part of praxis. For a time, old and new themes exist together, so long as old themes still have viability. Freire's focus is on societal structures and historical process, but he has made assumptions about the nature and functioning of men and women. And these assumptions are wholly or partially incompatible with the mechanistic and organic models which will be explained in the following paragraphs. For his part, Freire assumes, rather than states, a somewhat scholastic definition of the person.<sup>1</sup> But the uncritical acceptance of this definition may itself be the source of the dualism, the subject/object dichotomies, which he denounces. An attempt must be made at the very beginning to be precise about the form of the personal. And whatever form is postulated, it must be adequate to all that we now know about the person.

Macmurray tells us that philosophy is a reflective activity, concerned with the

formal characters of the processes, activities, or constructions in and through which the object is theoretically determined, and since the Self is an element of the world presented for knowing, it (too) must be determined through the same forms. (Macmurray, 1957, Chap. I)

Before, and especially since, the time of Descartes, philosophers have grappled with the problem of the person. Descartes defined the Self as thinker--res cogitans. By so doing, he created a system built around

1. Self as the starting point
2. Self in isolation from other selves, a Subject for whom all others are objects of its knowing
3. Self as primarily a thinker in search of knowledge.

But the division of the Self from the world it occupied and the reduction to object of everything else, including other selves, raised questions for later thinkers. How does the outer world get into the Mind? i. e., How can the Self, the knowing subject, make contact with the world? Can the Self know that other selves exist? What is knowledge? Can we know the world as it is, or do we invent our knowledge? How are ideas in the mind translated into action? What is the relation between man and world, body and spirit?

Cartesians "knew" that knowledge was possible. They assumed existence of a real world and a correspondence between that world and what was in the mind. They were not distracted by the necessity to establish that correspondence rigorously, except insofar as they verified their "laws." They saw the mind more as a mirror of reality than a creative faculty. Their logic was the logic of mathematics based on aggregates of identical units and arrived at laws which are, within their field, as applicable to human beings as to stones: laws of gravity, motion, heat, and light. But these formulations only partially described the human. In fact, living organisms obey them absolutely only when they are operating as things (e. g., a person or a stone in free fall).

The Cartesian premises, Macmurray shows, led inevitably to a dualism that



has not yet been completely overcome: a dichotomy between thought and action, mind and body, subject-knower and world-known. (1957, Ch. I, II)

The problem of knowledge and the fact that living organisms reversed entropic laws and followed their own dynamic in evolution, energy use, and development, set the philosophers of the romantic era searching for new models. Ultimately they arrived at conclusions that either denied the reality of the outer world, postulating only mind as the norm of reality (Hegelian idealism) or denied the importance of the idea in favor of the reality of the world of action alone (Marxist materialism). (Macmurray, 1957, p. 31) Kant demonstrated conclusively that there was no way, if one began from the Cartesian premiss, that the mind could know the world-as-it-is. Having argued Cartesianism to its logical absurdity, he, personally, found a way out of the dilemma thus presented, in a thesis which he himself never developed: REASON IS PRIMARILY PRACTICAL.

This is Macmurray's starting point. The argument goes like this: If the premisses of Descartes, that the Self is primarily thinker, and isolated, lead to an impossible divorce of knowledge in the mind from the world-out-there, and if the logic of the various romantic philosophers who argued these premisses to their logical conclusion is not at fault, then the premisses themselves must be wrong. The opposite, then is true. (Reductio ad absurdam) The Self is not primarily a thinker who can be adequately understood in isolation from other selves. Rather, the Self is primarily Agent: a do-er

whose action is wholly informed by reflection. Further the Self is Agent in relation with other agents and with a non-agent (non-rational) world.

### Origin of Incomplete Metaphors

It is beyond the purpose of this work to review in detail all of the arguments by which Macmurray shows the inadequacy of Cartesian and Romantic systems. For the philosopher it is not necessary and for the layman it is uninteresting. But these philosophies live on in educational practice in the form of metaphors and attitudes, and influence our ways of conceiving the person. In addition, much of Freire's writing is concerned with the nature of knowledge, dualism, and mechanism. For this reason, let us look at them a little more closely.

The development of philosophy since Descartes has paralleled that of science. The 17th and 18th centuries saw the rise of small particle physics and chemistry, sciences concerned with the definition of substances and their properties, and with discovering general laws, mathematically formulated and universally applicable. At the same time Cartesian philosophy developed around the concept of the human as a "substance who thinks," one who could somehow also be reduced to common denominators and expressed by mathematical laws.

Substance is that which is determined by thought as a mathematical system. (Macmurray, 1957, p. 32)

The assumption was that

pure mathematics provides the ideal form of all valid knowledge and whatever cannot be determined in this form is unknowable. (1957, p. 32)

But such "unknowables" exist, Macmurray reminds us, and since they could not be validly referred to objects, given the above assumption, they came to be referred to the subject, and to the creative spontaneity of the mind. From this practice evolved metaphors which identify the subjective with the illusory, unreal, and imaginary, as opposed to "cold, factual, objective" truth. These metaphors and attitudes are with us today.

The mathematical "laws" which were developed and which described patterns of activity of the material world, were based, precisely, on the fact that material substances are continuants: i. e., they continue to move in the direction that they are going, or to act according to the observed pattern, unless, and until, some outside force (agent) intervenes. Although called laws, these "laws" are not normative but descriptive of existing patterns. They can be applied to human beings, but only insofar as human beings and continuants, that is, insofar as they are not, at the moment, operating intentionally, (humanly) but simply as substances. For example: according to the laws of falling bodies.

Cartesian logic is adequate for the scientific determination of the material world, for discovering common patterns, cause and effect relationships, in a world of non-living substances and energy. But it is inadequate to express the personal for several reasons. It assumes that reality is made

of aggregates of identical units, moved merely as objects are moved. The Self and its activities, especially its activities as thinker, are beyond this domain. Cartesian logic can give no account of the spontaneous activity of the mind or its power to create the very constructs which science calls laws. To illustrate: it is the thought-activity of the Self which provides the categories for viewing the material world.<sup>2</sup> The concept: "Self is a substance" is an example of such a construct. But no substance, as defined by the Cartesians, is capable of these spontaneous constructions.

The precise point in history where the Cartesian system began to fail was in expressing the spontaneous, self-determining, and self-directed development characteristics of living things. However before leaving the Cartesian model for that of the romantics let us note that the treatment of individuals as objects, the prediction of their future activity by extrapolation from their past, based on a perception of them as non-agents or as continuants, and the oppressiveness of an economic and political system constructed on this perception: to keep the people non-agents, are important objects of Freire's attack. Although philosophers long ago saw the inadequacy of a purely Cartesian approach to the personal, educators are still operating on principles crystallized into methodology from Cartesianism. This point will be developed in Part III.

The inadequacy of the Cartesian system became evident in the 19th century when the biological sciences began to gain the ascendancy. Philosophy



was faced with a new problem: the form of the organic.

It is in the phenomena of life, and particularly in the processes of growth that this spontaneity of inner self-determination and directed development seem to be characteristically manifest. (Macmurray, 1957, p. 33)

The form of the living organism is not one of growth by aggregation, as with a crystal, nor is its activity explainable by chemical laws alone. It subsumes physical and chemical properties into a higher kind of activity. It reverses entropic laws, builds structures of higher energy from those of lower, and develops by synthesizing unlike components at each succeeding stage of embryonic and later development. Its form is that of a tension of opposites, harmoniously balanced, and achieved over time: "a differentiation of elements within the whole." (p. 35) Its logic is not mathematical but dialectical.

The organic form and logic are adequate to embryology, maturation, evolution. The question we must consider is: Can they be extended to the whole of reality, and particularly to include the concept of the Self and its activities?<sup>3</sup> Is the process of learning some kind of "self-determining development" similar to that of the embryo, in which "an original undifferentiated unity differentiates itself progressively, while maintaining a functional coherence of its elements?" (p. 35) Embryonic maturation follows this pattern. What about the development of knowledge in the child, or adult? Is it a progressive synthesis of unlike components?, an alternation of thesis and antithesis, leading to synthesis?



If such synthesis occurs, and there is evidence that in many cases it does,<sup>4</sup> it is the imagination which, for the romantic philosophers, plays the key role. For the Cartesians, the imagination was primarily reproductive, holding in memory the data for scientific reflection. For the romantic philosophers it was productive: creating the synthesis which is knowledge.

But accepting this role for the imagination creates a new problem without solving the old one. If we invent our knowledge, all knowledge becomes problematical. And the dualist questions remain: how does knowledge in the mind correspond to and affect the world out there? How do we know truth?

Among the romantic philosophers there were varied answers: that the real world is that of the mind; (Hegel), that truth is what satisfies the mind (aesthetic criterion); that faith, or innate categories, or laws provide the criteria for determining truth; (Hamann, Kant) that the real world is that of action (Marx).<sup>5</sup>

To Macmurray, the most critical issue emerging from the ascendance of organic philosophy, is the dominance of the biological metaphor in philosophy: the analogy of growth which so profoundly influenced Dewey (Berry, 1972) covering "all organic and evolutionary types of philosophy down to Alexander and Whitehead," (Macmurray, 1957, p. 34) as well as dialectical materialism. Macmurray regards this dominance as critical because it assumes that the human being, or at least the child, is essentially an organism, which only becomes "human" over time, and it negates the specific difference of the

human: intentionality.

The creative role assigned to the imagination creates an additional problem. It reduces all knowledge to the realm of the aesthetic

for it is the function of the artistic imagination to recombine elements of experience in a way that is not itself experience.

What "satisfies the mind" is the criterion for art. This reduction eliminates both science and morality as criteria of truth. In Macmurray's view, such a reduction, which flowed naturally from the romantic world-view, led to the totalitarian state, i. e. , If the only criterion for the good and the true is the aesthetically fitting and beautiful--"what satisfies the mind" of those in power logically can be imposed upon others, even upon a whole nation. Again, it is beyond the purposes of this work to go into the entire argument. However, the roots of totalitarianism embedded in the romantic philosophies require critical review, particularly as these philosophies begin to emerge today in new forms.

Further, the personification and glorification of Nature, the use of concepts of teleology rather than intentionality in speaking of human beings, uses which prevailed in the romantic era, led naturally to a type of mysticism which totally subordinates the goals of the individual to those of the collectivity. This trend also furthered the dominance of the fascist state.

There are some indications of this type of mysticism in Freire's approach to cultural revolution. (Pedagogy, Ch. 4) Although Freire is much more personalist than many educators of our time, it seems as though he too may

not have completely analyzed nor adequately addressed the "crisis of the personal." At least, his writings repeat old definitions rather than clarifying them.<sup>6</sup>

Macmurray comments that when science moved from an established physics to a scientific biology, philosophy moved from a mathematics to an organic form. It seems logical that the emergence of modern scientific psychology should be accompanied by the emergence of a new form: that of the personal.

However, the transition from an organic to a personal conception of unity cannot be so simple as that from a physical to an organic conception. The transformation is much more fundamental. The difficulties are of the same type as those which beset the effort to establish psychology on a sure scientific basis. There are two major difficulties. Firstly, so long as psychology is conceived as a science of the mind, consciousness, or the subjective, it fails. To establish itself it must think of itself as a science of human behaviour. Similarly, in the philosophical transition we can no longer conceive the Self as the subject in experience, and so as the knower. The Self must be conceived, not theoretically as subject, but practically, as agent. Secondly, human behaviour is comprehensible only in terms of a dynamic social reference; the isolated, purely individual self is a fiction. In philosophy this means that the unity of the personal cannot be thought as the form of an individual self, but only through the mutuality of personal relationship. In face of both difficulties a radical modification of our philosophical tradition is demanded. The first requires us to substitute for the Self as subject, the Self as agent; and to make this substitution is to reject the traditional distinction between subjective and objective. The second compels us to abandon the traditional individualism or egocentricity of our philosophy. We must introduce the

second person as the necessary correlative of the first and do our thinking not from the standpoint of the "I" alone but of the "you and I." (p. 38) (Emphasis not in original.)

### Conclusion

There are elements of truth in the view of the human person as organism but it is incomplete and results in inconsistencies. According to Macmurray it leads to Hegelian idealism or to Marxist materialism,<sup>7</sup> It exacerbates rather than solves the problem of dualism, and confronts us with the problematic nature of all knowledge. Further, as Kierkegaard also noted, if Hegelian logic is applied without qualification to the data of personal experience one produces a "dialectic without a synthesis" for the

process of the personal life generates a tension of opposites which can be resolved, not by reconciliation but only by a choice between them, and for this choice no rational ground can be found. (Macmurray, 1957, p. 36)<sup>8</sup>

The question of choice, intentionality, human freedom, is precisely the question that provides the key to Freire's arguments about humanizing and dehumanizing structures. And it is the defining concept of the human person for Macmurray.

Macmurray identifies the problem of the personal as the critical problem for philosophers today. He shows that Cartesian definitions of the person led to mechanistic metaphors and perspectives that are still with us. More significantly, he critiques the organic metaphor as inadequate and misleading. Both lead to dualism, and stimulate the development of false views about how

human beings learn, grow, and choose. Instead Macmurray defines the human person as agent, and agency as reflective activity. From this new standpoint he rethinks related philosophical problems about sensation, learning, knowledge, and action. In the following pages I will present an overview of this thought.



## PART II: Chapter 1 - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The person is a rational animal; he/she is able to be aware of self and the self's perceptions as well as aware of the external world, and is essentially free (free "by nature") to make choices, i.e., to act intentionally. The scholastic position is that of moderate realism with respect to knowledge, and for the most part, ignores in its educational systems the deliberate development of the affective side of the human person.

<sup>2</sup>What we see depends on the "glasses" through which we look, and these categories are the glasses. Freire's concern with extrojecting the oppressor (see analysis of the Pedagogy) is a concern with being aware of "glasses," categories, ways of seeing. Once the oppressed perceive that these ways of seeing are man-made, and that they themselves are equally human, it becomes thinkable to extroject the "internal oppressor." We must also note that the tools of analysis Freire recommends, by which one may come to see the "deep structures of society" (see second stage of literacy training) are, for the most part, Marxist tools, developed out of the Romantic era, and providing another way of "seeing."

<sup>3</sup>Self here is used to mean the Subject of experience, the one who is and who knows that he is.

<sup>4</sup>In this context, see the work of Festinger, Kelly, Hampden-Turner.

<sup>5</sup>I asked Freire (7/10/74) whether the idealist issue was not, at our moment in time, of merely historical interest, and why he spent so much time re-arguing it. (cf "Extension or Communication," 1968, and "Demystification of Conscientization," 1973, as well as many talks and seminars). His reply was that it is very much alive in the dualism that turns up everywhere in education: subject/object divisions; mind/will, body/soul. . . .

<sup>6</sup>For example, scholastic definitions of the person, distinctions of human from animal, development of consciousness.

<sup>7</sup>Marx once commented that he had not destroyed the Hegelian dialectic, but merely inverted it. He substituted the self-as-worker for the self-as-thinker, without changing the organic unity patterns.

<sup>8</sup>By no rational ground" is meant no base provided by rationalist systems whether Cartesian or Hegelian.

## CHAPTER 2: Agency and Relatedness

We have seen in the preceding section that there are two basic criticisms Macmurray makes of traditional philosophy:

1. It sets up a dualism when it gives primacy to the theoretical over the practical.
2. It is egocentric. It provides for a number of "I's" all essentially alike in relation to an object-world, but for no "you": that is, it makes no provision for a person essentially different from the "I" and correlated with it.

Because it proceeds from these bases, it ends in absurdity or inconsistency.

It seems logical then, that the corrective start from another base, give primacy to the practical, and relate a person's agency to his/her relationships with other persons. To feel the full force of this imperative it is necessary to study Macmurray's arguments in detail. However, this would take us too far afield in this work. The purpose of this chapter is to look at a philosophical system built around concepts of agency and relatedness as defining attributes of persons. The degree to which this position can be substantiated may be the degree to which we will be able to evaluate the objections of utopianism leveled against Freire and against his requirements for dialogic community.

(Part I II)

As we have already seen, the first question for philosophy today in Macmurray's view is the form of the personal, a way of thinking the human person that will not do violence to the unity of reflective and active functions nor destroy the integrity of the Self, yet will be applicable to all that is essentially human whether the Self is considered alone or in society.

Macmurray has defined the person to be essentially in act: an agent, (Freire speaks of praxis in the same sense) and states that men and women grow, develop, and act only dialogically: in relation to other persons. Agency is further defined as intentional action, action which includes reflection and is constituted by it. Thinking then must inform all action if it is to be properly human action and not mere activity. "Pure" thinking, which implies a withdrawal from overt activity, is at the negative end of the action continuum insofar as it is possible at all. Even ideally conceived, it is only possible because it is based on prior actions and in its turn, affects future action. Out of numerous examples of actions unique to person (Macmurray 1967, Ch. I) Macmurray distills what he believes to be the essential characteristic of all personal action and offers it to us as the form of the personal. Everything, that is properly personal, he says, will have this form: that it can be expressed as a positive which includes and is constituted by its own negative. (For a discussion of the use of the negative in Macmurray, see Appendix III.)

What might this mean?

Example: Action is defined as a positive which must necessarily include its negative: reflection-- withdrawal from external action. Without reflection we have not "action" but "activity": autonomic activity, habitual activity, chemical activity, stimulus-response activity, but not human action. Freire makes similar distinctions between praxis and activism.

Example: Intention: purpose, value position, from which one selects among actions, in view of an end to be attained by one of them, includes necessarily (and is constituted by) its negative--attention: by which one adverts to the qualities of various activities, is conscious of what one is doing or studying, but without choosing, at this time, the end to which this study or activity may ultimately be directed. (For example: the selective attention of nuclear scientists in the '20's: some of these scientists disowned violently the ends to which their research was put in 1945.)

Example: Community: a grouping of persons based on love, trust, and communication, for heterocentric ends, includes its negative--society: a grouping of persons constituted by something other than love, usually fear, and bound together for egocentric ends such as mutual protection or aggrandizement.

We can express more succinctly all that has been said above in Macmurray's four postulates:

1. The Self is Agent and exists as Agent.
2. The Self is also Subject (thinker) but cannot exist as Subject.
3. The Self is Subject in, and for, the Self as Agent.
4. The Self can be Agent only by being Subject.

What then are the important philosophical questions to be reconsidered from the standpoint of agency? The following form the framework for a philosophy of the person, and indirectly, of education:

1. What is the relationship of thinking to agency, or of the Self-as-Subject to the Self-as-Agent?
2. What is the nature and role of reflection, of theory?
3. How do we achieve knowledge? How does the role of sense perception, consciousness, motivation, and



valuation change when viewed from the position of agency?

4. How are the modes of reflection related from this position?
5. What has all this to do with society and human freedom?

Macmurray's answers to these questions will be the substance of this and the next chapter.

### The Relationship of Thinking to Agency

As with everything that is personal the relationship of the Self-as-Agent to the Self-as-Subject is that of a positive and its included negative. The Agent must include the thinker, must sometimes stand over against the world as spectator, to reflect on it, but is also and always in dynamic tension with that world. Freire speaks of the man-world dialectic, where each pole is causally effective upon the other. Macmurray develops a further interesting extension of the fact that the Self cannot exist as Subject (alone). In reflection, he says, the Self is at least theoretically outside the world it contemplates: over against it, a Spectator. But this is, in fact, impossible. To exist is to be in the world. Therefore the more the Self approaches the pole of perfect Subject--the more it is "outside the world, looking on"--the more it does not exist. The Self exists only as Agent.

As Agent the Self is Body (material): able to affect bodies which offer resistance to action, and able to offer resistance in turn. By resisting, it makes possible the acts of others.<sup>1</sup> As subject, the self is non-agent, non-body--nobody. This same negative connotation is carried by many of our metaphors. For example, "a 'mental note' is, in fact, a note which is not made." As Agent then, I am body, operative, material, and existent. As Subject I am mind, causally ineffective, immaterial, and non-existent.

But this whole play with the body/mind duality disappears if the Self is posited as Agent, and Action as including its negative, thought. The unity of the Self, Self-as-Subject and Self-as-Agent, requires a unity of self-affirmation and self-negation. (I am agent, i. e., acting. But for the moment, I am non-agent insofar as I am thinking and abstaining from acting. And the nature of human action is such that at all times it is some combination of acting and non-acting, action + reflection, Self-affirming and simultaneously Self-negating.) This is what Macmurray calls the form of the personal, when he postulates that the Self is constituted by its capacity for Self-negation: i. e., the agent is constituted by its capacity to be also and simultaneously thinker.

Action, then, is defined as

a full, concrete (causal) activity of the self in which all its capacities, (sense perception, judgment, movement. . .) are employed;

while

thought is constituted by the exclusion of some of these powers and a withdrawal into an activity which is less concrete and less complete.

If it is assumed that the aim of thought is the discrimination between truth and falsity, then thought must necessarily be a determinant of action and modify the form of action. The question that a theoretical activity seeks to answer can only arise in practical experience, and the truth or falsity of the conclusion can only be verified in practice. This statement is the underlying assumption of praxis as Freire has developed it in the conscientizing process.

### The nature of reflection

In reflection the Self withdraws from action, to stand as a spectator over against the world, but it still attends selectively to one or another aspect of action, and derives meaning. Attention is the negative of intention. Intention or purpose looks forward in order to modify the world; attention looks backward to learn its structure, to determine in idea what has already been determined in fact, and is not to be modified by future action. Attention examines the world of past actions, a continuant world. Such a world is already determined; its determinateness governs all the activities of reflection. One's conclusions then flow necessarily from the data, not from one's intent.

The purpose of reflection is to achieve a theoretically more adequate perception by attending to a re-presentation of events, and to do so it makes use of methods such as abstraction, generalization, and particularization. Freire states that this reflection on past events, and on one's previous perceptions of reality is the only means of growing to higher levels of

consciousness, of de-conditioning a naive consciousness, or perceiving the "deep structures" of reality.

Macmurray distinguishes two principal modes of reflective activity, appropriate to science and to art respectively: generalization, and particularization.

1. Generalization of the representation, in order to include as wide a group as possible in its extension. In this mode, the thinker abstracts from all that is unique, and attempts to see the object (event) as constituted by external relations. The end product of this process is ideal, a (pure) concept, a scientific law.
2. Particularization of the representation in order to fill in detail and render the object complete in all its uniqueness, a "self-contained unity holding all the attention within itself." The end result of this process is an image, an object of artistic activity.

Note that in both cases we are engaging in theoretical activity. Both the mathematical formulation and the artistic intuition are representational, ideal, and more or less conceptual; less or more intuitional. Both are the result of reflective or theoretical activity, for it is the intent that constitutes an activity theoretical or practical. The difference between theory and

practice lies in this:

A theoretical intention intends a determination of the idea of the world without going beyond this to a determination of the world itself.

For this reason the results of a theoretical activity have a reference beyond themselves. For any development of knowledge makes possible a modification of action which was not possible without it, whether such a modification is intended or not. The extension of knowledge always extends the range of possibility for action. . . . Practical activity includes theoretical activity, of necessity, in its constitution. Theoretical activity excludes practical activity from its intention, though not necessarily from the means for the realization of its intention. (Means such as a laboratory experiment may be used for the furtherance of a theoretical intention.) Consequently, its results are meaningless in themselves, and require a reference to action to give them meaning. They can be valid or invalid through a reference to the validity or invalidity of the practical activity which they suggest.

Macmurray states that in personal action there is a continual rhythm of "withdrawal and return," or action-contemplation-action; reflection is often forced upon us when we meet unforeseen difficulties in action. For Freire, reflection is an essential part of praxis which "names" the contradictions that emerge in the action. In such a case reflection is clearly subordinate to, and for the sake of action. But Macmurray warns it need not be so:

the moment of withdrawal into reflection may be prolonged indefinitely.

The operative intention may become the theoretical one, without specific reference to any practical intention to which it is a means. Then knowledge



becomes an end in itself, albeit irrational and meaningless.

for in the absence of all reference to the practical, reflection becomes phantastic, incapable of either truth or falsity.

However, Macmurray adds that even though there may be no particular reference to practical application,

any modification of knowledge, since it is in the Agent's knowledge, necessarily involves a modification of his practical activity, whether this is intended or not. We clearly cannot change our ideas of the world in which we act without in some way modifying our way of acting.

For example, suppose a group conceives of itself as inadequate, stupid, impotent, or incapable of changing an oppressive environment. Probably that group will take no action, or participate half-heartedly and even self-destructively in action. Now suppose the group's ideas of themselves, for some reason, change to an image of persons capable, intelligent and effective. Their strategizing, their energy, and possibly the nature of their acting will change, even though they may still be unable to achieve their goal.

Freire's focus on consciousness-raising and the highly theoretical nature of his writings make sense in the light of this position. If indeed, a person's ways of seeing reality change drastically, and it is hoped, in the direction of a truer perception, one more reality-based, action will follow without one's having to detail it.

It is also in this sense that the Pedagogy which will be examined in Part III can be seen as a handbook for revolution.

Knowledge and the Process of Knowing:

Sense perception, Consciousness, Motivation, Valuation

When we begin to consider sense perception from the stand-point of the Agent-Self, it becomes evident that the theories of sense perception we now have are built primarily on a visual metaphor. They assume the primacy of vision and make vision the model for all sense perception. (Thought itself is equated with "inner vision" and "light," e. g., "insight." This metaphor reinforces the subject-as-observer concept, and flows naturally from the Cartesian definition of the person. Macmurray offers instead the concept that the self is aware of the Other primarily by touch. The Other is that which resists my movement, my action. Tactual perception is necessarily perception in action; it is the experience of resistance. The experience of resistance is the experience of being blocked in something I am trying to do, by some Other, prevented from achieving my will, frustrated. If the Self is Agent, his moment-to-moment existence is identified with what he is doing at the moment, and the "tactual experience of resistance is the experience of the Other-than-myself which prevents my doing whatever it is that I am doing at the moment." It is a direct, immediate experience of the Other, which however, gives only minimal knowledge about that Other: simply that it exists and limits (negates) my Self.

Space, time, shape, size, and texture are all concepts derived from tactual perception. Tremendously increased discrimination of the Other is made possible with the evolution of special organs of vision, and the fact that the immediate stimulus for vision is light reflected from the Other, rather than body contact. Thus contact can be anticipated. Discrimination of actual, visual perception from imagination, illusion, hallucination, fantasy, or dream, is based on correct reference of the image to the existent, and/or present Other, and the verification of presence by contact.

Knowledge of Existence of the personal Other: How do we know that other Selves exist?

Here the argumentation becomes much more obscure and we are thrown back on common sense experience to bolster our logic. Macmurray draws on the analogy of Newtonian physics to claim that the Self cannot, in fact, act (move) unless there is resistance, and thus the existence of the Other, at least as resistant, is necessary to any action: it supports action as well as resisting it. Now assuming that the Self can exist only as Agent, then if there were no possibility of agency: of action (and this would be the case if there were no Other in the field) there could be no personal Self.

Macmurray extends the argument further to show that the Other is the necessary correlate of the Self, and further that the Other must be like the Self: not merely existent, or organism, but Agent. The weakness of the argument's impact stems from the organizational fact that Macmurray has not

yet developed, and so cannot draw upon, concepts of personal relationship which round out his definition of the person. If his insistence in making the existence of the Agent-Self depend on the existence of Other Selves in the field seems to belabor the obvious, perhaps we need to consider again the implications for the humanness of the Self--when he/she operates in ways that allow only that Self to be an Agent in a given field of action, attempting to reduce all others to things.

Freire has a similar concept in passages where he speaks of "dehumanizing" structures. Structures, in education, welfare systems, or government which prevent personal action, intentional and self-determined, change persons into things. The Self as person is not allowed to exist and eventually does not exist. Persons cannot exist as persons except in a world of personal others. In contrast when individuals begin to act upon these structures, working with other persons, their own humanity is restored.

There are also ethical reasons why it is necessary for Macmurray to establish the (necessary) existence of other Persons. It is only in a field of other agents that an action can be judged to be right or wrong, since rightness or wrongness derives from intention. And intentionality is a defining characteristic only of agents. Action which cannot be wrong, also cannot be right. If I am surrounded by a world of things, any act that suits me is right for me. But when other persons who also have needs and desires and "rights" come into conflict with me, the concept of right and wrong action comes into



being. If we deny right and wrong as criteria for discriminating intentional actions, we must seek some other criterion: perhaps what is useful to me (pragmatism) or what is aesthetically satisfying or fitting. These standards Macmurray discussed at the outset in his treatment of aesthetic norms and the fascist state. As a concept, the rightness or wrongness of an action depends on the existence of agents whose rights and needs are in conflict. Thus, Macmurray situates religion and morality in the mutual relationships between persons, and moral issues in a clash of wills.

Consciousness, sensory awareness, and feeling in relation to Knowledge:

Rationality has traditionally been seen as the differentia for the human species. But in the past rationality meant ability to think and judge. Macmurray retains the term to define the human, but appropriates it to his new defining characteristic: agency. So Rational Consciousness is the consciousness of self and the world of the Agent-Self. It implies the ability for reflective, intentional action. Consciousness is reserved to subrational or non-intentional awareness.

Consciousness then is that form of awareness of environment present in non-rational or non-intentional beings, or human beings operating non-intentionally. Macmurray argues at length that there is a break in the continuity between all levels of moving-feeling consciousness below the human level, and the level of the uniquely human, reflective, intentional or purposeful



response. The former serve survival purposes (e.g., the moving-feeling-awareness of an animal's sudden leap away from fire) and so have goals in the teleological sense. The latter, rational awareness, may serve, or subvert, survival purposes at the choice of the agent and have goals or purposes in the uniquely intentional sense. Knowledge presupposes agency: the "I do," and action implies intention. On the other hand, conscious activity implies response to stimulus, an automatic, non-intentional activity, whether attended to or not.

If by cognition we mean knowledge, then consciousness is never cognitive, since knowledge depends on awareness of the distinction between the Self and the Other, and this is the basis of rational (or irrational) behavior.

Thus Macmurray's account of consciousness is behavioristic. Accepting his definitions, there is no way to construct a continuum from the organic, feeling-motive level to the personal level: action-cum-knowledge, because, by definition, consciousness excludes the rational element exclusive to persons. This is not the common use of the term today and may therefore create some confusion. But this is the concept Freire is also attempting to specify when he distinguishes animal from human awareness (1968). Further, at the negative pole of the consciousness-knowledge scale, sensory experience and feeling are equally non-cognitive. At the opposite, or personal pole, knowledge can include its negative: feeling, as easily as it includes sensory experience. This has implications for non-humanists who would accept sensory data as

valid source of knowledge but exclude feeling data as being non-objective and non-scientific.

For it is the person who knows in acting, not his mind or his thought, and feeling, like sense is a necessary element in any personal consciousness.

The psychological analysis of consciousness into cognitive, affective and conative is misleading. . . . Consciousness as such has no cognitive element. Only persons know in any proper sense of the term and act with knowledge. And they know and develop their knowledge as much through their capacity for feeling as by using their senses, perhaps even more so, since sense depends upon feeling in a manner in which feeling does not depend on sense.

### Theory / Practice: and the Modes of Reflection

The heart of the human dialectic, and the source of its tension is the relationship of theory and practice, of reflection to action. Establishing the primacy of action and the role of reflection as an included negative seems to down-play an important, satisfying and necessary human activity. In fact this is not the intent. Instead we seek a coherent system and a different perspective on the modes of reflective activity. The three modes of reflection distinguished by Macmurray are religion, art and science. All derive from action, refer in some symbolic way to action, and are distinguished by their modes of operation, by what they suppress and by their levels of valuation. Before considering this concept in greater detail, let me summarize some of the notes by which Macmurray distinguishes action, as opposed to both activity and reflection:

1. IN ACTION there is choice and discrimination: I am doing this and not that, and the choice inherent in the fact that I am intentionally acting requires some ground of discrimination, independent of the agent itself: i.e., it requires the existence of alternative possibles of which the agent is aware, and a process of valuation.
2. IN ACTIVITY (such as a response to stimulus), the nature of the activity depends on the nature of the organism.

For example: an amoeba responds to the presence of a foreign object by engulfing it (regardless of whether it is food or a grain of sand). A person responds according to the nature of the object presented; even a starving person does not attempt to eat a flagpole; or if he does we say he is no longer functioning "rationally" (no longer a "person" in this respect).

Therefore, in action, the nature of the response is dependent on the nature of the other, and on the conscious awareness that the agent has of the Object. The ground of choice is the agent's knowledge of the Other.

3. Our knowledge of the past (memory) is the history of the interrelations of the Self and Others up to now.

IN REFLECTION there is abstraction from action. At this point

1. The self becomes pure subject, over against the object world.
2. The self is in the pure present.
3. The past, held in memory, is an object of knowledge: with time as one of its dimensions--sometimes called the "fourth dimension." It can be considered a dimension, i.e., spatialized, because it is fixed. (This is an aspect stressed by Freire as essential for any conscientization.)
4. This past is a continuant: i.e., completely determinate, not to be modified further by action. Any predictions based on it are based on its extrapolation, unchanging into the future. (Freire refers to the same point, though less

systematically, when he speaks of the necessity to preserve the status quo, causing the need to reify history and so dehumanize education and social structures. History is robbed of its dynamism, and there is no future, but only a continuation of the past.) (cf Role of the Churches in L.A.)

5. It is the effort of reflection which extends and completes our fragmentary memories.

Reflection

is characterized by attention, is based on memory, and is oriented to the past and the determined. It attends to a mode of the other, as focus of reflection, in order to ascertain its structure.

Action

is characterized by intention, is based on anticipation, is oriented to the future and the undetermined. It intends a modification of the other, (by agency) in order to determine its structure.

### Modes of Reflection

Reflection, Macmurray states, can approach truth by one of two routes: the particular or the general (p. 84). Let us accept, for the moment, that truth is a completely adequate determination or representation of an object. Both the particular and the general modes are ideal. To particularize is to express the uniqueness of what is represented. This is the mode of the artist and results in an intuition or an image. We ask: what about this object is totally its own? To generalize is to suppress particularities, so that what is represented is constituted, not as unique, but as having external relations common to it and others. This is the mode of the scientist and results in a concept, idea, or law. We ask: what about this object is like other objects?



Freire's process of conscientization exemplifies both modes. The theme is particularized in the artistic codification. The reliance on the gestalt-making powers of the human mind contemplating the codification is the approach of the artist to the search for truth. The second level search for patterns, "the deep structures," their contradictions, and generalization is the approach of the scientist. When it lacks this second step, education may be failing students because it fails to be scientific!

According to Macmurray, the real difference between the practical and the theoretical is in the intention of the agent. Both the work of the artist and that of the scientist are theoretical activities because they intend a modification of the representation of the Other, rather than practical activities which intend the modification of the Other.

The distinctions it makes between sub-human and human knowing rest precisely on the ability to think about and modify representations of the other rather than modify the concrete, present other. The critical point of consciousness-raising is the passage from what Piaget calls concrete operational to formal operational reasoning.

But the most important basis for the distinction of practical from theoretical activities is that of valuation. For action to begin at all valuation must be present and valuation is always a question of feeling.



1. Any action begins in a feeling of dissatisfaction with the situation as it is (the motive) and terminates when that feeling has been changed to one of satisfaction. This statement presumes a completed action, not one terminated prematurely. It applies to all action: theoretical or practical. Without the motive feeling, there is no action.
2. If we consider the world as a system of possibilities of action, feeling, referred to a situation in this way, is valuation. It moves us to accept or to reject a possibility of action. When we abstract from a positive valuation, i. e., when we reject the possibility of action, then the world is considered as matter of fact, system of events, an object of study. But the negative valuation is still retained: i. e., selective attention. We may choose to consider one aspect of the world (to value it) rather than another. Accordingly we have the whole range of sciences: physics, chemistry, history, sociology. . . In the reflection phase of praxis, selective attention focuses on economics and practical aspects of reality.
3. The above discussion is based on a division of valuation into positive and negative, a choice for action or a choice against action, for reflection.
4. Valuation may also be based on the discrimination of actions into means and ends. An act is a means, if it is valued for the sake of some end. The intention passes over to something else. This act is chosen, from alternatives, for the sake of that end. An act is an end, if it is valued for its own sake, a terminus of intention, and a source of satisfaction.

The pursuit of science, (any science, natural, sociological, behavioral, historical. . . ) insofar as it is without positive valuation, necessarily become a means to some other end, determined not by itself, but by someone outside: an agent. The agent may be the scientist himself, or another:

government, university, business. . . Freire considers both action in general, and the particular action of learning, only as means to another end. For this reason it is particularly important to critique the question of his values, and choice of ends.

The first reflective mode is intellectual. It abstracts from positive valuation but includes negative valuation: selective attention. One sees the world as a system of possibilities of action; focusing on one or another possibility results in the Sciences. As we have seen the method of the sciences is that of generalization, the formulation of general laws or patterns by the suppression of particular details. It yields a determination of the World-as-Means, to some further End.

The second reflective mode is the emotional. It sees the World-as-End in itself, to be rested in, contemplated, enjoyed. The valuation is positive and the method one of particularization. The object of this reflective activity is the production of an adequate image to symbolize that to which it refers, and the result is the external expression of a work of art.

Both of these modes result in ideal personal constructs. The production of Boyle's Law is no more a reproduction of the World-as-it-is than are the unique interpretations of the artist. The difference lies in the fact that artist and scientist proceed by different methods because they value the world differently: the one, as a means to something else; (the scientist) the other, as a good in itself; (the artist) and they focus on different aspects (particularities,

or generalizable patterns) in their creative activity of expressing the world. For some reason, perhaps the enduring presence of Greek philosophical tradition, we consider the mode that suppresses particularities to be more "objectively true," but Macmurray insists that there is no ground for this. To reiterate: both modes involve valuation, or feeling, which provides the motive for the activity; and in both, we invent our knowledge. This knowledge then requires reference to the world by some action, in order to verify it.

Freire is, in some sense, primarily a scientist. He uses artistic expressions (codification) for what they are able to evoke in the minds of the learners but his concern is an analysis of the world-as-means to the fuller human relationships of persons in society. Human development and personal self-determination are the focus of his values. The end, if expressed in Macmurray's terms, is a religious one; the means are scientific: analysis and generalization. The reference to the real world in praxis verifies and modifies the insights, and new theory leads to new action.

Summary: Up to this point we have established the form of the personal, as a positive which includes a self-negation; the definition of the Self as Agent, and the philosophical primacy of action over reflection; action, or praxis, which includes and is informed by its negative-reflection. From this viewpoint we have looked at the problem of dualism and seen how the new central position of agency eliminates the mind/world dichotomy. It also paves the way for resolution of the subject/object dichotomy which, however,

is dealt with more effectively when Macmurray speaks of personal relationships. We have also examined the genesis of knowledge, the perception of the Other, the relation between practical and reflective activities (theory and practice) and some of the distinctions between artistic and scientific forms of reflection.

### Persons in Relation

The Self does not exist as an isolated Agent any more than it exists as an isolated thinker, and this is the second major thesis of Macmurray's critique.

Persons are constituted by their mutual relations to each other. I only exist as one element in the complex 'I and You' (p. 24).

The form of the personal takes shape and is refined by the quality and motivation of the relationships in which the person is involved. These relationships can be looked at from several points of view and will be seen as personal or impersonal, direct or indirect, fear-oriented or love-oriented. Within the I-You relation which constitutes my existence and yours, I can isolate myself from you in intention, and so my relationship to you becomes impersonal. In this event, I am treating you as an object, refusing personal relations. A personal relationship is one defined by mutual intentionality and agency; an impersonal relationship is one in which, for purposes of science, economics, or self-interest, one person treats the other, not as another agent, but as an object for study or use (pp. 28-33).



In the next section we will examine Macmurray's theory on types of relationships that evolve out of basic life positions, and their connection with forms of society and modes of knowing.

Before doing so I would like to insert at this point an interlude to distinguish personal and impersonal, direct and indirect relationships, because these categories are valid and need not, necessarily, imply dehumanization.

In impersonal relationships the Other is seen as determinate, and hence predictable, one whose patterns can be studied and behavioral laws derived.

Impersonality is the negative aspect of the personal; since only a person can behave impersonally, just as only a subject can think objectively.

Impersonal relations are valid when included in and for the sake of the personal. For example in psychology one may undertake the study of persons whose behavior is "abnormal" with the intention to promote their return to health. However, because this requires abstracting for the moment from the personal relationship, which is taken as normal, such treatment of persons (as things) has to be justified.

A purely objective attitude toward another person can only be justified if it falls within and is subordinate to a personal norm. The other person may be treated, rightly, as a means to the realization of our intentions, and so conceived, rightly, as an object, only insofar as this objective conception is recognized as a negative and subordinate aspect of his existence as a person and so far as our treatment of him is regulated by this recognition.



For example, for a scientist to "cause" illness in a patient merely to serve the scientist's purposes of study would be to make the impersonal relation exist for its own sake. By commonly accepted societal norms, this cannot be justified.

Our relationships, then, with other persons are always personal, viewed from the position of the Subject. From the position of the Other, they may be personal or impersonal. They may also be direct or indirect, according as we relate to the others as persons known to us, or relate to them as functionaries: grocer, salesman, farmers. It is necessary that someone fulfill these functions for us; it is not necessary that he/she be personally known to us.

The scientific treatment of the other is governed by a different intention from that of personal relationship. Personal relationship issues in a knowledge proper to philosophy, a knowledge of persons as free and indeterminate agents, in relation to ourselves. Scientific study issues in a science of anthropology, wherein the Other is studied as an object, a continuant, one who is determinate and predictable, conditioned and therefore (for the moment of study) denied the property of free choice.

The relation of our personal to our impersonal knowledge is the relation of two different emotional attitudes toward the Other, which provide the motives for two different ways of behaving toward the Other and therefore, in their reflective aspect, of conceiving the Other.

Although the impersonal concept of the other is in opposition to the concept of person, it falls within the schema of the personal as a negative included in and constituting the positive. This objective aspect of the Other for me is always a component of the most personal relationships. (Even in talking to a friend, we almost unconsciously observe him "objectively.") However, if we take the scientific account of the person as the complete account, such that it entails the rejection of the personal conception, with the freedom it implies, Macmurray reminds us that we are in error, and the error lies not in the scientific account but in the philosophy of the human person which of its nature includes the scientific and goes beyond it. We are in error because we failed to understand the special character of scientific knowledge.

If science is exalted today it is in fact the result of a false valuation of the objective attitude, a valuation which makes it normative for all attitudes.

The distinction. . . between a personal and an objective knowledge rests upon this: that all objective knowledge is knowledge of matter of fact only and necessarily excludes any knowledge of what is matter of intention.

But persons, as person, are constituted by their power of choice, i. e., of intention.

Since an objective knowledge of other persons cannot treat them as agents, but must treat them as determinate objects or continuants, determinism, in this sense, is a necessary component of scientific methodology. The method consists in searching for patterns of behavior which recur without

change and in formulating these into laws of general applicability. The procedure is based on the assumption of continuance: that the patterns are constants and will be found in the behavior of all members of a class.

In conclusion:

The field of the personal, with which we are concerned, is defined by a personal attitude to other persons; the field of the anthropological sciences by an impersonal attitude. These two attitudes are primarily practical, though each has its negative or reflective aspect. The personal attitude is the attitude we adopt when we enter into personal relation with others and treat them as persons. Its reflective aspect, systematically pursued, is a philosophical knowledge of the personal. The impersonal attitude is the one in which we do not treat other people as persons in personal relation with ourselves, but as men, that is as members of a determinate class of objects in our environment whose presence and behavior limits, and so helps or hinders, the realization of our own personal ends, and of whom we must take account, since their presence conditions our own actions. This too, has its reflective aspect in a knowledge which, when methodically developed, provides a science, or set of sciences of human behavior.

The philosophical knowledge of persons as persons, and therefore as agents, is a full and inclusive knowledge of the personal other and includes its negative, the fact that he/she is a continuant object in the world. The scientific knowledge excludes consideration of his/her agency; it is objective, partial, and for the sake of the personal, considering the other as a determinate object, as he/she appears to the mere observer. Thus there is no necessary contradiction between personal freedom and scientific determinism in the anthropological field.

However, the concept of determinism refers to something else as well. Not to whether I, a person, am continuant enough to be known and predicted, but whether I, a person, can in fact make "free choices" or whether I am so determined by genes, environment, and subconscious programming that my choices do not emanate from me. This aspect of determinism is not discussed by Macmurray, for one of his assumptions is that agency, implying intentionality, is possible. It is also an assumption made by Freire.

It is necessary to have scientific or impersonal knowledge of the other not only for anthropological and psychological studies, but also for economic and social considerations. I must assume that others, whom I do not know personally, will continue to behave according to patterns that I have known in the past--i. e., that they will continue to make clothes, produce food, etc. I count on this determinateness of "People as a whole" even though I know that any individual "Other" could break with the pattern.

The organization of personal activities depends on an objective and impersonal knowledge of the other.

We are, in fact, concerned with the distinction between direct and indirect personal relationships.

Direct relations within the field of the personal involve a personal acquaintance with one another. They may or may not be personal at the level of those relations. Indirect relations are relations between persons who are not personally known to one another. (My relations to the people who grow my food.) All indirect relations are necessarily impersonal.



In these chapters we have established that human beings are, by essence, agents, and that agency or action implies reflection or intentionality. Macmurray at this point states that agency has meaning only with respect to other agents. He postulates

1. that persons exist, act, and grow only in interaction with other persons and
2. that there are two basic kinds of feeling-motivation which characterize persons; love and fear.

These motivational patterns begin in infancy and set the scene not only for individual life positions, but through them for the organization of societies, modes of reflection, and politics. Given this bipolarity of motivation, the problem of human existence, he states, is always the problem of reconciliation; the return to positive motivation toward the other (in infancy, the mother) after a period when the negative, fear, was dominant. The development of this concept and its relation to modes of reflection and models for organization of societies will be the subject of the next chapter.



1. See the Analogy with physics, which Macmurray develops at length. Where there is no resistance, there is no movement of one body with respect to another.
2. For example, study of quantum theory is, in itself, neutral. It acquires meaning beyond itself in reference to the practical activities it serves. In 1940 its meaning seemed to derive from service as theoretical content for graduate seminars. In 1945 other kinds of practical significance shook the academic community with fission bombs and fusion energy sources.

### Chapter 3: Persons in Relation

The 'newness' of Macmurray's philosophy is the importance he gives to two premisses: (1) The person is above all Agent; and (2) The Person is essentially shaped--qualified in his essence, in whatever it is which makes him/her human--by the ways he/she is in relationship. So strong is this second conviction that Macmurray relates modes of reflection, ways of valuing life, forms of society and devices of politics to the types of relationships that evolve from basic love and fear motivations.

This chapter will attempt only to present the essential notions of his treatment of Persons in Relation although much of his interest and clarity will necessarily be sacrificed in condensation. However, his insights bring into new perspective Freire's comments on dialogic and anti-dialogic community and warn of points where inconsistencies may be hidden.

We will first look at Macmurray's schema which derives the quality and style of all relationships from the early-established attitudes of love and fear. Although the developmental psychology is a product of his era, the conclusions retain their validity. We shall then consider how these motivations affect modes of action which he characterizes as communal, contemplative and pragmatic, and modes of reflection which he expands from the scientific, artistic, and religious bases already presented. These

same motivations are then carried over into models of society, law, and politics.

The organizing theme for the discussion of Persons in Relation is motivation. The bipolar motivation: love versus fear, runs through the entire analysis and is related to modes of reflection, organization of societies, religion, art and science. Macmurray traces basic motivation patterns from infancy in a development similar to that of Erickson (1950). Like Erickson, he sees the fundamental problem of human life as reconciliation: the return to positive motivation toward the other (in this case, the mother) after a period when the negative was dominant. This becomes the primary problem of human growth; its failure or avoidance an important factor in explaining modes of morality, reflection, societal organization, and politics. Without going into details of the argument, the main points of his thought on persons and their relationships are summarized below.

1. The primary motivation in the child is positive or negative, love or fear.
2. This primary motivation, love-fear, partakes of the form of the personal: a positive which includes its negative. Love includes the negative pole, fear, and dominates it.
3. Ordinarily in adult life the negative motivation, fear, is masked by intentional choices. In fact, since motive is the negative of intention it ordinarily only comes to the surface of consciousness when intention is frustrated in some way.

4. The origin for the child of the distinction between good and evil is the problem of coping with its first experience of evil; the Mother's rejection of it by weaning.

### Quality of Relationships

Macmurray relates the quality of relationships with the initial love/fear polarity.

5. Patterns are established in personalities according to whether love or fear is habitually dominant. Love leads to a reaching out to others; fear to withdrawal in self-protection, or to aggressiveness. If fear, the negative motivation, dominates, the child sees the mother, and later on, others, as unpredictable, enemies to be coped with, controlled, or defended against.
6. In cases where fear of the Other is the dominant feeling, the problem of protecting the self is solved in opposite ways, withdrawal or aggression, according to the personality. Passive personalities tend to solve (or bypass) the problem of reconciliation by trying to placate the enemy, to conform, to become a "good boy" so as to win caring and approval. This is an egocentric, defensive position. Egocentric here implies no value judgement but indicates that the concern is for self, not the Other. The child is motivated by fear for self, fear of the other.

More aggressive personalities fight the enemy, struggle for power, become hostile, rebellious, "bad boy." This is also an egocentric, defensive and isolated position. There is no real return to unity with the Other, but an effort to compel the Other's will to follow mine. It is also self-defeating, since the hostility of the child begets further rejection and hostility in return.

7. Both the conforming and the aggressive behavior have their basic attitude determined by fear of a hostile world, a world not to be trusted.

8. In persons in whom the positive motivation consistently wins out over the negative, love dominates. Relationships are heterocentric; there is a tendency to reach out, to trust, to place the Other's interests first. The world (and the Other) is seen as good.

### Reconciliation and Growth

9. In childhood, and at every point of growth, there must be periods of disruption, of apparent rejection and disequilibrium. For example, the child must learn to do for itself what the Mother has heretofore done. But her refusal of the child makes her appear to it "bad." Then fear or rage dominates.

To effect the dominance of the positive again, the child must see the illusions in the negative phase, and so dissolve the conflict of wills.

This implies not so much a change of judgment as a change of valuation.

It means that the child must recognize as unreal what has been taken for real (Mother is not really bad but only appears to be; she really loves me) and reverse the valuation of the situation. Value is primarily a question of feeling.

10. The ability to do this depends on the recognition of the distinction between appearance and reality.

The recognition of this distinction and ways of coping with it are important throughout life. In the imperfect reconciliations referred to above, (good boy, or bad boy approaches) where fear continues to be dominant, the child either accedes to the mother's demands because it must, or tries to force the mother's will to its own, but interiorly the valuation of the situation has remained the same: mother is bad. Thus the child remains egocentric,



conforms as policy, without finding any real satisfaction for its own desires in conforming, because the solution imagined and desired is something other than the reality. Macmurray believes that the source of our dualism as a habit of thinking is found in the repetition of this mode of resolution, and its crystallization into habit: i. e., the habit of dividing the real world from the world of the mind.

11. But Persons cannot exist except in relationship.

The reality of relationship is the full mutuality of fellowship in a common life in which alone the individual can realize self as a person.

The objective of all personal life is the achievement and maintenance of a fully positive relation to the Other.

Both negative modes of relationship, conforming and aggressive, are ambivalent because the very notion of relationship posits a bond with the Other while these ways of behaving deny it and tend to destroy it. By seeking to force the Other to care for me, they force the Other to defend himself against me. And so they destroy mutuality. In its stead, the best that can be hoped for is cooperation, but cooperation between persons or groups who continue to fear and mistrust each other.

Therefore the quality of relationships relates directly to the habitual ways an individual has come to perceive his world as hostile or friendly, hence, to whether he/she is moved by fear or love. In a later discussion Macmurray extends this motivational pattern to its effects on the organization of life styles:

Three types of disposition arise through the interplay of positive and negative phases in the process of personal development,

one positive and two negative, affecting our interests and ways of perceiving.

Our established or habitual interests and actions function as dispositions to select from what is presented to us at any moment and to organize it in consciousness in terms of its relevance and our intention.

12. These dispositions are presuppositions of the possibility of action, a priori motives, (equivalent to "categories of apprehension" in Kant's terminology) and give rise to three "ways of life" each with its own moral structure and its own conception of morality.

The three modes are communal, contemplative, and pragmatic. They are related to the positive: love, and the two negative: fear-conforming, and fear-aggressive, patterns respectively.

Persons who are fear-dominated, with a tendency to withdraw from life in order to protect self, tend to seek the contemplative.

Persons who are fear-dominated, with a tendency to control others and/or political life in order to protect self, tend to seek the pragmatic.

Persons who are love-dominated, with a tendency to reach out and trust life, tend to seek communal modes of living and acting.

These life styles will be discussed later in this study.

## Morality and the World of Action

Morality is the science of relationships, their study, their building and rebuilding. It is concerned with questions of right and wrong. Such questions are meaningless, according to Macmurray, unless they are seen in the context of relationships between agents who have mutual and conflicting rights.

## Modes of Perceiving: Predispositions of Morality

1. The distinction between right and wrong choice is inherent in the nature of action. An action is right or wrong according to how it is ordered by intention and the claims of others. "To ACT is to realize intention, with the help of the Other."
2. If the Other is considered a non-agent, we have an amoral situation, according to Macmurray. In this case "to act rightly, I must know, so far as it is relevant to my intention, (my purposes) both what the properties and characteristics of the Other (for example, an instrument) are, and how to use the Other as means to my end."

Wrong action in this case can occur through misapprehension of the nature of the tool or through lack of skill in manipulating it. It is a question of knowledge, style, or efficiency. Even using a tool "wrongly" I may, by accident achieve my goal, but awkwardly, inefficiently, and with unnecessary expenditure of effort. Right action, seen from this perspective, becomes a matter merely of efficiency or style:

- a. of efficiency: if the primary intention of the agent is the end to be achieved by the action (example: completing a task)
- b. of style: if the primary intention of the agent is the means, a display of skill (example: a game of golf)

If efficiency is to be the criterion for right action, its norms are provided by technology; if style, by aesthetics. The technological standards are essentially pragmatic. A mechanistic view sees action only as means to an end and discriminates right from wrong in terms of efficiency. Aesthetic standards are essentially contemplative; they see action as an organic whole, an end in itself, and discriminate good from bad action in terms of stylistic quality. But it is important to remember that both the technological and the aesthetic standards were derived from a consideration of a solitary agent (that is, the Other was considered a non-Agent, not a person). Neither the norm of Aesthetics nor of efficiency considers the intention of the agent, nor allows the Other to be a person.

However, in the real world, this is a fictitious situation. There is no action of a solitary agent, for agents exist only in relation to other agents. Action is defined by intention; and rightness of intention cannot be discriminated with respect to a single agent, nor can it be found in the use of one agent as a means to another's ends. The grounds for discriminating rightness from wrongness in intention are found not in the Self, but in the Other, who is also intentional.

The moral rightness of action has its ground in the relation of persons.

### The World of Action

Seen from the standpoint of Agency, the world in which we live is in fact a unity of action. There are many agents. Therefore, if action is to be a means to determine the future, there must be unity of intention, for the world cannot be determined in incompatible ways.<sup>1</sup> If two agents have incompatible intentions, one or both necessarily must lose freedom:

Either one must yield to the other, of his own free will, or they must seek to prevent one another from acting.

In the first case, one of the agents loses his freedom and cannot realize his nature as agent; in the second, both lose their freedom until one has mastered the other and forced him to abandon his intention. . . . The intention of each party is dictated by the other (hence there is no freedom) and neither determines the common future. The struggle. . . may have quite catastrophic effects on the situation, but the consequences are not intended by the agents in the struggle.

Macmurray here is describing a situation of violence, however peaceable be the means by which one or both lose freedom. For example, when oppressor and oppressed have incompatible intentions for the use of resources, one or both lose their freedom. The situation is, by its nature, one of violence. The following postulates make explicit Macmurray's views on action, freedom and interdependence.



1. The interrelation of agents makes the freedom of all depend on the intentions of each.
2. This interrelation of agents is the ground of morality.
3. Thus, "the freedom of any agent is conditioned by the action of all other agents." My freedom depends on how you behave.
4. If we call the harmonious interrelation of agents their community, then a morally right action is an action which intends community.<sup>2</sup>
5. Since any act of any agent, within its limits determines the future for all agents, every agent is responsible to all other agents for his actions.
6. Freedom and responsibility name two aspects of the same phenomenon. However, responsibility to the other is limited by intention, and must be related to knowledge. (And as Freire has shown, the quality of knowledge is related to historic and social factors.)
7. Therefore, whatever an agent does is morally right if its intention is to maintain the community of agents; morally wrong if its intention is to the contrary.

Or, put succinctly: the moral rightness or wrongness of an action depends on intention and attention. It depends on the intention directing it, and the agent's attention or apperception of the situation. Given this fact, education is necessarily concerned with apperception and whether it is demonstrational or not, necessarily education is concerned with the moral.

8. The moral orthodoxy of a community is established by the mode of apperception common to its members.

For example, what Freire perceives as prophetic in the role of the Churches

in Latin America, may be seen as merely political, or even taboo by some groups of Churchmen.

What is expected of me by the Other must always play a part, though not necessarily a decisive part, in determining the morality of my actions.

9. A "category of apperception" (communal, contemplative, pragmatic--see below) determines the form in which the community of agents is conceived and the form of the demands on me to which my moral action is a response.<sup>3</sup>

### Modes of Morality

If there are three typical modes of apperception, one positive and two negative, logically there are also three typical modes of morality which, in general, will tend to characterize a group: the communal, contemplative, and pragmatic modes. If the modes in any group are mixed, natural pressures created by conflicts will tend to restore equilibrium and dominance to one. Moral orthodoxy in a group is the degree to which the members conform to what is the accepted mode of the group as a whole; orthodoxy is distinguishable from the traditional concept of a moral code. The code may state one thing but the practice of the community demonstrates the true norm of orthodoxy.

The moral problem to be resolved by all three modes: communal, contemplative or pragmatic, is the problem of hostility resting on fear.

1. The communal mode is based on positive motivation, (love) is heterocentric, and has for its objective the maintaining of positive personal relationships.

In the face of a moral problem it demands transformation of motives by the overcoming of fear. It is summed up in the norms: "Love thy neighbor. . ." and "Love thy enemies. . ."

2. The two negative modes (contemplative and pragmatic) are egocentric, and tend to be dualistic. They seek to maintain a relationship while negating or withdrawing from it in fear, and creating a division between the actual and the ideal worlds, or the material and the spiritual self.
3. For a person operating in the contemplative mode: the real world is the spiritual world. Dependence on others is a matter of fact, but one can, so far as possible, cease to intend the practical life. The practical life then becomes secondary and is reduced to automatic activities and relationships, requiring a minimum of one's attention. The real life is not in the practical. By conformity to rules and patterns of behavior practical functions become routinized and primarily a means-only to the life of the mind (soul) which is the life intended.

At a societal level, this is best achieved by making relationships automatic and regimes unchanging in an organic structure where each member is functionally related to the other, is trained to fulfill his function, knows what his role is, and conforms to it almost as second nature. Morality becomes a question of good form, possibly stipulated by rules but more likely perceived by intuition. The standard is aesthetic. Moral judgment,

depends upon a vision of the good which is the same for all who are united in personal activity by means of it.

Examples of this mode can be found in contemplative monasteries, government bureaucracies and multinational corporations, wherever the norm depends on each one knowing his/her functions, routinizing actions, and

stylizing roles. Moral judgment tends naturally to levels described by Kohlberg as Stage 3.

4. Where the orientation of the group is pragmatic, and the basic relational attitude still is one of fear or mistrust of others, the real life is found in action in and on the world to change the world. Again there is a dualistic divorce between the life of the mind and the life of action but now ideas, and all that is spiritual become a means subordinate to practice. Conflicts of wills result in struggles for power.

The problematic of action becomes the effort to achieve my own purpose in the face of the resistance of the Other.

However, the problem of how to achieve unity of action for the greatest number remains. The world cannot be determined in incompatible ways. In this mode, the technique for achieving unity is not union, but rather cooperation, and the technology for achieving maximum cooperation and harmony is Law. Morality in a society so structured, becomes a morality of obedience to law: to external law, but above all

to a moral law which the individual imposes upon himself and through which he secures the universal intention to maintain the community of action.

From this emerges the glorification of self-control--"limiting one's own freedom for the sake of the community" and of terms like "will," "obligation," and "duty." In Kohlberg terms this is a Stage 4 orientation, which Macmurray identifies with the Stoic philosophers, Roman Law, and Immanuel Kant.

When these contemplative and pragmatic orientations are institutionalized Macmurray holds that they result in two kinds of society to be discussed below.



He reserves the term "community" for the communal, heterocentric orientation.

### Society and Community

In every case a human society is a moral entity: a unity of persons, and is maintained by the intention of the members to continue together in a certain structure.

Its basis is the universal and necessary intention to maintain the personal relation which makes the human individual a person and his life a common life.

The pragmatic orientation of persons leads them to form societies maintained by power, structured by law, somewhat mechanical in operation and in attitude toward persons. Such societies consist of dynamic units of energy held together by some outside force (law or power). Of themselves the units tend to repel (fear) each other, but they need each other and so they establish means to cooperate. We see an extreme example of such unity in that of nations which are allied during war, but enemies at other times.

The contemplative orientation, on the other hand, leads to a society in the style of Rousseau, maintained by "natural goodness," unstructured, organic, growing toward an ideal maturity. It can be maintained if, and only if, members identify their individual good with the general good and find their personal satisfaction in promoting the general good. Ideally, in



such a society, each believes that his/her real interest is the general interest and that private self-interest is an illusion. Actually such a society would be anarchy in the technical sense, but since anarchy has not proved practical, Rousseau acknowledges:

The problem is to find a form of association which will defend the person and goods of all the associates and in which each, while uniting himself with all, will remain as free as before and obey only himself.

Macmurray adds that

It is possible to have such a society by a mystical self-identification with the whole of which I form a part.

and this, he claims, is the clue to the mystery of self-government.

Mysticism is an essential element in all reflective experience, though it is not usually recognized as such because its role is normally subordinate. It is, however, essentially contemplative, and in form at least aesthetic. Self-identification with the whole, with the Other that includes oneself, is mysticism. The dramatist identifies himself with characters in his drama; so do the actors on the stage as they play their parts in the drama, and the spectators as they watch the spectacle, each remaining himself the while. But this is only theoretically possible--only in a play. If it is made the basis of society, and so of life as a whole, it creates illusion. For then there is no other life than the life of the stage. We cannot leave the theatre and resume the serious business of real life where we must bear our own identities. The drama. . . may be meaningful. . . as a commentary on life. It can hardly be, for the members of the troupe, at least, a commentary upon itself. It becomes inherently meaningless and pointless. Unlike the pragmatic society, the contemplative society is not a State. It is not grounded in power, but in the voluntary submission of its members to the general will. Its inherent ideal is anarchism--an

automatic harmony of wills produced by the suppression of self-interest in favor of the moral will for the general good.

Such a society has distinct limitations: it must remain small enough for all members to know one another and to meet together for decision-making. Its size may be extended, at least in appearances, through representative government. In this form, the elected representative identifies himself with his constituency and speaks with their voice so disinterestedly that what Macmurray calls "the fiction of self-government" is maintained. When the "Will of the People" emerges from the debate and is enacted into law, it is loyally accepted by all the people who then identify with it. Government, or the State, is necessary but it is "not really a State" but only a function of society, needed to execute the Common Will. Tensions naturally develop but they are "not over questions of power, but the necessary tensions between peoples whose interests are basically one, and who are equally satisfied with government, whichever party wins out." The competition although real is not serious; the whole game of politics is popularly viewed as a game, not serious business, with the outcome not really important. . . "May the best man win" and life goes on much as before.

For example, in the United States a new government is elected at least every eight years, but socially and economically, there is little disruption in every day life, to distinguish one incumbency from the other.

In spite of the tongue-in-cheek irony with which Macmurray underscores the romanticism inherent in democracy, he locates the weakness.

This kind of society depends on the majority of the members not taking the practical life seriously, but treating it as a means to the private life.

Since in fact, action is primary for human beings, Macmurray says that the only way the illusion that it is not primary can be maintained is by divorcing theory and practice.

The illusion is only possible by keeping theory and practice apart. It involves the belief that what is true in theory would not work in practice . . . The practice of such a society may be worse or better than its theory but it cannot be the expression of it. . . for the theory is really a compensation for the unsatisfactory situation which exists in the practice.

The contemplative mode of apperception produces an ideal which it hopes for but which it does not intend in practice!

It asserts that the ideal is the necessary outcome of the conflict in the actual world. To try to improve it by planning would be dangerous interference with natural laws which in their own good time will necessarily bring the improvement about.

Further, when the organic society described above is compelled (by war or other crisis) to take its practical life seriously, then the struggle becomes real, and its outcome is no longer indifferent. The game-playing is over. It quickly transforms itself into the pragmatic mode. For example, in the crisis of war, the United States gives its president powers amounting

to dictatorship. Then

the unity of society can only be maintained by the power of the State;. . . idealism gives way to realism; modern democracy to the totalitarian state.

It is evident that the discussion of morality forms the bridge in Macmurray's theory from the individual to the social aspect of the personal. Any human society is a unity of persons, a matter not of fact but of intention. It can therefore be destroyed only by destroying the intention of the persons who constitute it to maintain it in being. It is a moral entity. Its basis is the universal and necessary intention of the members to maintain the personal relation which makes the individual a human person and his life a common life.

That human life is essentially social was articulated by Plato. But that "man is a social animal" (Aristotle) does not translate into "Man is one of the herd animals." This statement would define the personal on the analogy of the organic and to do so must treat human nature as matter of fact to be defined from outside, from the standpoint of a spectator.

Although this seems quite possible: to define the human on the analogy of the organic, it is in fact impossible for the person doing the defining to be outside the human race, to be a spectator; he/she must also be part of the species, observed and interacting with other members. As a reflecting member of society, I cannot divorce any activity, including my



reflective activity, from its modifying influence on society. To be able to do so would be to define the person as a thinker outside society, who happens to act, not as an agent who must reflect.

We can produce the illusion of pure contemplation by suppressing the referent to action as the motive of reflection. But pure thought would be pure phantasy. A thinking which could not be false could also not be true. Since thinking like all our activities has a motive, it may be that the motive of thinking dualistically (attempting to divorce thought from act), is the desire to know the truth without having to live by the truth.

As we have seen, a Society is a grouping of persons in which the motivation is negative and the bonds between the members impersonal. The association is an aggregate for the better promotion of the ends of each individual Self.

A community is a grouping of persons in which the motivation is positive, the members are in communion with one another and their association is a fellowship. Community contains within it its negative, society.

A community, then, is a personal unity of persons, which rests upon a positive apperception by its members of the relation which unites them as a group. Both societies and communities are groups of agents, each characterized by intentionality. The modes in which agents apperceive one another determines the relations existing between them:

The mode of apperception which is normal to any society determines the mode of the society's existence.



This conception, however, may be true or false. Its truth or falsity is verified by action.

### Community, Communion, and Religion

1. Community is a form of society based upon a positive perception by the members of the relations which united them as members.  
 "I need you to be myself: a fully positive personal relation in which, because we trust one another, we can think feel and act together."
2. The mode of conception that a people has of itself influences the mode of society and is influenced by it--because any relation of agents is a matter of intention. That is to say: the mode in which we conceive our relations, determines the relations themselves.
3. If the conception is false, the actions based on it will be self-frustrating. For example, if we conceive others as friendly and cooperative when in fact they are egocentric and hostile to us, our efforts to work with them will result in frustration.
4. If there is a categorical error in the conception: that is an error in the perception of one's own nature, then every action, regardless of efforts (like changing objectives), will be self-frustrating, and ultimately lead to despair. (A trivial example: If I consider myself a musician when in fact I am tone-deaf.)
5. There are basically three reflective modes: religion, art, and science.
6. Religion is the reflective activity specifically concerned with relation of persons. Religion is about Community.<sup>4</sup>

To repeat: Community is a personal association among individuals who are equals but not copies of one another, who are free, and aware of their freedom, and who are open to receive anyone into their fellowship. These are the characteristics of Freire's dialogical community (Pedagogy, Chapter 4) and they are the characteristics which have traditionally been

associated with the great religions: "A universal community of persons in which each cares for all and none for self." Religion is about community.

A society acts together for a common purpose. A community acts together in fellowship, in a unity of persons as persons, a unity constituted and maintained by affection. It is heterocentric: i. e., the Other is the center of value.

Any community of persons, as distinct from a mere society, is a group of individuals united in a common life, the motivation of which is positive.

7. A community is not organic in form: i. e., not based on a relation of functions. It is a unity of persons constituted and maintained by the motives which sustain the personal relations of its members, by mutual affection and the will to community of the members. "It is a nexus of the active relations of friendship between all possible pairs of members."

In community each acts, thinks and feels for the others and not for self. Each remains an individual who realizes himself in and through the other.

### Human Societies

Idealist philosophies place the essential difference between human and animal groups in self-consciousness. Freire concurs: the power to objectify and name the world, to perceive oneself and one's own perceptions are elements of his definition of the human, whereas he maintains that the animal does not exist (1970)--stand out from the world, and perceive its relationships to it. However, Macmurray notes that self-consciousness does not discriminate human societies from communities. Consciousness

alone does not commit a person to anything. In this case it does not commit one to remain in the group. Further, self-consciousness normally occurs spontaneously only when there is some breakdown in relationships. As long as I relate to another in full trust and affection, the center of my interest and attention is in the other. It only centers in myself when something happens to disrupt or constrain the relationship--to introduce a negative element. The problem of community then is the problem of maintaining or re-establishing positive relations in the face of possible outbreaks of hostility and fear. And it is of the nature of community that such reconciliation cannot be mandated, but must result from mutual agreement and love. Among the modes of reflection we have been considering the primary mode is that which reflects on the primary problem: how to maintain positive personal relationships in the human community. This mode is religion, which includes and subsumes both particularization and generalization, both art and science, and is about the business of relationships. We shall see later on in this study that Freire's critique of some of the churches in Latin America is the accusation that instead of building dialogical, other-centered, community they are following aesthetic lines of action more appropriate to self-serving and self-saving societies. (Part III, Ch. 1)

### In Summary

1. All reflective activities of the personal are concerned with the development of knowledge, i.e., are primarily concerned with others but include the negative, knowledge of self.

2. Reflective activities are the negative of action, for the sake of action, and are symbolic actions. As such they determine the future symbolically.

3. Reflective activities fall into three principal types:

those that reflect on and symbolically determine personal relationships and aim at improvement: this is the realm of religion, according to Macmurray.

those that reflect on and determine values, satisfactoriness, the good as an end, and function for the refinement of sensibilities: this is the realm of art.

those that reflect on and determine means to desired ends and function to develop efficient technology: this is the realm of science.

4. Personal relationships and personal activities include both values and means. In this sense, religion includes and provides the matrix for art and science. But each mode of reflection has its own type of universality and its own unique problem.

5. The problematic for religion is that of maintaining or re-establishing fully positive interpersonal relationships, of overcoming hostility and fear by love.

The problematic for art is the development of a fully adequate image as an expression of reality.

The problematic for science is the development of efficient means for achieving the ends we have in mind.



## Conclusion

I have developed at length Macmurray's analysis of the contemplative-organic society for two reasons: (1) it is of interest to the Americas in the light of our recent history and two World Wars, and of our tendency to believe that a democratic society is right for the whole world; and (2) it is of particular interest in the light of the growing mystical tendencies of Freire's later work and the accusations of utopianism made by some of his critics. Some of Freire's concepts fall into the mystical idealist categories described above, and, I believe, if immaturely understood, could lead to the dangers of totalitarianism which Macmurray traced to other romantic thinkers. However, the intent of Freire's critique and language and his explanation of the relationships necessary for cultural revolution, are closer to those of the third, positively-motivated society which Macmurray describes as Community.

In explaining the religious mode of reflection Macmurray makes three observations which supplement insights of Freire. Freire is concerned with scientific knowledge only and the question "What is knowledge" leads him to process answers. But the basis of the process is interpersonal relations. Since religious reflection is defined by Macmurray as that which seeks symbolically to solve problems of personal relationships he is concerned also with process knowledge: How do we know other persons?

Not "objectively", he says, as we know things, for the primary character of the personal relationship is mutuality. It is "I" and "You" that constitute the unit of action, of observation, and of reflection. Freire insists that the unit of



action, of observation, and of reflection. Freire insists that knowledge is social, is neither acquired, developed nor verified alone. Against "objective" knowledge, he places the norm: "If I do not know you, you do not know me."

And so it follows that the only mode by which persons know each other is revelation, a communication not of facts but of self "giving oneself away"--  
"All knowledge between persons and all education is revelation."

## PART II: Chapter 3: Notes

1. For example a piece of territory cannot be determined as belonging to country X and to country Y simultaneously. If they fight over it, one wins, and the other loses the possibility of determining that bit of world--and in that measure loses freedom of choice.

2. By community we mean the heterogeneous, mutually sharing, trusting group that supports, challenges and loves.

3. This issue relates to orthodoxy. Within a community a given action may be unorthodox, hence taboo or "immoral" although in fact, it may still intend and even promote relationships and other, deeper, or avowed communal ends.

During the post-Vatican II transitional period in the Roman Catholic Church, there was much variation from diocese to diocese on the issue of abstinence from meat during Lent. A standard quip had it that one could be liable to Heaven, Hell or Purgatory depending on how far down the New York Thru-way one stopped for a hamburger. The question is one of orthodoxy over morality.

4. Rule of St. Benedict.

## PART III--PAULO FREIRE, THE LIFE PROJECT

### Chapter I: Exegesis of Three Works

#### INTRODUCTION

In Part I of this study we examined the historical and sociological background of Freire's writings and attempted to outline the philosophy which guided him. In Part II we placed that philosophy into the perspective provided by another Christian Marxist and social philosopher, John Macmurray. Doing so provided us with a more rigorous language and a context against which Freire's ideas could be evaluated and perhaps supplemented. In a sense both these sections have been preliminary to the real work of this study. In this section we shall examine critically three of Freire's published works in an attempt to develop his educational theses and relate them to the educational metaphors which have currency in the United States in our present day. Freire's writings seem to fall into three phases: the transition writings, sociological in nature; the revolutionary and philosophical writings; and most recently, a small group of theological, almost mystical writings.

In the transitional period, which included his imprisonment in Brazil and the years immediately following in Chile, Freire described the general characteristics of a "Society in Transition" and the passage of a people from semi-intransitive to naive consciousness. Much of this material is found in

the Portuguese edition of Educação Como Prática Libertadora (translated into English and incorporated as the first part of Education for Critical Consciousness). Transitional also were the further trial and politicization of the literacy method during the years in Chile, and a number of essays: "Cultural Action and Conscientization," "Cultural Freedom in Latin America," "Education as Cultural Action," "Cultural Action: A Dialectical Analysis."

While still imprisoned in Brazil, Freire began the articulation of some of the ideas which mark the second, or revolutionary set of writings. Chief among these, most revolutionary and clearly more philosophical than pedagogical, is The Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Other philosophical writings include Extension or Communication and "Education as Consciousness-Raising." In this group of writings his thought is concerned with the nature of the person, the world, the "man-world entity," knowledge and learning, and the role of pedagogy in cultural revolution. The Pedagogy appears, on careful study, to be not a manual but a philosophical rationale for revolution, although, in general, a revolution of a Gandhian type. However, Freire does not altogether exclude violent options, nor examples like Che Guevara and Camilo Torres. By his definition a situation of violence already exists in oppression and the question of violence in the popular sense is somewhat beside the point. The issue seems to be revolution or non-revolution, rather than violence or non-violence.

Finally, Freire's thought now seems to be evolving into a theological or mystical phase. In the present phase two characteristics are emerging: the growing significance of the dialectic in his analysis and proposals, and the theological or mystical direction which becomes increasingly prominent in language and value positions. (Mystical is here being used as developed by Macmurray in the preceding section.) I am not sure that he would accept the term mystical, nor do I use it in any evangelical or traditionally religious sense. Mysticism involves the dedication of one's whole being in something larger than self: the Party, the State, Religious Service, Union with God. . . and the willingness to submerge personal good, even to the sacrifice of life, for the sake of this greater good. In these later writings there is a growing clarity about the stance of dedication, an almost religious commitment to the work of liberation of men and women, a liberation that is internal, ideological, and transcendental while remaining praxis: (see also Weffort on this point) action in the world for the here-and-now liberation of all human beings, beginning with the most oppressed.

That praxis of this nature involves structural change in society becomes more and more clear, but what is still ambiguous, is whether Freire has opted for the necessity of revolution in the classical sense. Weffort believes that he has. On the other hand, it is possible that Freire believes that cultural revolution is not only the essential component of classical revolution, but is sufficient without a political take-over. In the Pedagogy



(Chapter 4) he indicates that cultural revolution precedes, accompanies, and follows political revolution. The latter should only take place at that moment when the new order is well-established in the people's consciousness and there is no further danger of role reversal--that is, no further danger that the oppressed, having achieved power, merely become oppressors in their turn.

Education has been the form that action has taken in all three phases, and I believe, the stimulus for Freire's own movement from one to another. However, it would be a serious oversimplification to try to separate sociological from philosophical and theological considerations. It is, rather, a question of focus. Out of Freire's early apprenticeship in the movement of conscientizaçao, he carried the conviction that consciousness, in the sense of awareness of underlying relationships in a situation, does not just happen. It must be catalyzed by an event, or a person who has moved a little deeper into the analysis of a contradictory situation. Catalytic communication is a role for education. Out of his Marxist readings came the concept of the dialectical unity of theory and action which he has named praxis, and which is his single pedagogical method. Marxism is also a source of his conviction that unless structures change, human consciousness will not change. Out of an existentialist and phenomenological background came a deeply personalist view of human beings and human potential. He sees the person as incomplete, becoming, "ever able to become more," and for

this to understand more than he/she now does. The instrument for this becoming is pedagogy: a Pedagogy of the Oppressed, by the oppressed.

Education for Critical Conscience (Freire, 1972) is an English translation of two earlier essays and exemplifies the transition in Freire's writing from preoccupation with the past to preoccupation with larger issues of the future, and his personal transition from doxa to logos: understanding the surface phenomena, to "analysis of the deep structures, true understanding." We already have seen (Part I, Ch. 3-4) the sociological data out of the past, first presented in Education as a Practice of Freedom. But we still seek answers to questions it raises. What happened in Brazil? How could one prepare a people to achieve a different outcome? Why are so many of the people, who were "conscientized," so easily and totally silenced now? These answers are not provided. Some indications however, appear in the second essay: "Extension of Communication." This essay reflects on data amassed through Freire's involvement with education under the agrarian reform movement in Chile, a valuable source of information, for Chile was experiencing a non-violent revolution which was to last over a decade. (1962-1973) But it was a cultural revolution effected by the leadership for the people rather than with them, and Chile now faces the same task Freire had earlier identified for Brazil:<sup>1</sup> to bring the people to understand and participate in national democratic life. The revolution did not begin with the conscious action of the

masses. This in itself was its weakness.<sup>2</sup>

The second essay presents Freire's epistemology and ontology which are expanded and completed in the Pedagogy. What is knowledge? What does it mean to be human? What is human education? The writing in the second essay is more difficult: more abstract and philosophical, less obviously relevant to the business of teaching. But the questions it raises are those which make education relevant at all to the humanization of persons. It is necessary abstraction.

Freire is repetitious and somewhat cyclic in his writing. His thinking evolves from essay to essay by reflecting on itself. He is primarily a philosopher of education but does not systematize his philosophy. Instead the pieces of a system are scattered throughout his work. To introduce some linearity I shall use as outline the following system which Macmurray gives us, because it has many points of contact with Freire's thinking. The main categories are:

The Personal: definition, nature, persons in relation

Action, Agency: nature, priority, intentionality, praxis

Knowledge: nature, acquisition, social dimensions

Reflection: metaphor, valuation, modes: science, art, religion

Relations: oriented by love or fear: contemplative, pragmatic, and communal societies

If we add oppressive relationships and

Education: mechanistic literacy and neutrality and conscientising, metaphor, word, dialectic, we have a frame for Freire's system. With the exception of references to metaphor, Macmurray does not treat education or praxis in the Gifford lectures, nor is he committed to the concept of the dialectic which is central to Freire.

### The Personal

Macmurray defines the critical problem for philosophy today to be the discovery of the form of the personal. The form he offers us is that of a positive which includes and is defined by its negative. In this definition he echoes Hegel, yet denies him, for he does not speak of the oppositions present in every historical concept and their synthesis, and he rejects dialectic logic as adequate to human choice. Yet when we look more closely at his form of the personal, it seems to be dialectic in nature. Freire does not define the personal as such, but the way in which he uses "human," "humanization," "dehumanizing structures," implies a neo-Scholastic definition that could be formulated somewhat as follows:

The human person is a rational animal, differing from other animals in ability to be aware of self and of the self's perceptions of the environment, and ability to make purposeful choices (to act intentionally).



The definition, so expressed, is equally compatible with a Cartesian or an agent-oriented system. Freire has not clarified this issue at the level of definition. The definition gives no clear right of place to agency nor does it incorporate choice within action, per se. In fact it generates images of a spectator self over against the world, a concept that Freire has had explicitly to reject. As Macmurray has shown us, any Cartesian definition of person creates insurmountable dualism, and Freire has devoted pages to repudiating dualism of the subject/object, mind/world variety. If, however, we incorporate into this definition something of his treatment of the dialectics: human-dehumanizing, oppressive-liberated, prescriptive-dialogic, we arrive at a definition of the person much closer to Macmurray's agent-in-relationship. It is my belief from conversations with Freire that the two postulates of Macmurray, agency and relatedness, are not only compatible with his thought but bring a needed clarity. Let us accept, then, as a starting point that persons are agents, that agency includes reflection and intentionality, and that persons exist and grow only in relationship with other agents.

### Knowledge and Education

The content of "Extension or Communication" is Freire's understanding of knowledge, the contrast between this understanding and the views of Extension Agents, the sociological data for Freire's rejection of extension as ineffectual and immoral, and a counterproposal for education. We cannot maintain strict



linearity in this review since each of these notions is interwoven with the others.\*

Knowledge is a dynamic representing of reality, created when persons together confront and analyze that reality and act to change it. As such it is inseparable from praxis.

Knowledge is not extended from those who consider that they know to those who consider that they do not know. Knowledge is built up in the relations between human beings and the world, relations of transformation, and perfects itself in the critical problematization of these relations.

This is quite different from the concept of knowledge ascribed by Freire to extension agents. If knowledge could be "extended" at all (reached out to someone else), it would have to be conceived of as reified and static; this is a view Freire opposes. Against it, he places his own epistemology.

Knowing, whatever its level, is not the act by which a Subject transformed into an object docily and passively accepts the contents others give or impose on him or her. Knowledge, on the contrary, necessitates the curious presence of Subjects confronted with the world. It requires their transforming action on reality. It demands a constant searching. It implies invention and re-invention. It claims from each person a critical reflection on the very act of knowing. It must be a reflection which recognizes the knowing process,

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\*The following extensive digest is intended to assist those who have little knowledge of Freire. For those already familiar with Freire's writings, pp. 161-209 may be omitted.

and in this recognition becomes aware of the "raison d'etre" behind the knowing and the conditioning to which that process is subject. . . . In the learning process the only person who really learns is s/he who appropriates what is learned, who apprehends and thereby re-invents that learning: s/he who is able to apply the appropriated learning to concrete existential situations. On the other hand, the person who is filled by another with "contents" whose meaning s/he is not aware of, which contradict his or her way of being in the world, cannot learn because s/he is not challenged. Thus, in a situation of knowing, teacher and student must take on the role of conscious Subjects, mediated by the knowable object that they seek to know. The concept of extension does not allow for this possibility. (p. 101)

The key in this passage occurs in the phrase "becomes aware of the 'raison d'etre' behind the knowing and the conditioning to which that process is subject."

At some length, Freire clarifies the perceptions of the peasants:

There are various levels of knowing: magical, naive, and critical--all conditioned by the structures with, and within which, persons live. Magical thinking involves a misconstruing of apparent causal relations for true ones.

It occurs because persons are too close to their reality, or to nature, to objectify it, and to perceive its true causality, and because they already have a world-view, with belief and ritual, into which new knowledge must fit.

Freire suggests (p. 107) that all men are subject to magical thinking--even men highly educated and technologically developed. Knowledge is "conditioned by the concrete cultural reality in which human beings find themselves." (p. 102)

Further, when those operating in a magical context are presented with new knowledge (an intrusive or foreign element) they relate it to the matrix of "facts" as they already perceive them. Hence they interpret and assimilate them to their existing myth.

Magic is neither prelogical nor illogical. It possesses its own internal logical structure and opposes as much as possible any new forms mechanically superimposed on it.  
(p. 104)

For this reason, presentation of contents of knowledge, without due respect for the total cultural context of the recipient is ineffectual even for agronomist ends of increased production.<sup>4</sup>

The rest of the essay is an extended discussion of right and wrong ways of educating, given this interpretation of what knowledge is. Important ideas are extension, the social nature of understanding, and the non-neutrality of educational means.

Freire sees extension as a merely technicist, supposedly neutral, form of training based on the general philosophy that the agricultural skills which peasants need to increase production can be taught them independently of any consideration for their world view, self-image, or existing technology. This concept, Freire says, reifies the learner and knowledge, implies that the one who "extends" is superior, and that the receiver is ignorant and passive. It constitutes cultural invasion because

the aim of any invader is to penetrate another cultural historical situation and impose his system and values on its members. (p. 117)

This, in fact (although perhaps without malice) the extension agent does. As a result a relationship of authority is established which must be supported by conquest and manipulation.

Authoritarianism need not necessarily be associated with physical repression. It can also be seen in actions based on the "arguments of authority." "This is the right way--it's technically correct--don't raise questions, just do it." (p. 117)

Technicism is based on the belief that technical skills can be divorced from values as well as from social reality. It is mechanistic, messianic, and paternalistic. Mechanistic, in that extension agents assume that knowledge is a thing which can be mechanically transferred from themselves to the peasants, given the right techniques, and that once the peasants learn the agricultural technology, production will automatically increase. Messianic, because in technical education ("technical capacitation") alone will be found salvation and the extension agents bring the gospel of technical know-how to the poor. Paternalistic in that the peasant is assumed to have no culture and no knowledge, to be a waiting emptiness for the good father/government agent to fill.

But such is not the case. The peasant receivers have a culture of their own, a technology, albeit empirical and primitive, of their own, and a world-view that integrates work, belief, ritual and life. Education, not



extension, is what the peasant needs.

Faith in the transmission of facts on the part of the agronomist betrays an ignorance of the cultural nature of these facts. Applied science grows out of science which grows out of a culture. The factual layer cannot be simply translated so as to be the icing on the cake of a different science (understanding) and culture (the peasants') out of which it did not come.

Techniques do not just happen, but like the science of which they are a practical application are socio-historically conditioned.

. . . Because the answers peasants give to natural challenges are cultural, they cannot be replaced by superimposing the equally cultural responses (ours) that we "extend" to them. (pp. 108-109)

By reflecting on his own reality and on the peasants' interpretation of their reality, as well as on the interlocking and self-healing nature of the peasants' total cultural context, the agronomist will come to know that all knowing and ignoring are culturally conditioned.

#### Education versus Extension

True education incarnates the permanent search of people together . . . for their becoming more fully human in the world in which they exist. (p. 96)

Its object is

to make it possible for human beings, through the problematizing of the unity being-world, to penetrate more deeply the prise de conscience (understanding) of the reality in which they exist. (p. 107)



The object of extension, on the other hand, is "to change the peasants' knowledge to one more like to that of the extension agent." (p. 99) The transformation of perception brought about by education requires praxis; the role of the educator is to catalyze the reflection on action, and to catalyze the action itself out of which knowledge grows. The teacher "poses the reality as a problem" to be analyzed and solved, draws attention to points naive or unclear, questions causality, and in so doing, learns, along with the students, of the underlying realities and of their (the people's) power to act effectively. (pp. 125-127) The result is the learners' discovering

their own presence within a structure and not as "imprisoned" or "stuck to" the structure or its parts. (p. 107)

Without this there is a valid criticism of the "technical aid" approach to education in that it "leaves them (the educatees) acritical and naive in the face of their world: (p. 152), possessing some information, badly assimilated, but not possessing the power to conquer that world, intellectually or actually without ongoing aid.

If education is the relation between Subjects in the knowing process mediated by the knowable object, in which the educator permanently reconstructs the act of knowing, it must then be problem-posing. The task of the educator is to present to the educatees as a problem the content which mediates them, and not to discourse on it, give it, extend it, or hand it over, as if it were a matter of something already done, constituted, completed, and finished. In the act of problematizing the educatees, the educator is

problematized too. Problematization is so much a dialectic process that it would be impossible for anyone to begin it without becoming involved in it. No one can present something to someone else as a problem and at the same time remain a mere spectator of the process. S/he will be problematized even if methodologically speaking s/he prefers to remain silent after posing the problem, while the educatees capture, analyze, and comprehend it. . . . Educators. . . "re-enter into" the object of the problem through the "entering into" of the educatees. This is why educators continue to learn. (pp. 152-153)

The term "problematizing" here means more than asking questions, although it carries that meaning also. "The educator is problematized". . . He or she is concerned not only with questions like: "What is there about this situation that is a problem for us? Where precisely is the contradiction?" but also with the problematic nature of all knowledge. Presumably people begin to develop a habit of mind that questions the given in every situation, analyzing it according to structures that are not immediately self-evident. Asking the right questions is a way of structuring understanding and imposes upon reality a set of values which have demonstrated cogency and consistency in prior scrutiny.

However, it is necessary to beware of the mechanistic gimmick of adopting a "problem-posing" or dialogical method without any radical change of sociological substructures. A technicist solution is ineffectual for long-term education. Further, their sociohistorical situation renders the peasants apathetic to dialogue and the situation impervious to "problem-solving techniques."

Their existential experience is constituted with the limits of anti-dialogue (essential, not accidental),

of a latifundiary vertical structure wherein distance, sometimes physical distance, and always social distance, renders dialogue impossible. Within similar rigid, vertical structures the consciousness of the peasant has evolved over historical time. This is the "consciousness of the oppressed" which the work of education must address. Conscientisation, change in consciousness, is effected through change in both the internal and the external conditioning environment. (pp. 120-121)

There is a further problem: dialogue and problem-posing are time consuming. To see that the time loss is worth the price we might look at education from the perspective of goals. If the object of a unit of study is that the student acquire, comprehend, and be able to apply a given set of facts, (note: this goal is an outsider decision and implies a mechanist view of training) then if the method is effective, the simple direct inculcation of the facts, with practice in their use, is the shortest route. However, if the object of a unit of study is that the student be empowered, able to deal with unforeseeable pieces of the environment by creating or choosing his own tools, and to grow in skill, analysis, decision-making and intersubjectivity, then dialogical, "slow" methods are both the goal and the only route. The differences between extension and education are less differences in method or assumptions than differences in the end desired.

Leaving aside for the moment the development of "banking education" which Freire discusses extensively in the Pedagogy, let us turn to the important concept of neutrality of educational means. It is the assumption of technological education that the skills and information "given" are necessary to development and are neutral, that values, moral positions, the uses that the information will serve, are not the business of the educator. We are reminded of the moral question raised by Macmurray with respect to the neutrality of Science. As we have just seen, to evaluate the efficiency of educational method we must look to the goal. So here education itself is a means which must direct to some end. It is not neutral since it relates to culture and inculcates a value set. If this is denied in attempts to maintain a false neutrality, the values which guide education simply go unscrutinized. Agrarian reform cannot be unaware of all the political, technical, social, religious and educational overtones of its work. (p. 134) A more fruitful conception of agrarian reform would put its maximum effort into the transformation of perceptions rather than into a mechanistic transmission of techniques.

A critical attitude toward agrarian reform with an emphasis on cultural change which recognizes the need for perceptual change (see Paulo Freire: "The Role of the Social Worker in the Process of Transformation") opens up a new and fertile field of work for the agronomist-educator. . . As agents of change together with the peasants (who themselves are agents) it is incumbent on them to enter into the process of transformation, conscientizing both the peasants and themselves at the same time. The



conscientization I shall discuss in the latter part of this work is an inter-conscientization. (p. 135)

### Relations

Education then, is communication and interconscientization.

Without a relation between subjects that know with reference to the knowable object the act of knowing would disappear. . . There is no such thing as isolated thinking. (p. 136)

. . . The thinking subject cannot think alone (without the co-participation of another subject). This co-participation of thinking Subjects in the act of thinking is communication. Thus, the object is not the end of the act of thinking but the mediator of communication. (p. 137)

Communication is manifested by linguistic signs and requires agreement on their meaning. Real agreement on meaning requires a common language and common emotional conviction which can only be achieved through dialogue. The final portion of the essay develops the characteristics of a humanizing education by criticising its opposite, Extension, once more. Humanizing education is dialogical, dynamic, relationship-building, co-creative of knowledge in teacher and learner. It becomes critical consciousness when it

goes beyond the mere apprehension of the presence of a fact and places it critically in the system of relations within the totality in which it exists. (p. 148)



## The Pedagogy of the Oppressed

In the evolution of Freire's thought the Pedagogy of the Oppressed provides the reflection on action that is integral to praxis. The philosophical postulates emerging from this reflection have been extracted and presented in summary form in the first section of this paper. The question that confronts Freire is how to achieve liberation, the conscientizing implicitly required by the sociological and philosophical perspectives he has espoused. The question that confronts us is how well did he succeed in his literacy methods, and what are the dimensions of literacy as he understood it. Praxis is the mode of everything that Freire does and writes, reflection in and on action to reconstruct one's world. Philosophical reflections, then, developed out of action and terminated in new action.

In the Pedagogy, the new education Freire outlines emerges as revolutionary. It is important to realize that he is not talking about cosmetics: substitutions of discussion for lecture, or greater attention to language and cultural relevance. He is talking about political and economic literacy. The Pedagogy of the Oppressed explores the critical divergence of its basic principles from those implied in existing pedagogical practice. These are deeper issues than how to implement his literacy methods. In fact, these methods could be prescriptive, and not really consonant with Freire's philosophy of dialogue.

To demonstrate the critical divergence of the Pedagogy will demand considerable time. At this point, let me give only three generic examples. Existing practice in education is based on this society as we know it, as a given, and socializes the student to it. Existing practice is based on the assumed superiority of teachers to students, at least with respect to the teacher's discipline. Existing practice is based on ultimate decision-making tied to power--

the power of authority with respect to adults over youth;

the power of ownership of the institution with respect to institutions over young and older adults;

the power of government with respect to adults over adults.

Freire claims that the first practice leads to domestication, the second to manipulation, and the third to repression. All three have high potential for oppression.

The Pedagogy is revolutionary both in its assumptions and in the potential for violent revolution of its implications.<sup>8</sup> However the book is obscure, in the original and still more in translation, and it is possible to read it without recognizing its departure from both classical Marxism and American humanism. American humanism says that human persons have the inner power to become uniquely great and self-determined individuals. But the concern of the humanist not to interfere with that uniqueness or to impose values leads to a liberalism which relegates values and attitudes to the strictly private domain. It guards no man's rights because it fears to set limits in the name of the common good.<sup>9</sup>

Classical Marxism assumes that the socialist revolution, when it comes, takes place in a mature bourgeois society, amidst an abundance of goods, an abundance of means of production, of human skills, tools, consumption, and human culture, in a society where political freedom is taken for granted. (Deutscher, 1971) The revolution in underdeveloped countries is a revolution of scarcity, scarcity of almost everything. Scarcity engenders fear, inequality, political and intellectual constraint, and the revolution is strongly shaped by the need to win political freedom. This is the world out of which and to which Freire speaks. However, Freire is Marxist in his understanding of the essential contradiction of Western Society: the increasingly social character of the processes of production

and the antisocial character of private property. He does not dwell on this point but on the exploitation that enables some to accumulate private property at the expense of others.

Much of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed is repetition or amplification of principles already discussed by Freire in other writings. In fact, the book might be called "Reflections on a Critical Pedagogy," but it takes a far more radical turn than other publications (radical = going to the roots).

Three important concepts stand out:

- that oppression is first and foremost in the mind and liberation must begin there. This is why there needs to be a pedagogy.
- that conscientização cannot be complete until there are structural (political and economic) changes which make possible a human, self-determining mode of existence for all men. This is why revolution is implied.
- and that the work of liberation exacts a price that is nothing less than total commitment.

Freire is not merely philosophizing or playing idea games (Pedagogy, pp. 34, 47, 52, 54). The price of "helping" the oppressed is sharing their lot with a commitment to whatever cost is necessary. Notions of commitment and its cost appear more and more dominantly in what I have called Freire's "mystical" writings.

The Pedagogy is divided into four sections. In the first Freire introduces most of the concepts to be discussed throughout the essay, explains the nature and existence of oppression, his own philosophical stance with respect to human beings, dehumanization, and the "man-world" entity. The role of the oppressed in their own liberation, and the difficulties presented by the "internalization of the oppressor" make evident the need for a pedagogy. Other concepts treated are false consciousness and the subject/object duality, the role of education in liberation and transformation, violence, the centrality of dialogue and the nature of revolutionary leadership.

The role of education in both oppression (domestication) and liberation is the content of Chapter 2. This section presents an extensive development of teacher-student relationships, dehumanizing education, which Freire calls depository or "banking" education, and its opposite: "problem-posing" education.

The philosophy and method of problem-posing education is the content of the third, and perhaps most provocative section of the Pedagogy. Praxis and the power of the word: "naming," are explored and a methodology for literacy and consciousness-raising developed. The entire essay closes with a fourth chapter which is an extensive discussion of dialogue, dialogical and antialogical action, and cultural revolution.

In the Pedagogy Freire defines dehumanization as prescription: the deprivation of the right and/or opportunity for persons to make their own



decisions, and situates the causes of dehumanization: fear of freedom (p. 31), fear of the loss of privilege (p. 29), need to have, and to have power, in order to be (pp. 30, 45) and lack of confidence in the common people (p. 46).

He describes the "screening effect" created by vested interests which cause persons to misperceive reality: not to see the oppressive structures.

(Neurotic perception, p. 37) In the course of the first chapter of the Pedagogy, he changes abruptly from a cooler language to oppressor/oppressed terminology, which in spite of his own explanations seems to give an excessively voluntaristic tone to the actions of the "oppressors." Freire recognizes (p. 44) that "the oppressors" may in fact be caught in an oppressive structure which also oppresses them, and of which they may be unaware. In his use of the term he is speaking about an oppressor class, even while he recognizes the good will of individual oppressors who "convert" and fight beside the oppressed for their liberation (pp. 46-47). Still the terminology creates a "good guys/bad guys" mentality that can be unfortunately simplistic.<sup>10</sup> For the sake of clear reference I have continued to use the oppressor/oppressed terminology in analyzing Freire's thought, aware however of the gratuitous rhetoric it introduces. I will have occasion to return to this point in discussing the "leading power" of the word.

### Oppression

As we have seen "Any situation in which A objectively exploits B

or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression." (p. 40) Freire identifies prescription as a basic element in the oppressive relationship.

One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is prescription. Every prescription represents the imposition of one man's choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the man prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness. (p. 31)

This false consciousness destroys the effectiveness of any stimulus for action. (Freire, 1970) False consciousness results whenever there is internalization of the oppressor's mentality within the oppressed. For example, generations of sitting in the back of busses and living only in certain sections can be so internalized by members of certain races that they come to consider it wrong to do otherwise. Again, many women in America consider their proper role that of housekeeping and mothering, without realizing that they have internalized a cultural stereotype ascribed to them from outside.

The oppressed suffer from the duality. . . within. They are at one and the same time, themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness (values and goals? or prescriptions? Ed. note) they have internalized. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting him; between human solidarity or alienation, between following prescriptions or having choices, between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or

being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account. (p. 33)

The mentality of oppression affects the oppressed in other ways. As indicated in the schema on page 45, it provides the only model the oppressed have for being human. Hence, initially at least, the oppressed as they become more aware of an unjust system, do not desire to change the system but to reverse roles within it.

It is not to become free men that they want agrarian reform, but in order to acquire land and thus become landowners--or more precisely bosses over other workers. (p. 30)<sup>11</sup>

The internalized oppressor also causes people to internalize that they are inadequate. They fear freedom which implies personal choice, because they fear the risks (p. 32) and responsibility of autonomy.

The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. . . (and) is the indispensable condition of the quest for human completion. (p. 31)

To overcome the mentality of oppression and the external reality of a dehumanizing situation, oppressed people need "critically to recognize the causes" of the oppressive situation and to find a group with the same commitment as themselves to work for change. (p. 32) Initially their

struggle will be a threat both to oppressor and to their own companions who can fear still greater repression because of it.

The first purpose of the pedagogy is the liberation of human consciousness, of both oppressor and oppressed, from the myths created by living in an oppressive structure.<sup>12</sup> Some of these myths are:

-that men, in principle equal, are in fact unequal in ability and right to determine their world.

-that it is better to keep people "happily unaware" of the injustices of which they are victims and about which they can do nothing. (p. 20)

-that the models of an educated man, a capitalist system, and a developed or modernized nation imported from oppressor groups or nations are the only right models, and are good for all men.

So the battle against oppression must be joined on two levels: the level of the mind--and this is the work of education; and the level of economic and socio-political change--and this is the level of revolution. That there can and must be a non-violent cultural revolution, in Freire's argument (see Pedagogy, Chapter 4) does not preclude the possibility, in some cases the necessity, to "take away from the oppressor his power to oppress." (pp. 40-41) Freire does not, as we have seen, explicitly advocate violence, or rather, he takes refuge in the fact that violence is already present, though unacknowledged.



Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons-- not by those who are oppressed, exploited, and unrecognized. (p. 41)

It is the educator who must assist at the growth in awareness of existing violence and injustice for all those caught in an oppressive system:

The pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument for their critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization. Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one. The man who emerges is a new man, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all men. (p. 33)

Here, it appears that Freire is speaking of a classical revolution and a classless society, not merely of a process of internal liberation. True revolution presupposes liberation.<sup>13</sup> If it does not deal with the presence of the internalized oppressor, it will fail as a revolution.

Resolution of the oppressor-oppressed contradiction indeed implies the disappearance of the oppressors as a dominant class. (p. 42)

Marx' thesis: that change in economic structures precedes change in consciousness, is evident here. Until the oppressiveness of an oppressive system is destroyed, there can be no liberation. Since it is the attitudes of human beings which perpetuate oppressive structures, it might seem



conceivable that education, without revolution, could change such structures. But it is Freire's premise that there is no valid reflection without preceding and accompanying actions: i.e., without praxis. In this light the Pedagogy seems to be a clear call to revolutionary action.

The pattern for the educational work is laid out by the necessity for those involved to see "the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform." (p. 34) But this perception alone will not effect liberation.

This perception is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for liberation; it must become the motivating force for liberating action. Nor does the discovery by the oppressed that they exist in dialectical relationship to the oppressor, as his antithesis--that without them the oppressor could not exist--in itself constitute liberation. The oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enlists them in the struggle to free themselves. (p. 34)

This demands a radicalization of the oppressed and of those others, formerly members of oppressor groups, in sympathy with them. Radicalization involves commitment to the position one has chosen and ever greater engagement to transform concrete, objective reality. (p. 21)

The radicalization required of the individual from another class, who would join the struggle, is solidarity with the oppressed.

Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture. (p. 34)

Since the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is established in concrete reality, the "resolution of this contradiction must be objectively verifiable" (p. 35) in the transformation of that concrete reality. This maintains the reflection/action dialectic called praxis and combats the

subjective immobility which would divert the  
recognition of oppression (in)to patient waiting  
for oppression to disappear of itself.

Without "making real oppression more oppressive still by adding to it the realization of oppression" there can be no authentic praxis. (p. 37)

### The Pedagogy

One of the means for the internalization of the existing myths of a society is our present mode of education. A large portion of Chapter 2 of the Pedagogy is devoted to depository or "banking" education. This name for educational methods is used to show that the student is considered a spatialized, empty vessel, into which the teacher makes deposits of "knowledge" which can be withdrawn at certain times (examinations). Freire first points out the subject/object dichotomy implied: the teacher is a person, a subject, who knows, decides, and teaches. The student is an object, a passive empty container who receives and stores. We have already seen that in Freire's analysis the result is not "knowledge"--since knowing requires a dynamic co-creating of what is known. Yet the context (not the contents) is internalized. I, the student, am inferior, a thing, to be decided for, taught and led.

In opposition to this method, Freire advocates problem-posing education: problematization which we have already discussed. In the culture circles, the content of the curriculum is drawn from the daily life of the people. But Freire implies that within so-called "school" disciplines and situations, problem-posing education can elicit the relevant core from the irrelevant information. Further, it respects the human dignity of the student and involves him/her in the dynamics of inquiry, teaching and learning. Freire employs barbarisms such as educator-educatee, and educatee-educator to indicate that there are in this system no "teachers" and "students" but co-learners in dialogue. There is, however, a role for the teacher: to catalyze the questioning, to present his/her own reflections as one of the objects for consideration, to prepare materials to assist students to penetrate more deeply the challenge of the reality under consideration. But not to decide exclusively what is to be considered, nor why, nor what the "right" outcomes are. Teachers are also learners in an open-ended exploration.

This chapter seems to be a diversion in the forward flow of Freire's writings. It presents, in fact, additional data on the dehumanizing potential of existing educational practice, but its "school" applications of problem-

posing distract from the political and directional consciousness-raising of the rest of the Pedagogy.

This direction is established again in the discussion of the Word, naming, praxis and dialogue found in the remaining chapters. The somewhat simplistic presentation of problem-posing given above might lead one to believe that it is equivalent to the familiar "inquiry" methods in education. However, a consultation of the text shows that in adult education at least, it is far more complex, critical and committed. One of the still unanswered questions about Freire's intent is how far down into the earlier years of a child's education do/should political and economic organizers for educational methods reach. The reader is referred again to Part I, Chapter 4, for a detailed summary of the methodology not repeated here.

There are several assumptions implicit in Freire's discussion of existing and ideal pedagogy. These are basic to his theory of knowledge and, necessarily, to his theory of action.

1. Man's mode of knowing reality is by interaction with it, not contemplation of it.
2. Knowledge is not an absolute because reality is not fixed; it is a process.
3. Knowledge is a resolution of opposites in dialectic interaction.
4. What, and only what a person acts on, that she/he knows.

5. Knowledge is the perception of reality, dialogically arrived at, between two or more persons, and verified by action.
6. Thus knowledge (a theory) is continually modified by the validation or absence of validation of the hypotheses it points to.
7. Knowledge necessarily leads to action. (pp. 33, 37)

Present day pedagogy, insofar as it is narrative implies that knowledge also is reified, a thing which can be packaged and transmitted. The narrative is untruthful (p. 61) because the "deposits" contain contradictions and because reality is described. The possibility of clear description indicates that reality itself is fixed, static, and predictable.

The result of a banking attitude toward the student and knowledge, is increased nonhumanness and passivity for the student, conformity to the reified world which he/she absorbs, and dehumanization for the teacher as well who never comes to know truth: i. e., reality as it is (in process). Hence, out of touch with truth, the teacher cannot be intentional or transforming of that reality.

Even the words used to transfer knowledge become denatured, no longer instruments of power, or creative of change (at least of change in consciousness, which is liberation) but instead are tokens of pre-digested, non-active symbolizations called "facts." The teacher is



acting, but not humanly, because human action is knowledge-based, intentional and predictive of change.

This type of education is in the moral, not amoral, order: with its morality ranging from

- evil: if frustrating the creativity and transforming the natural inquiry of the student mind is deliberate; or if adaption is promoted, the better to dominate;
- to -criminal neglect: if the educator has failed to reflect critically on his/her practice, since both training and position posit reflection;
- to -blind tool-ship of the institution: there where institutionalization operates the work of oppression, in spite of the good will of some individuals
- to -total ignorance of the effects of his/her action. This last makes the teacher equivalent to the most "submerged" peasant.

The assumption under this aspect of Freire's critique of educational practice is that education as such is a process of inquiry. (p. 58) His criticism of the standard methodology underscores the obvious reifications, the lack of inquiry and the substitution of a teacher-student polarity for a true dialectic. It assumes that knowledge is only of the past and, like the past, is wholly determinate.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, Freire assumes that the goal of education is the development of critical consciousness. (p. 60) Oppression is first of all a state of consciousness; the essence of the humanization of education is related to

- a changed concept of the nature of reality (as process), of knowledge (process) and of the human person (process with power, "ever becoming more than he is").
- a changed concept of the dynamic tension between self and other, as creative of the person.
- a changed concept of the function of time in the determinate (past) versus indeterminate (future) world, and its relation to freedom and power to determine the future.

The content of a liberating pedagogy is the historical situation in which people find themselves and their perception of that situation. To arrive at assessments of the people's initial perception, and to bring them to perceive their own perceptions, Freire uses projective materials.

In all the stages of decoding, men exteriorize their view of the world; in the way they think about the world their generative themes may be found. (p. 97)

The possibility for manipulation by the leaders is enormous if the educator begins to shift his view from the themes to the people or tries to insert themes he/she thinks they should discover. Freire holds that there are no pre-determined themes apart from the concrete "men-world" relationships. Hence, in theory at least, there can be no mapping of the itinerary of thematic investigation in advance, beyond that of the sparse procedural steps given in the Pedagogy and in Education for Critical Consciousness.

The development of thematic investigation described in Chapter 3 of the Pedagogy, although involving the people in dialogue, places the planning and direction of the entire project in the hands of outsiders, the "experts." This seems to be prescriptive and in contradiction to Freire's position that the oppressed must undertake the work of their own liberation (Ch. I, 4). This is the crux and challenge of the Pedagogy.

The task which the Pedagogy sets itself is to evolve a mode of education capable of dealing with the need on the part of the people so recently, or still, submerged in a semi-intransitive consciousness, so that they may become aware of their oppression, and of the necessity to achieve internal and external freedom. Yet this pedagogy must be respectful and dialogical, not manipulative, depository or prescriptive. To develop it several questions can no longer be avoided.

1. Who will be the agents of the new order to be achieved by the struggle against oppression? Those who enjoy the goods of an oppressive structure have too much to lose to undertake its overthrow (pp. 42-44) and are often unaware of its oppressiveness. The oppressed, who have the sensitizing and motivating action of misery, also have the freedom to work for change, once they have extrojected the values and point of view of their oppressors.

Those who recognize, or begin to recognize themselves as oppressed must be among the developers of this pedagogy. (p. 39)

Extrojecting the oppressor housed within is a necessary first step. As long as the oppressed are seen or think of themselves as objects, a thing or a category, or a class (the poor), they are dehumanized. Freedom and responsibility require that they be subjects and that they act.

The oppressed, submerged in the situation must get a new perception on the situation, see it as an entity apart from themselves, but without action on that situation perception alone "will not lead to transformation of reality because it is not a true perception." (p. 37)

2. If the implementation of the pedagogy requires political and economic power, can the oppressed bring it about? By formal education, no; for systematic education "can be changed only by political power." (p. 40) Formal education conducted by those in power can only be expected to maintain the same patterns of power, and to adapt the uneducated to their oppression.

However, educational projects "can be carried out with the oppressed in the process of organizing them." Freire's culture circle method is one such project. (See Part I, Ch. 4) To achieve a new perception of their state the "oppressed must see examples of the vulnerability of the oppressor" and the transformability of the situation. Thus they can overcome magical beliefs about the oppressor's power, invulnerability, and the inevitable rightness of their victimization. (p. 51) This implies that they must engage in action which demonstrates that the oppressor is vulnerable and that the situation can be changed, however slightly.

In the first stage (of the pedagogy) the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and commit themselves to its transformation.

In the second, after the

reality of oppression has been transformed, the pedagogy . . . becomes a pedagogy of all men in the process of permanent liberation. (p. 40)

Freire softens the revolutionary implications of the above by adding that the confrontation occurs in the first stage through a

change in the way the oppressed perceive the world of oppression; in the second through the expulsion of the myths created and developed in the old order. (p. 40)

and which tend to endure into the new. "In both stages, it is always the culture of domination that is culturally confronted." (p. 40)



3. Can myths be expelled without action changing the old order? If not, these statements imply revolution. Freire notes that violence is a given of the existing order, because any coercion of the free person such that he/she cannot make significant life decisions is a situation of violence.

Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence.  
(p. 40)

Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as person.  
(p. 41)

This violence, by an action-reaction mechanism, causes and apparently justifies a violent response!

Yet is is. . . precisely in the response of the oppressed to violence of their oppressors that a gesture of love may be found. Consciously or unconsciously the act of rebellion by the oppressed (an act which is always, or nearly always, as violent as the initial violence of the oppressors) can initiate love. . . . As the oppressed, fighting to be human, take away the oppressor's power to dominate and suppress, they restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression.<sup>15</sup>

Given Freire's dialectical approach, one might expect here some attempt at synthesis of the polar opposites into a new kind of system. There is no indication in the Pedagogy of such a step.

False consciousness is not limited to the oppressed mentality. It permeates every level of an oppressive society.

Once a situation of violence and oppression has been established it engenders an entire way of life. (p. 44)

conditioning oppressors and oppressed alike, creating in the oppressor "a strongly oppressive consciousness" which without "concrete material possession of the world and of men. . . could not understand itself--could not even exist." (p. 41) The ever greater "having" of the possessing class generates myth-making words: their own "competence," "ability," "courage," "initiative," "willingness to risk," which imply that the cause of the poverty and ignorance of others is due to their incompetence and laziness. (p. 45) These myths, conditioning the mind of the oppressor, together with a desire to control, can be unsuspected and particularly dangerous, in those who leave the ranks of privilege to work for the liberation of the oppressed. (Ch. 4) They betray themselves in attitudes: fear to trust the peasants to do their own thinking, avoidance of honest dialogue with them in favor of planning for them--"later after we have educated them, they will be able to do it for themselves!" It is difficult for conditioned minds to believe in the humanness and ability of the underprivileged. (p. 46) These attitudes are the source of anti-dialogical action in those committed to change an oppressive system, and they defeat any real systemic change.

Trusting the people is an indispensable precondition for revolutionary change.  
(p. 46)

Such converts become populist leader types--truly wanting to "help" the oppressed but acting for not with them--and so perpetuating the essence of oppression: decision by another.

The man who claims devotion to the cause of liberation yet is unable to enter into communion with the people, whom he continues to regard as totally ignorant, is grievously self-deceived.  
(p. 47)

As with the people, so with the leadership, the instrument for a change of consciousness is praxis:

Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth. Those who undergo it must take on a new form of existence; they can no longer remain as they were. Only through comradeship with the oppressed can the converts understand their characteristic ways of living and behaving which in diverse moments reflect the structure of domination. (p. 47)

Freire, opposed to any form of messianism, is committed to faith in the inner competence of oppressed peoples. He is aware that the oppressed mentality is characterized by a fatalistic docility and duality of the oppressors and that these are manifested in horizontal violence, self-deprecation and emotional dependency. His dilemma is constructing a pedagogy to change this situation yet avoid prescriptive, outsider decisions as to content, method, and values.

### Praxis, Naming and Literacy

As we have seen, Freire's work began with literacy training, a literacy whose objective was that men and women should name, and so control their world. By naming, Freire means both reflection and action for change. There is an ambiguity in the concept of naming as Freire uses it. Sometimes the term is equivalent to praxis; sometimes it is restricted to analyses, or even to labeling. In treating of the "culture of silence" he implies that naming is constructive of intelligence and "being robbed of the power to say their own word" is to be deprived of understanding.

To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action reflection.

But while to say the true word--which is work, which is praxis--is to transform the world, saying that word is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every man. . . .  
Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world. (p. 76)

The concept of naming as power has many echoes for linguists, educators, philosophers and psychiatrists. However, naming also could become a tool for the more effective control of one person by another.

Dialogue is an encounter among men who name the world; it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one man by another. (p. 77)

The domination implicit in dialogue, is that of the world by the dialoguers; (together, not one dominating the other). It is a conquest of the world for the liberation of men. (p. 78)

By its focus on honest collaboration and dialoguc, Freire's methodology and philosophy enhance the dignity of the oppressed. By the process of naming, acting and reflecting, people become aware of the inherent defects of an oppressive system and of their power over it. They are conscientized.

The need for conscientizing to enable the people for participatory democracy was first discussed in Education as the Practice of Liberation and is reinforced here. Education is the instrument for the people to discover that oppression is a systemic flaw, solved only by changing the system itself, if the existence of liberated persons is to be viable.

The difficulty with this whole section of the Pedagogy is the rhetoric and lack of precision. Much is suggested about the creative role of the Word, dialogue, the injustice of depriving people of their own word, the nature of praxis as naming-action, but if we ask Freire what and how to do it, there are no further details beyond the codifications and discussions of the first twenty "words" of the literacy training. Stanley has developed the implications of political literacy (1972c); Freire himself admits (1974) that his fuller development was cut off in Brazil by the coup of 1964. But the fact is that



neither here nor in later writings to we find the detail on the second level of conscientisation that his works promise.

### Dialogue and Cultural Revolution

Whether cultural or violent, revolution requires a commitment. Commitment to revolution results from conviction: that the revolution is itself pedagogical.

The closing chapter of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a lengthy development of the characteristics of cultural revolution as opposed to cultural invasion and of the utopian view of interpersonal relationships it requires. It is not possible to teach or lead without a relationship of love, a relationship which places one at the "other" end of the self-other continuum. The cultural revolution will be characterized by dialogue, commitment, cooperation and love, as opposed to manipulation, sloganizing, "deposition, regimentation, and prescription which Freire says are the characteristics of cultural invasion. All of this seems rather airy and abstract until we realize that cultural invasion is the term he applies to most of our traditional modes of education, development and assistencialism. He repeats that the manipulated consciousness under such regimes has at best only a semblance of choice: a selection among those choices allowed by the dominators. In fact, people who have been long prescribed to, will choose according to the will of their rulers, even when there is no coercion to do so.

On the other hand, true revolutionary leadership requires nothing less than an abandonment of self-interest and personal gain for the sake of the collectivity. The level of communication is such that the people themselves, coordinated, stimulated, perhaps challenged and directed, but never superseded by the praxis of leadership (p. 120) commit themselves to transform their world.

Dialogue with the people is radically necessary for every authentic revolution. This is what makes it a revolution, not a coup. (p. 122)

Dialogue corresponds to a radical need of persons: "beings who cannot be truly human apart from communication." (p. 123) It requires a solidarity witnessed by "humble, loving, courageous encounter with the people" which is necessary for both leaders and led.

When men avoid encounter they become inflexible, and treat others as mere objects. (p. 124)

Dialogical encounter can take place only between person "in communion" who liberate each other. (p. 128)

But the Utopian vision cannot become a reality unless there has first been an internal liberation of the dual consciousness housed in all of us. If one comes to power, still seeing self and the situation as before (seeing injustice as just) the same injustice will go on but with a new person in the ruling role. This, Freire comments, is at the root of the revolutions "manquees." They failed because there was indeed no inner revolution. Liberation is the inner revolution by which

- a) the oppressed mentality comes to see the situation and the self in it;
- b) to see self as able to transform it, with others; and
- c) to commit itself, at whatever cost, to this work of transformation,

which begins with transforming consciousness and with action on situations, and is continually and simultaneously reflective on both.

To be human is to communicate, and communication is essential to revolution. Any liberating action not sustained by, and promoting dialogue is self-contradictory. It is for this reason that Freire discriminates cultural invasion from cultural revolution completely on the basis of dialogue.

Communication is so essential that to lose, avoid, or frustrate it is to dehumanize. (p. 124) However, dialogic encounter cannot take place between antagonists (p. 124); it takes place only between equals. Hence, revolutionary leaders cannot carry on the revolution for the people, but only with them, on a footing of equality and mutual decision, and their own ability to think truly, depends upon ongoing dialogue.

If the revolutionary leaders deny this right to the people (implicitly deny their capacity to raise their own level of consciousness by reflecting on the causes of their existing reality) they impair their own capacity to think. . . correctly. (p. 126)

But Freire goes further. To work for liberation one must identify with the dominated; he/she must "die" as a dominator or uninvolved person (and institutionally, an uninvolved person is a dominator) and be "reborn" as one of the oppressed.

There have been revolutionary leaders who do not believe that dialogue is possible prior to taking power. They intend to give the opportunity for dialogue later. But dialogue after the taking of power is a sort of luxury, not a means to authentic revolution. Such a leader misunderstands revolution as education, and instead visualizes a "new education" to be established "after the revolution." This is a return to the view of education and knowledge, of teacher/student, which is characteristic of the world of oppression, a world which the revolution is supposed to change. It evidences the dualism still in the mind of the leaders.

We have said that only the oppressed can carry out the work of liberation. However, the entire discussion on the leadership of revolution raises questions about this. The revolution, Freire says, begins as a social entity within the oppressor society. It was also Marx's view that only the fully mature bourgeois capitalist society is ready for the socialist revolution.

(Deutscher, 1971) Here occurs the first change of consciousness and the dramatic change in act of those who cross over to the ranks of the oppressed. Any cultural action must correspond to the potentialities of that society. The potentialities of any social entity are to develop (be transformed) by interplay of its own contradictions. No external intervention is effective except in the measure that it matches with these potentialities and accentuates these contradictions. The newness of the revolution is generated within the old oppressive society before the moment in time of the taking of power. (p. 132) If not, there is a coup, but not a revolution. The oppressive structures have to go if revolution is to be achieved. In many places (Ladoc, 1973) Freire has claimed that the whole fabric of capitalist society is essentially competitive and dominating and is incapable of sustaining the kind of dialogic, cooperative, loving humanism essential to a non-oppressive society. The revolution is both interior and exterior cultural change, through praxis, and is ongoing, with or without the moment of a takeover of power. Only if this cultural change is indeed ongoing can it prevent the bureaucratization of the revolution after the political taking of power. In other words, as Freire indicates in Chapter 4, cultural revolution is the matrix; military revolution is one point

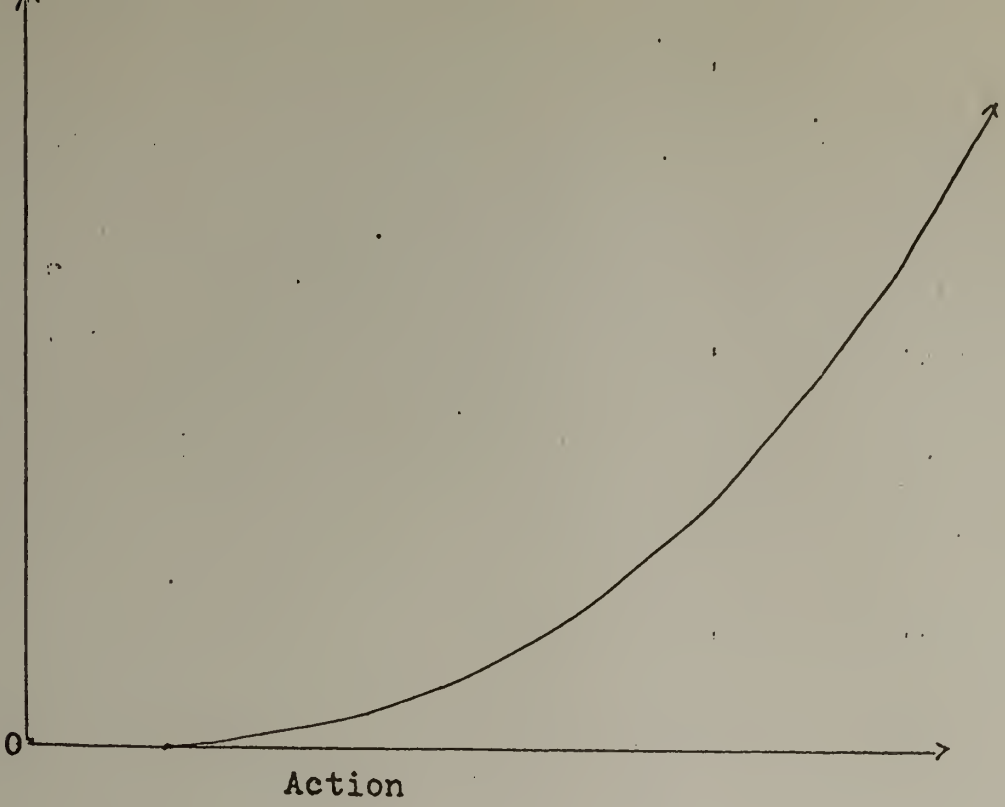


of intersection. One might represent the concept on a three-dimensional graph (a two-dimensional attempt is offered below) where growing consciousness in the oppressed increases with action to promote social and political power for the oppressed. The increased action, in turn, causes growing oppressiveness (repressiveness) in the actions of the dominant group. At some critical point the moment of revolution is reached. It is (theoretically) possible that the critical temperature might never be reached and the axis of reactionary efforts on the part of the dominators be reduced to zero without military action. The ambivalence about violent versus non-violent revolution in Freire's writings might be clarified if we look at the unlikeliness of zero reactionism with a mathematical model. (Figure 2)

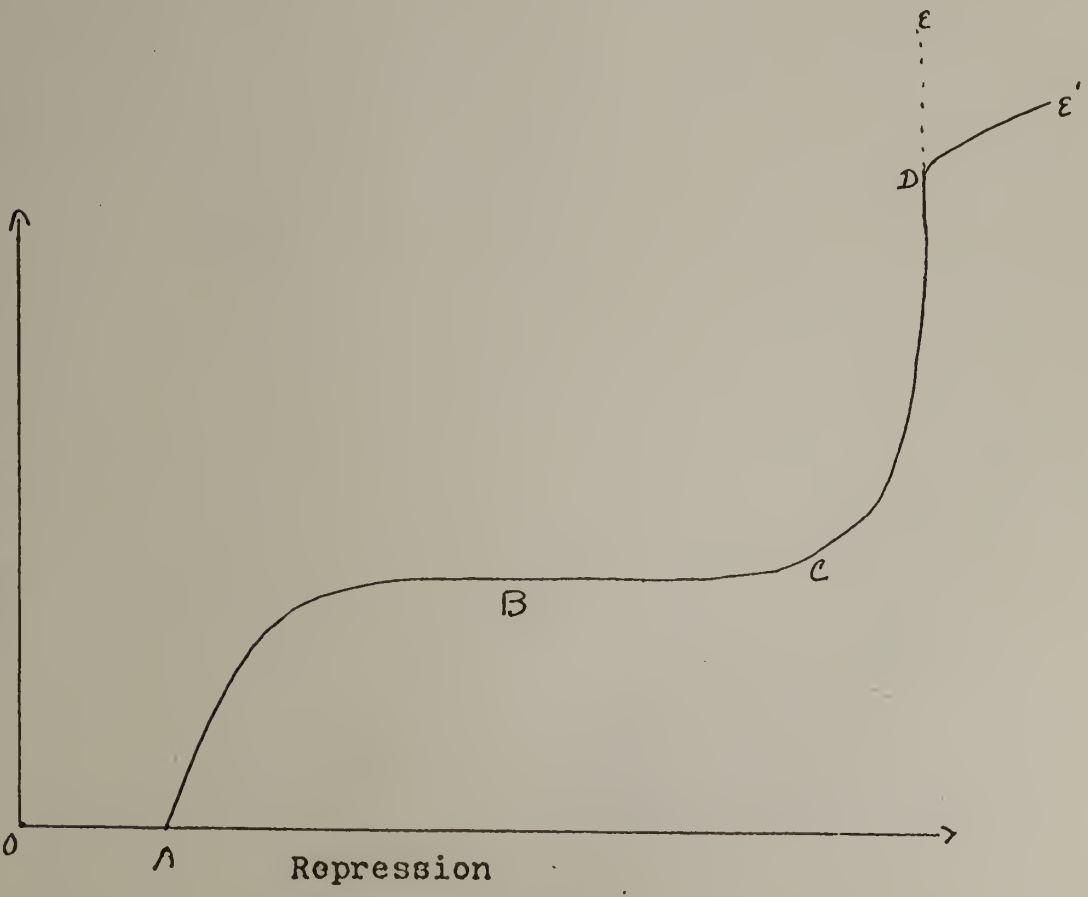
However, the important point Freire is making here is that unless there is growing consciousness and growing dialogical commitment to love on the part of the revolutionaries, there will simply be a line-up between antagonists: dominated and dominator, with the power belonging to one or another according to the moment of the revolution, but with no change in the oppressiveness of the situation. The history of revolutions in modern times and of communism as it is found in Russia shows that these revolutions resulted in systems as competitive, prescriptive and oppressive as the ones overthrown.

On the other hand, cultural invasion, like cultural revolution, is also cultural action. The differences lie in the view of the human person, the

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### Explanation of Graph

Repression has existed. At some point (A), praxis begins and when it reaches a certain level stimulates greater repression, to such a degree that action may be brought almost to a stand-still.

(B) However with increasing repression a critical point (C) is reached. Increased repression and abortive actions now achieve a breakthrough of understanding and a leap forward (C-D) into revolutionary action.

C-D represents the revolution, where external oppression is neutralized, and action is dramatically effective.

The internalized oppressor still present in the revolutionaries probably will prevent complete disappearance of repressive actions, although now coming from a different source and so the curve will probably follow D-E' instead of D-E.

view of the relationship between persons, the view of the self, the view of society as competitive or cooperative, and given these views, in the purposes for the cultural action. One's views are created and refined by one's agency and hence are interdependent with the world in which one lives, and with its malleability to change.<sup>18</sup>

Cultural revolution aims at development of individuals and transformation of the whole society. It becomes cultural invasion when the locus for the pattern of the transformation is located outside the being transformed. Then there is change, modernization, but not development. (p. 160) (See for example, A.I. D. and other kinds of "development" of Latin American countries by Western powers.) If invaders and revolutionary leaders act in the same way, (act for the people instead of with them) their objectives soon become the same, whatever their initial differences in intention. To repeat: the constitutive elements of a true revolutionary action are dialogue, cooperation, unity and communication. Cultural revolution, Freire claims, integrates the values and world-view of the leaders with those of the people to produce a new model, belonging to both and resolving the contradictions between them. (p. 183) This still allows the leadership to go beyond the rather limited aspirations of a partially submerged people, without setting those aspirations aside. By accepting the desires of the people and bringing them into the perspective of a larger problem, they conscientize both the people and

themselves. (p. 185) For example, Freire cites the workers' desire for higher wages, which was brought into the larger context of the problems of the ownership of labor.

To achieve critical consciousness of the fact that it is necessary to be "the owner of one's own labor," that labor "constitutes part of the human person," and that "a human being can neither be sold nor can he sell himself" is to go a step beyond the deception of palliative solutions. It is to engage in authentic transformation of reality in order, by humanizing that reality, to humanize men. (p. 185)



The Pedagogy: A Summary

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a process which makes the condition, existence, and causes of oppression objects of reflection by the oppressed, and through them, by all men. It is a conscientizing process carried on by problematizing a situation (questioning it, ferreting out together its contradictions and the tasks they imply) in dialogue. Dialogue such as this, and the whole conscientizing process, rests on certain assumptions:

- that all human beings have the ability to understand their situation, get distance on it, and act to change it.
- that men and women learn together with others by experimental action, on whose results they again reflect.
- that men and women are conditioned by previous historical experiences and usually need a catalyst to arrive at new insights into a situation.
- that this catalyst may be another person (educator) or a change in the concrete context (movement by a member of oppressor class into context of the oppressed) but usually requires both. Education is a question of praxis.
- that to be human is to be in control of one's own life, to be a center of decision-making.
- that dehumanizing others by preventing their decision-making also dehumanizes the oppressor.
- that if a situation is evil, (unjust, oppressive) revolution is justified to change it.
- that the situation of oppression, whereby some men are treated as things or animals, is evil.
- that the first unfreedom is in the mind:

- (1) of the oppressed, who have internalized the oppressor, fear freedom, are not convinced that anything can be done, nor that they have any power to do it
- (2) of the oppressors, who have identified their being with having, mythicized the nature and condition of the oppressed, fear change and loss, and are themselves oppressed in a variety of ways.

-that external conditions: economic, social, and political, historically condition thinking, so that the liberation within men's minds cannot take place without external transformation of the conditions which perpetuate oppressive contexts, or the oppressive nature of the context.

-that the process of liberation is a scientific process. Activism, excessive objectivity without reflection, is irresponsible; verbalism, excessive subjectivity without action, is ineffectual. Only praxis, integration of reflection and action, leads to liberation.

-that praxis inevitably leads to liberation if there is commitment to stay with the ideals of dialogue and communion, and pay the price: not be bought off by the lure of power or position.

The key ideas of the Pedagogy are dehumanization, internalization of the oppressor, liberation by praxis, dialogue and communion. Dehumanization appears in common educational practice as "banking education." It rests on the subject/object dichotomy of teachers and students, the concept of knowledge as a thing rather than a process, and the assumptions of ignorance, passivity, spatialized emptiness with respect to students who must receive all knowledge from the knowing Subject, the teacher. Based on the unspoken assumption that students are things, it succeeds in making them things as well as in providing a channel for the transmission of other myths by the dominator group.

In contrast to banking education, Freire places problem-posing education and later shows it to be part of a larger reflective process called praxis. It restores to the individual the right to "say his own word" and be actively a part of the co-knowing process. Praxis, or the naming-acting-reflecting cycle, in Freire's theory is both the source of understanding of the object-world and the means of transforming it. The centrality of dialogue in this process has certain implications of respect, mutual dependence, trust and love, and leads him into a discussion of cultural invasion versus cultural synthesis. These are characterized by what he calls anti-dialogical and dialogical action respectively. Anti-dialogic, prescriptive and authoritarian action is engaged in by those whose aim is conquest and control, preservation of the status quo. Leaders whose desire is to help the people and correct an oppressive situation, however, may also fall into this trap if they cannot trust the people and attempt to think and plan for them, rather than with them. In both cases these attitudes lead to manipulation, sloganizing and depositing, an attempt on the part of the leaders to prescribe attitudes and regiment behaviors. For those whose aim is "helping," this is done in the belief that the people do not understand what will be best for them. Anti-dialogic action is characteristic also of those who enter an under-developed country to promote "development" for their own gain: sources of raw materials and markets for goods.

Freire calls the action of all of these cultural invasion, for they disregard the culture, language and technology of the people and substitute

their own in the name of progress or modernization. (See also "Extension or Communication.") Dialogic action, as Freire sees it, is the only action open to the revolutionary leadership. It must be characterized by cooperation, dialogue, organization, and unity in the work of liberation. If it is, it will become cultural revolution. If it is not, it will be oppressive in its turn. Unless cultural revolution occurs, classical or military revolution will make no real difference to the victims of oppression--and these victims are found at every social level in the system. Cultural revolution is the objective of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

Cultural Action for Freedom (1971)

Neutrality

The monograph, Cultural Action for Freedom, includes two essays published during Freire's Harvard period, 1969-70. Both contain materials which have appeared in large part in previous publications but they have been subjected here to a re-reflection. In the first essay: "The Adult Literacy Process as Cultural Action for Freedom," the author establishes more firmly the non-neutrality of education, and reiterates that materials and methodology imply and inculcate a value set on the unaware, a value set which evolves from a philosophy of man.

Only someone with a mechanistic mentality, which Marx would call "grossly materialistic" could reduce adult literacy learning to a purely technical action . . . Technique itself, as an instrument of men in their orientation in the world is not neutral. (p. 6)

One of the means by which education is rendered non-neutral, is the metaphors which are used and which imply certain assumptions: the digestive metaphor: the learner is "undernourished; illiteracy is a "poison herb to be eradicated," a "disease" to be cured; words become "bread of the spirit" which illiterates are to "eat" and "digest." (p. 8) Closely related to the nutritionist approach is the banking metaphor described in Chapter II of the Pedagogy. Here words and facts are "deposited" in the "empty" students.



In both, Freire illustrates the power of words to create as well as to lead. He is concerned with the alien content of texts, the insulting tone for the adult learner of totally irrelevant materials, and the myths created by the materials: myths implying that literacy will automatically lead to jobs, prosperity and dignity.

Analysis of these texts reveals. . . a simplistic vision of men, of their world, of the relationship between the two, and of the literacy process which unfolds in that world. (p. 10)

### Violence

A second clarification in Cultural Action for Freedom is that of violence and marginality. The illiterates of Latin America are "marginados"-- marginal men, at the periphery of society.

If then, marginality is not by choice, (and how could it be with all it implies of hunger, disease) marginal man has been expelled from and kept outside the system and is therefore the object of violence. (p. 10)

If marginality is not seen by educators as the result of structural violence, notions of integrating the illiterate, changing him, "curing" his sickness of illiteracy by the "medicine" of literacy are reinforced. But, if the cause of marginality is expulsion, violence, the cure must attack the cause. As we have seen, these beings are not "marginal"; they are within the structure of

society but dependent: "beings-for-others," representatives of the dominated strata of society and in "opposition to those who treat them as things."

Alienated men, they cannot overcome their dependency by incorporation into the very structure responsible for their dependency.  
(p. 11)

The task is not mechanistic adaptation to be achieved by a technical, "neutral" education:

Teaching men to read and write is no longer a question. . . of memorizing an alienated word but a difficult apprenticeship in naming the world.

By changing the view of the illiterate from that of "marginal man" to that of oppressed men within a system, one changes the task of the teacher and makes the literacy training itself a step in demythologizing the world. (p. 12)

### Naming

The third major concept in Cultural Action for Freedom is that of the word: the role of language in leading thought. "Naming" is a concept used throughout Freire's writings, and always seems to imply more than the simple meaning of the word in the given context.

Language is "profoundly significant"; the human word is word-in-action, powerful to express and create. Because of this, the object of the literacy process must include not only the man-world relationships and a perception of them but the dialectic between the products of human activity which transform human beings in an "inversion of praxis." Speaking the

word is both a process and a right: a right to express self, to express the world, and to create the world. That is, to decide, choose, and participate in history. De facto denial of this right has resulted for oppressed peoples in the culture of silence already discussed in Part I. "The fact that human beings, (even if literate) are alienated from power is responsible for their silence." (p. 13) They do not know that the concept of their inferiority is a myth nor do they know that their enforced silence is due to the fact that "their work does not belong to them." (p. 13) Praxis is more than a linear process of reflection-action-reflection; more than a human process of reflective action.

Action upon an object must be critically analyzed in order to understand both the object itself and the understanding one has of it. (p. 13)

. . . for the learner to know what he did not know before, he must engage in an authentic process of abstraction by means of which he can reflect on the action-object whole or, more generally, on forms of orientation in the world. (p. 13)

To repeat, reality is never the objective datum alone but includes one's perception of it, and it is on this that man must learn to reflect.

The first context for this reflection theoretically and ideally is the school where teachers and students dialogue together. The second context is the real situation "the social reality in which men exist." (p. 14) In the Metodo Paulo Freire, the instrument facilitating the process of abstraction in the theoretical analysis is codification: visual representations of the themes

in the existential situation. The point of the codification, which is of course an artificial form, is to force the discussants to take distance on the object under consideration. One of the characteristics of animal existence is the inability of the animal to have any distance from the environment; its total immersion as part of the natural world. One of the characteristics of human beings who are repressed and silenced (pp. 14-15) is unawareness of the structure of the social context that keeps them submerged. The use of codifications to gain distance corresponds to the use of simulations in modern educational practice.

In decoding the codification the discussants perceive the object as a whole, then analyze it, naming its surface structure components. From this they are led by facilitator questions to decodify the second and fundamental level, the "deep structure" (Chomsky) consisting of themes, relationships and contradictions. This deeper analysis gives insight into the contradictions and the dialectic of the surface structure with the real-world context in which the discussants live. Spontaneously they recreate the Gestalt after the analysis, but this time it is a Gestalt that contains within the global view of the thing-in-the-whole, the particulars of their own place in that whole.

(pp. 14-15)

Perceiving one's present or former perceptions is an integral part of naming and praxis.



If the act of knowing is a dynamic act. . . and no knowledge is ever complete. . . then in order to know, man not only "admires" the object, but must be always "readmiring" his former "admiration." (p. 15)

And by this focus on the act of analyzing, as well as on its product, errors in perception are rectified.

One objective of the process "perceiving one's previous perceptions" is to demythologize so that the people may become aware of the values they have internalized. Since we are concerned with the leading power of the word, we must also note the potential for manipulation in the technique. The choice of theme to be codified necessarily "leads" what is discovered. For example, Freire says "Let us suppose that we were to present to groups from among the dominated classes codifications which portray their imitation of the dominator's cultural models, a natural tendency of the oppressed consciousness at any given moment." (p. 16) As a result of the decodification, the people perceive the "myth" of the absolute value of these models, and the subtle implication of the superiority of the dominator's culture. However, a different codification, it could be argued, might lead the students to "perceive" the validity of one of the models presented.

Freire's answer to this is that the themes to be codified come from the people themselves, in the form of metaphors and day-to-day preoccupations, of which they are unconscious. To assume that this is so without any projection of the listener into the themes, is to presume a facilitator



consistently listening without a personal agenda (without values?), without screening for what he/she wants to hear.

Does this imply, on the other hand, that to avoid manipulation the learner "ought to reconstruct the process of human knowing in absolute terms?" to re-invent every wheel? Freire would say no. He advocates a synthesis, achieved in dialogue, "between the educators' maximally systematized knowing and the learners' minimally systematized knowing," (p. 17) which he conceives as possible by the simple technique, consistently applied, of objectifying the real-life situation and posing as problems the contradictions evident in it. From this flows the process of Naming.

Problematizing is not the prerogative of the educator. By continuously directing the attention of the people to the problem side of a situation, moving away from a fatalistic attitude toward a task orientation, it is assumed that the process and attitude of problematizing will become a habitual mode of thought for them. Critical consciousness will be a way of life.

### Cultural Action

The direction of the decodification process to cultural themes such as the conditioning of men by the products of their action, or by the importation of foreign models, is called "cultural action." Cultural action in this case is the internalization of the dominator's values, social and cultural norms. They can only be ejected by corresponding cultural action.

As we have already seen, even if revolution were to change the super-structure of a dominated group, without cultural action at the level of the infrastructure, it would be a revolution manquée, perpetuating the same structures of domination with different occupants in the key roles. (Eliás, 1974; on Soviet capitalism. Other examples can be multiplied. See also "Extension or Communication": Chilean agrarian reform.) The instrument for cultural action is praxis, not verbal lessons or propaganda.

### Utopia

The fourth concept important in the analysis of "Cultural Action for Freedom" is that of utopia. As indicated before, the utopian vision is unreal only in the sense that it is unrealized, not that it is unrealizable. The Pedagogy has been accused of being unrealistic and unrealizable, hence utopian. This is not the sense in which Freire uses the term. By utopian he means

to be engaged in denunciation and annunciation:  
denunciation of an unjust and dehumanizing  
situation, annunciation of its transformation

and what the transform will look like.

This requires a theory of transforming action, since neither denunciation nor annunciation effects change. The effectiveness of the theory and methodology of action is the factor that saves the utopian, hope-filled pedagogy from being merely utopic arm-chair philosophizing. Unfortunately while there is

considerable data available as to the technical effectiveness of the Freirean literacy process (which is not unlike Ashton-Warner's and others) the end: literacy, is only incidental to Freire's pedagogy. There is also data as to the effectiveness of praxis and problematization to awaken awareness of unjust structural factors in one's environment. There is, as yet, very little data as to the effectiveness of this awareness in the change process--without a parallel military and social change in the power structure.

It must be recognized that the process itself, and the changes envisioned are long range. (Note: I am not sure that there has been a clear visioning of what the end-product will look like. Freire is exceedingly ambiguous in describing the classless society which might replace competitive, exploitative structures.) It has been said that the steady movement of Latin American countries toward socialism has been heavily influenced by Freire's thought. (Perez, 1971) But, in point of fact, the conscientizing process has not yet been widely implemented among the most "silenced" levels of society. It has shown marked effectiveness among the intellectuals, middle class and churchmen, to radicalize or promote reaction. (Medellin, 1972; "80 Priests" LADOC 1973; MEB 1960-70)

For Freire, utopianism is one of the descriptors of education. He does not subscribe to the thesis: the first function of education is socialization to the existing systems.

When education is no longer utopian, i.e., when it no longer embodies the dramatic unity of denunciation and annunciation, it is either because the future has no more meaning for men, or because men are afraid to risk living the future as (a) creative overcoming of the present which has become old. (p. 20)

For a pedagogy to be utopian, it must know the present reality, i.e., have at its disposal all the necessary techniques ranging from literacy methodology to the behavioral sciences. It must also have a view of the future as indeterminate, for if the future is completely contained in the present reality there is no future, but merely an extrapolation of the present; action becomes absurd since change is impossible.

The second essay in Cultural Action for Freedom: "Cultural Action and Conscientization" reflects on both philosophical and sociological aspects of Freire's thought. The chief concepts: the distinction between human and animal existence, the human power to exist, to understand the significance of human action, and to communicate; the power of consciousness to reflect upon, not merely to reflect the world, and a detailed analysis of levels of consciousness have all been discussed elsewhere. Freire claims that mechanistic objectivism, solipcism, and behaviorism, distort the human dialectic: the first posits only the world, with consciousness merely a copy of it, the second posits only consciousness, which creates reality, while behaviorism "makes men machines" (mechanistic behaviorism) or negates them altogether (logical behaviorism) "since it affirms that men's consciousness is 'merely an abstraction.'" (p. 30)



Conscientization is only viable because men's consciousness, although conditioned, can recognize that it is conditioned. (p. 30)

This recognition and the ability to imagine, in advance, the end as if already achieved enables men and women to form goals and to plan.

In re-analyzing the relationships between dependency and the culture of silence Freire notes the theoretical impossibility of a government adopting an attitude of increasing independence from external, highly technological societies, and yet continuing to maintain silence among the people within its own borders. Alternately, it is impossible for it to allow the people to emerge from silence, increasingly to participate in history, while attempting to maintain dependence of the economy on foreign powers. The historic confirmation of the incompatibility of independence and silence is found in the governments established by Quadros (Brazil, 1961) and the Peruvian military coup (1968); the consistent position of general dependence and repression is seen in the Brazilian coup (1964).

#### The Necessity of Cultural Action

The latter part of the essay is concerned with moments in the revolutionary process, and establishes the necessity of cultural action in the process of revolution.



The difficulty with the long contrast of cultural action for freedom versus cultural action for domination is the use of words like myth, slogan, manipulation, to characterize "the enemy's action" and dialogue, utopia, conscientizing, to characterize "the good side." The former "uses the communications media (and modern educational methods) to indoctrinate and dominate"; the latter uses "scientific methods" to promote conscientization for freedom. The distinctions between use and abuse of media and science could easily depend on which side they are viewed from.

However, the need to challenge one's own myths and deifications of reality, revolution or technology, is a valuable insight, as is the tendency of technology to depress critical thinking by "saving us the trouble" of problem solving. (p. 50)

Technology thus ceases to be perceived by men as one of the greatest expressions of their creative power and becomes instead a species of new divinity to which they create a cult of worship. Efficiency ceases to be identified with the power men have to think, to imagine, to risk themselves in creation, and rather comes to mean carrying out orders from above precisely and punctually. (p. 50)

Freire is not anti-technologist. He recognizes that technology and science are means necessary to human development, essential to economic growth; means which take their valuation from the end to which they are directed. However, they are not by that fact neutral, for they arise from and reveal a view of man and the world, and tend to effect what they signify: i. e., if the technology is such that

man is treated as if he were a machine, he tends to become mechanized, silenced, dehumanized.

### The Role of the Churches in Latin America

Much of the language occurring in Freire's later writings, and in the Pedagogy to describe cultural revolution is religious language. The concepts presented, while addressed to secular ends, imply a power and form of commitment usually associated with religiously oriented life-projects, the dedication of martyrs and holy men of whatever persuasion. It is Elias' opinion that the theological aspect is critical to an understanding of Freire. (Elias, 1974) This theological dimension becomes the pervasive one in publications since 1971 and in Freire's growing philosophical identification with the Theology of Liberation writings appearing in Latin America. (1973)

Two documents will serve to make these views clear: "Conscientizing as a way of Liberating," published in Contacto from a tape of a talk given in Rome in 1970, and "The Educational Role of the Churches in Latin America," published in Pasos, in October 1972.

A number of things are different in the Freire of these articles:

- the frank recognition of the relationship between his utopian vision and the Gospel message.
- the open confrontation of the Latin American Churches as

- powerful social agents: for domestication, or for liberation.
- the appeal for a new "institutionalization" of non-formal or non-institutional education.
- the almost evangelical exhortation to commitment to the work of liberation
- the articulation of the social function of the Church for Latin America (or at the very least, its equal treatment as wrong).
- the clearer articulation than heretofore of the probable need for violence.

It is in the light of these writings that the Pedagogy appears as a frankly revolutionary document; a pedagogy for effecting revolution, rather than a methodology for educating marginal people.

The talk in Rome deals again with the historical commitment to a task implied in conscientization, the utopian nature of that task of denouncing and announcing, and the implications for education for freedom (cultural action for freedom). None of these ideas is new. What is new is the frank relation of human liberation to divine salvation and the call to liberating action as a prophetic call--indeed, as the only mode in which the commitment to a transcendent reality can be lived out in the Latin American Churches today. He denounces concepts such as "God" and "heaven" if used as magical palliatives for human misery or myths to keep the oppressed patient with their

lot; denounces any view of religion which promotes fatalism or "other-world-ism." He calls upon the Churches to stop rationalizing and mythologizing, and to join in the action, historically; to promote the human, earthly liberation of men and women. He is calling on them to realize that any salvation hereafter is a myth, if it bypasses the human task of liberation here and now. This is what the incarnational presence of God in history is all about. Lastly, he calls on the Churches to realize the meaning of communion: that no one frees himself alone, and no one frees another, but "men together in concert, in communion, collaborating on something wrong that they want to correct," achieve the liberation of men. There is a sense in which the mystical language of Easter is the only language to represent this position, for the price of commitment to the work of liberation is dying--perhaps in the literal sense--in the hope of being born again. This is language Freire uses more and more frequently: dying to anti-dialogical ways of acting (Pedagogy), to innocent or naive ways of seeing (Talk in Rome), to self-protecting ways of being (Role of the Churches) in order to move forward into the life that is revolutionary. The revolution is personal, interior, and cultural, before, and while, being revolutionary in political action.

"The Educational Role of the Churches" adds that the transition from innocent or naive ways of seeing to critical ways is, like dying, irreversible. If one is not prepared to pay the price of commitment, one can attempt to go back to an idealistic dream world--but unsuccessfully. Instead one becomes

"astute": rationalizing and manipulating in an attempt to justify a lack of commitment to what one has seen and cannot un-see.

Freire speaks of the loss of "innocence" of the Church as a whole. By the loss of innocence he refers to the loss of naivete on the part of "good men" who were unaware of the state of oppression of others, or of the structures which perpetuate oppression, and of the fact that their own benefits derived therefrom. Once awareness comes, innocence is lost. People either go forward, to commit themselves to the work of changing these structures, or find the cost too great, withdraw, become "astute." Then they justify themselves by conducting "band-aid" social welfare projects, helping "the poor, helpless, unlettered masses keep their faith." Freire's irony is heavy; he does not hesitate to apply it to the Church as a whole, which, having seen the truth, must either move forward, or reject its vocation. It is no longer possible to maintain the fiction of neutrality in the face of social issues.

This is a gauntlet flung down: for this is precisely the issue for well-meaning as well as reactionary elements in the Churches, which are confronted by the dilemma of choice between unfortunate alignments with one or another political camp and the non-viable option of doing nothing because they do not know what to do.

A Church that refuses to face its insertion into history is not any the less inserted. . . .  
Insertion does not depend on the will of those who assert it. In fact, by affirming the Church's non-insertion they rather corroborate that insertion. . . .



but on the side of those who deny to the dominated classes all possibility of being. And that is exactly how the Church, through fear of losing itself at some uncertain future, really loses itself now as it endeavors to avoid the risk involved in a future that it must build and not simply receive.  
(p. 17)

By neutrality, the Churches forego the possibility of denunciation and annunciation, or of speaking at all to youth who know that the Latin American problem

is not laziness of its people or the inferiority of their lack of education. . . but imperialism, not as an abstraction or a slogan, but as a palpable reality, an invading, destroying, present force.  
(p. 17)

By avoiding the risk of "dying," the neutral Church avoids permanently its "resurrection" and eternal vitality. But this is not universal. There are some among the Churches who are prophetic, utopian, hopeful, and non-neutral, and it is to these that Freire appeals.

Their experience shows them that being a Christian need not mean being reactionary, just as being a revolutionary need not mean being demoniacal. Rather, being revolutionary means opposing oppression and exploitation, favoring the liberation of the oppressed classes, in concrete terms and not just conceptually. . . they perceive that it is not enough to say that men and women are human persons: one has to do something objectively to make their status as human persons effective. They learn that assistential works will never enable the oppressed to reach their full stature as persons.  
(p. 18)

The essay analyzes in detail the positions that the Churches have taken in the past: traditionalist, modernizing, and prophetic. The educational work of the Churches: purposes, methods, processes and aids, whether in schools, pulpits or seminaries, is conditioned by which of the three choices they have made.

Freire describes the traditionalist Church, aligned with the power elites, its continuation of the "missionary" approach and its "obsession with sin and death and eternal punishment." He calls it "the refuge of the masses" mentality because it provides a (mental) escape for the oppressed. Deprived of the good things that others enjoy, the oppressed can at least take refuge in notions like "the evil nature of this world and its enjoyments," which "are not worth having in the light of eternal life." It is surprising to the North American Christian that such dogma are still being preached in the latter quarter of this century but if so, it is easy to see the alienation and the anaesthetization of action against oppression that would be promoted. Traditionalists delude the people into "flailing out against the demon and sin, yet leaving intact the real cause of their oppressed state." (p. 20)

Traditionalism is characteristic of closed societies. But many of the Churches in Latin America, Freire says, have evolved out of the traditionalist perspective and are modernizing. This parallels the emergence of the masses, the advent of populism, and the craze for "development" in society at large. The sudden interest in development, spurred by foreign

aid, United Nations programs, and national planning institutes, did not occur by accident. Freire ascribes its cause to

Imperialism's economic interests--e.g., its need for expanding its markets and the need to "update the outmoded structures" of its branch offices in Latin America--providing that the updating did not go too far and disturb the vertical relationship between the metropolitan society and the dependent ones. (pp. 21-22)

In order that development not destroy dependence

all political, economic and cultural decisions controlling the transformation of the dependent societies would have to be made in the metropolis, except for certain trivial ones. (p. 22)

It is this external control that Freire blames for the fact that the Latin American societies are merely modernizing instead of developing, since true development must initiate within an organism, independent of any but self-control. (p. 22)

No class society can have an integral development, for development presupposes liberation.

Concomitant with modernization, populism appears, and assistencialism.

The masses have been conditioned by years of dependence; while claiming "rights" they welcome welfarism and manipulative treatment.

Modernizing trends affect the Churches also. They become "efficient," streamlined bureaucracies with professionals in charge of social programs, (formerly called "charities") modern techniques and communication. But, Freire charges, the Church is still aligning itself, not with the poor, but

with the power elites. It is for their purposes that it supports "reformisms that only preserve the status quo."

It talks of humanizing capitalism but not of throwing it out altogether. (p. 23)

. . . (but) there can be no humanization without liberation.

Freire's attack upon the "modernizing" Church is virulent: it is a Church of half measures, alienating its members who see that compromises and reformism achieve nothing; afraid to take a stand, frozen into immobility, dead--while its more efficient techniques give the impression of progress. It is vicious because it stands by and wrings its hands at the alienation of dominator and dominated alike while refusing to recognize the role of the system in generating their contradictions; because it distorts the meaning of liberating education to an individualistic "change of heart, not a social and historical endeavor of men," (p. 25) and reduces it to "liberating children from blackboards and old-fashioned curricula."

There is, however, a third line appearing among the Churches in Latin America: uncompromising, lonely, full of risk, feared. Freire calls it the prophetic Church. The prophetic Church is non-neutral, dialogical, critically aware, utopian, and informed.

It refuses to divorce this-worldliness from transcendence or salvation from liberation.  
(p. 25)



It sees education as a "mode of action meant to change things, a political program for the permanent liberation of man." (p. 28) Yet it knows that no change that is only in men's minds means anything. It is from this Church that a new theology is emerging. Hated and feared by both traditionalists and modernists, it speaks by action but also by words. Like the prophets of old it cries out against injustice. It lives in men like Che Guevara, Camilo Torres, Dom Helder Camara and in groups like the Bishops of Medellin, the Liberation Theologians, the "80 Priests" of Chile.

It is the function of this Church to bring its prophetic witness wherever there is exploitation and silence in the Third World, or in the Third World present in the First World.

#### A Reflection from Maemurray

Many of the targets for Freire's attack are outgrowths of the basic dualism earlier identified in Cartesian assumptions. Whether it is people, or knowledge, or learning, which are "reified and mechanised" we are concerned basically with the subject/object division that Freire has, in fact, invited. This dichotomy is at the heart of the most fundamental concept: oppression. He does us a service, however, in making how universally it has permeated our worlds. Yet, even his own methodology does not escape being tainted by the threat of dualism and he is constantly correcting this by reiterating the dialectic nature of praxis, knowledge, man-world relationships. His explanation of



praxis is ambiguous in that it seems to imply. . . reflection, naming, strategizing, action. . . in that order. In practice Freire does not do it that way. Reflection is born in action, but the integral dialectic of praxis is less apparent than is the integrity of agency in Macmurray. To overcome the dualism created by the assumed, and imprecise, definition of the person, Freire develops concepts like "man-world entity" instead of "man versus world," "colleagues in the revolution" instead of "leaders and followers," "educator-educatee" instead of "teachers and students." In many cases these provide a rather lame solution for the problem of dualism. The "experts" and leaders of the culture circles assume a leadership role that pre-decides the direction of discussion by the choice of the questions; his revolutionary leadership take a responsibility that others do not feel. The semantic changes are apparent, not true, dialectic relations. There is not present in them the tension that ultimately leads to higher syntheses, but rather a renaming which avoids the appearance of opposition. However, insofar as the word leads thought and action, this renaming may be important. Having said this, it is important to emphasize that the concept of the dialectic in Freire goes far beyond the need for a facile solution to dualism, and pervades every major category in the system: knowledge, neutrality, praxis, relations, violence, cultural action. In this, it is creative and exciting.

Although there are many points of contact between Freire and Macmurray, the latter is not concerned with praxis in the sense of political construction, but only with the inseparability of action and reflection in agency. Yet this priority shows that knowledge derives from action, the important base in praxis. Subsuming this, Freire goes beyond it to place action/reflection into the matrix of social conditions and social consciousness, and show that changes of consciousness come only from actions that change situations.

One of the problems with Freire's epistemology is the ambiguity in his definitions of knowledge. In Macmurray's thinking the Self cannot exist as thinker but only as agent, who exists and grows only through relationships with other agents. Freire's position on knowledge as process emphasizes this social dimension. Knowledge is dynamic, achieved by persons together, "mediated" by the reality, confronting its contradictions, "problematizing" it. The lack of clarity stems from the fact that he repeats this formula over and over in essentially the same words, without leaving room for other modes of knowing or for the role of "content." Yet, in other contexts (Pedagogy, 1974 seminars) he has referred to what is really a content curriculum: information needed by those who would effect social change; "control of Marxist tools of analysis," the "systematized knowledge" of teams of experts in the literacy process (1969), all content which does not forego by that fact its dynamic nature. Macmurray does not go into the psychology of learning any more than does Freire, but he gives us three basic modalities for reflection,

and recognizes a valid body of knowledge that accrues from each. These are the reflective modalities of art, science and religion. He also allows for a "reflection for its own sake," or theoretical activity to which the practical is subordinated--either temporarily, or (illogically) permanently. Freire himself is engaged for large portions of his time in theoretical activity: writing, analyzing, speaking. He would be the last to deny the effectiveness of the idea in generating change. A simplistic reading of his statements on action and knowledge, however, (I, 5) could lead one to repudiate such theoretical activity, apparently divorced from direct action.

A further difficulty with Freire is his mysticism. In speaking of the fear and love-orientation of persons in societies, Macmurray has given us two useful insights to examine Freire's political position. In one, Macmurray notes the essentially aesthetic and contemplative nature of societies where mistrust among members is managed by routinizing and stylizing the quality of life. Values are relegated to the private domain and one ceases to consider the public life as the real life. This lack of seriousness about public values and issues is illustrated by representative democracies where the outcomes of national elections have very little effect on the routines or quality of daily life. I have already suggested that nations such as the United States are in a naive populist stage of consciousness with respect to national politics. But if we take Macmurray's remarks seriously we raise a question about a

flaw in this mode of government, one that would prevent such a government, on any large scale, ever being non-oppressive. We have also noted the ease with which, in times of crisis, such democracies become dictatorships. In his concern to prepare "silenced" people for critical participation in democracy, Freire has been aware of naive intermediate stages, but shows no awareness of the "fatal flaw" Macmurray refers to. On the other hand, Freire himself seems to evidence the characteristics of mysticism: idealization of a form of collectivity, and subordination of self-interest to it, assumptions that "the public good is my good": qualities which make representative government work, but also qualities which have in the past led to totalitarianism. In this context some of Freire's remarks about violence and counter-violence give pause. A contemplative society can easily lead to totalitarian government for the aforesaid reason that the real life, the life intended, is not the public life. Ethical norms and values are relegated to the private domain and the public life is unscrutinized. This is not the form of society that Freire is recommending, but it is an easy step away if there is that too-great submission of the Self into the whole, a self-identification with the whole. Freire describes a dialogic revolutionary community which concords with Macmurray's third societal mode, but without adverting to the dangers in its nature. Neither mysticism nor rugged individualism is the solution but some synthesis for the dialectic polarity of these, at the one pole, and the Utopian community at the other.



Quite simply, I believe Freire is ambiguous here. He has not thought through, or at least not expressed, the implications and limitations of democracy nor the form of "government" most likely to promote community, but is groping toward a Utopian vision that is in direct agreement with his theses that persons are and grow in relationship, and act communally to construct the world. His judgements against "dehumanizing" structures are moral judgements, based on what these structures do to the quality and universality of human relationships, and to the inversion of the ends and means in education.

In Persons in Relation Macmurray states that the problem of the personal is the problem of reconciliation: of overcoming fear by love. If we look at this as the problem of replacing fear-oriented societal structures by love-oriented structures, we have the basis of cultural revolution. The problem conscientisation addresses is the attitudes and the means for cultural revolution. The society Freire criticizes is competitive, mistrustful, and dehumanizing, because it is based on a contemplative approach, "each man for himself," with a minimum of interaction. Unequal distribution of resources is only a symptom of basic attitudes which have been structured into economics and politics. To attack it on this level is to cure the symptom and not the cause, if that is possible. The alternative implies that conversion, conscientisation, must precede any action. But this is not praxis. Praxis is reflective political action, recognizing the mutually creative effect of environment and consciousness.



Hegel saw history as the evolution of consciousness. Marx saw consciousness following history: i.e., economics structuring history, and history structuring consciousness. The latter seems at times to be Freire's position. But in fact he has grasped that awareness and environment are poles of a dialectic.

Consciousness and history move forward together, in tension, first one leading, then the other. Conscientisation gives the tools of praxis that enable people to take a conscious role in this process, to enter history. And so the logic of Freire's position on cultural revolution as cultural action: If we have accepted Macmurray's postulate on the necessity of relationships for existence and growth, then there is an essential flaw in the very nature of competitive society, an essential contradiction (see p. 139 above), which will doom it to be dehumanizing and will be its ultimate downfall. If the essential contradiction is not understood, the new societal structures with which we replace it will be in the same competitive, power mode. This history has shown.

## PART III: Chapter 1: Notes

1. Private communication, July 1974.
2. Private communication, July 1974.
3. P. 163 English Edition, Education for Critical Consciousness, Seabury Press, 1973.
4. Freire has some amusing anecdotes about elements of "foreign" faith or techniques being "baptized" in the magic rituals of a peasant village.
5. Note use of propagation--a generative word--rather than transmission.
6. Notes on Pedagogy of the Oppressed.
7. Notes on Cultural Action for Freedom and Selected Essays.
8. Elias believes that initially Freire was not a revolutionary, and in fact broke with the Acao Popular when it began to show leftist tendencies, but that the Pedagogy is a frankly revolutionary document. I tend, now, to concur.
9. An example: Because limits cannot be set or crime control laws enforced by constituted authority in Detroit without liberal outcry, citizens in self-defense have established vigilante groups which function instead of law enforcement agencies but whose norms and methods are not subject to public scrutiny. The final results of this mode of protecting freedom is to destroy it. On the other hand, Freire can come to terms with anti-humanistic concepts like the "necessity to take from the oppressor his power to oppress" and do so in the name of ultimate humanism. The latter plays God by action, the liberal by inaction. Both styles pose for us moral and values questions.
10. In many places throughout the Pedagogy, as already noted, Freire seems excessively voluntaristic in attribution of evil intent to the oppressors, although he recognizes that they too are victims of an oppressive structure which happens to work to their advantage. There is ample historical evidence of people in power deliberately defending and perpetuating such structures to their own gain, but there are also humanitarians who further oppression unwillingly and sometimes unwittingly. See Institutional Racism in America, Knowles and Pruitt.

11. Freire says, "Even revolution must confront this phenomenon. Many of the oppressed who directly or indirectly participate in revolution intend--conditioned by the myths of the old order--to make it their private revolution. The shadow of their former oppressor is still cast over them." (p. 31)

12. It is true that a changed consciousness will move to create economic and socio-political change but is it possible for consciousness to be awakened without some preceding experience of external change?

13. "Liberation" is not a question of mind alone. cf. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning. I am using the term "classical" to distinguish revolution in the ordinary political sense from "cultural revolution" discussed in detail further on.

14. Again, we note an excessively volitional tone to remarks such as the one that student ignorance is accepted by the teacher "to justify the teachers' existence." If the teacher assumes that reality is static, and that all is worth knowing is already determined (is in the past), then the goal of education logically becomes the adaptation of the student to the determinate world. No malice is required to explain this stance.

15. This passage makes robbery sound like charity. "We're not stealing your house; we're liberating it, and you, from the oppressive structure in which you sleep!" This is a difficulty with Freire's position.

16. For some reason, in this discussion of the revolutionary leadership, Freire chooses to consider the leaders apart from the oppressed. The tone of the section seems to contradict the communal thrust of preceding sections and makes one wonder whether the leaders are indeed also of the oppressed, or are persons who are "planning for others."

17. "Experimental" is here distinguished from "experiential." The former is the mode of the scientist who reflects on reality, designs and carries out a modification of that reality, and reflects on the results. New knowledge is the result. The latter (experiential) is associated with structured (usually structured by someone other than the subject) learning experiences whereby a child, or adult, arrives at and internalizes a piece of information which the teacher wants the person to acquire in the most efficient way possible. Life-experiences, although exempt from this artificial contriving, are equally "undergone" rather than self-designed.

18. The lack of malleability caused the "Democratic Inexperience"  
Freire discusses in Education as a Practice of Freedom.

## Chapter 2: The Freirean Challenge to American Education

In the earlier parts of this study we have examined the historical and sociological background of Freire's work and attempted to ground it within a philosophical system. We examined in detail the works themselves, with their assumptions and immediate implications. In this section I would like to show by an examination of metaphor, the inconsistency with the above implications and philosophical positions, of common practices in American education and offer a counter proposal to the dualism created by existing metaphors. This work can only lay foundations, and hopefully, demonstrate the necessity for an intensive study of present educational thinking. It suggests, however, a new set of criteria for such a study, and offers counterproposals which are indicative of directions. I believe that the new departure must be dialectic and shall attempt to establish what this approach would require of an educational system. This dialectic concept is a major thrust of Freire's ideas, as we have already seen, but to date, "Freirean" experiments reported have been concerned primarily with literacy methods, or with political consciousness-raising. The level has been that of the individual practitioner or consciousness of a local group, not that of systemic and directional change.



This section will close by confronting the unanswered questions in Freire's theory, as it is articulated to date and the objections of other commentators to it. The summary, Chapter 3, will draw these conceptualizations together in a very tentative theory of pedagogy, which it is the intent of the author to develop in detail in further research.

### Metaphor in American Education

In Part II we examined partial answers to the problem of the personal in modern philosophy. Historically these fell into two classes: Those which reduced the personal to substance and those which reduced the personal to organism of the order of plant or animal. Although these reductions were recognized as inadequate by contemporary philosophers and have been replaced today by a confusion of other, often contradictory, hypotheses, these dated solutions have perdured in education in the form of serious metaphors.

It is normal for human intelligence to make relationships and to express some phenomena in terms of others more familiar, more picturesque, and in some way analogical. The metaphors we shall explore in this chapter fall into two classes: Mechanistic and organic, or horticultural. Some compare the recipient of education, and/or the whole process of education, to a system of machines, computers, programmed and predictable processes. Others compare the learner to an organism, a tender plant to be protected, nurtured and developed.

These metaphors tend to lead our thought in certain directions and to pre-form certain conclusions: i. e., cause things to exist by speaking as though they do exist. However, by the "leading power of the word" I mean something more. It is the process that is, almost inevitably, initiated by naming (in the Freirean sense of the term). An accurate analysis of the structures of a situation, a "naming," itself leads to the next thought, and the next action step. "It takes you by the hand and leads you to a solution," a former mathematics professor of mine used to say, when defining the "given's" in a problem. This is what Freire suggests when he leads groups simply to name the contradictions.

Since metaphor is a way of naming, let us first explore its leading power.

A metaphor implies a likeness between two essentially unlike things. It makes a leap from some set of similarities existing in them to a stated (but not intended) identity. The mind "carries over" (metapherein) to treat of one thing as though it were the other. (Green, 1971) It is a capsule-size analogy with all the usefulness and dangers of an analogy. Its usefulness inheres in what it can add of clarity to our thinking, new insights, unusual combinations, creative breakthrough's. (Allport, 1961) But the accompanying danger is that of reductionism and coercion, of treating individuals as if they were in fact (merely) machines or plants.

One metaphor for American education is that of the machine.

Problems of pedagogy are seen as problems in systems analysis. The learner is like a computer to be programmed. Questions which are raised concern

-the quality of the input, or of the raw material

(Jenson, Hernstein)

-the nature of the processing (Rogers, Brown, Mager,

Bloom, Weinstein, Bruner)

-the component parts of the system: curricula, scheduling, teacher-training.

The focus and direction are provided by the goal, the desired outcome or product. The language itself is that of the machine: "inputs," "outcomes," "processes," and the words further mechanize our image of students and learning and our treatment of them. The underlying assumption, whether we examine "behavior modification." or "cognitive mapping" or "diagnostic-prescriptive" teaching or "competency-based teacher education" is: if the input, analysis, and processing are right the outcome (the graduate) will be educated, good, and prepared for life. The frustration of many educators who have accepted this model, stems from two sources: (1) it does not work out this way, and (2) their predictions of desirable outcomes are based on the determinate, that is, the past and present world. And there is disquieting reason to believe that the shape of tomorrow's world might be so significantly different that the skills trained into students will produce early obsolescence or total inability

to live in that world "successfully." The alternative to this is to try to second-guess the future, to render the indeterminate and unknown determinate and predictable, and so "prepare" students to cope. A third alternative is to admit that change and the unforeseen will be the given of the future and build new sets of coping skills, including flexibility and fearlessness in the face of change, into the educative system.

Close to the mechanistic metaphor in non-humanness, although far from the above examples in style, is the storage metaphor, which Freire attacks under the name of "banking education." Here the pupil is considered a capacity to be filled with a static, determinable quantity of knowledge which can be produced again on demand. In this approach, content-oriented curriculum writers and "bag-of-virtues" moralists meet.

Underlying the mechanistic approach are reified assumptions about the nature of persons. What all the preceding have in common is the passivity and thing-like nature of the student, whether he/she is molded, shaped, programmed, processed, or filled. The decision about the input and the processing is an outsider decision, the student has no opportunity for choice, because presumably, he/she is incapable of choice. He/she is a particularly perfect machine or computer, or a particularly imperfect, empty vessel. He/she is what is put in from outside; Once "filled" he can produce the proper answer for any anticipated problem--but since the material is in him but not of him, not his, it can hardly affect what he will be. All controls for action



are also outside--in the environment--which reinforces behavior positively or negatively. (Skinner, 1948, 1971) External control does not change when the student is "taught control"--when programmed in a certain way to continue responding to stimuli according to outsider-determined patterns, long after visible controls have been removed.

Given this view of students, it is the burden of the educator, and of society through the educator, to determine what are the proper goals, the best end-product, and to ferret out the best means for introducing the "pieces of knowledge" whether cognitive or affective content or processes, that will assure that the student will achieve these goals.

When the student fails to function as a properly programmed thing, when he/she attempts to be self-determined, spontaneous and intentional, in an unpredicted direction, the phenomenon is identified as a motivation or behavior problem, or a lack of native ability (poor raw material). The student assured of success is the one who responds at each stage as predicted.

The mechanistic approach to education has implications for the way pedagogy is conceived and organized. I do not mean to imply that this caricature depicts an existing school or system but rather that our metaphors, line of research and treatment of students become consistent and intelligible if we posit some such set of unspoken assumptions. It is on this metaphor, unanalyzed and unchallenged, that we operate. Once educators clarify precisely what an educated person is, technicians can perfect the means for



producing one: diagnostic tests to evaluate the raw materials, relevant curricula to motivate, (oil the wheels so that the student will keep moving through the process), teacher-training to enable teachers to perform with mechanical replicability. Even creativity can be programmed for, by exercises in fantasy, sensory awareness, synectics. Foremen (superintendents and evaluators) supposedly control the process and monitor the line to see where the system is breaking down. Consultants, Management-By-Objectives specialists, and human relations trainers are called in to repair it.

None of this works perfectly, of course. But implications arising from glorification of this model and wishful thinking that it could work are the danger of the metaphor. The above caricature points up the hidden assumptions.

Let us, for a moment, suppose that students and/or pedagogical processes can be so mechanized, and in one sense, automated, and further that they can be perfected to turn out the desired product. Whose desire? The full weight of world-making falls on the shoulders of the decision-makers. What value system guides those who program the machines? Is the desired outcome a person who will conform to society's existing norms or one who will change those norms? Theoretically at least, either could be programmed for. If it is to be change agent, according to what new norms shall he/she be formed? These are moral questions and education is above all a moral process. The questions concern ends and cannot be foresworn, for a

mechanistic approach to education necessarily answers them in spite of itself, and whether it posits one desired end or another. It begs the question to say that the educator cannot decide values for another. They are being decided by every component part of the machine and the way it is set up. The product will bear the shape of the passage. There is no neutral education.

It is not surprising that this should be so. Macmurray has demonstrated that the Cartesian-based "scientific" model for reality, while claiming to be value-free, is in fact negatively guided by valuing. Values are involved insofar as it chooses to focus attention in one direction rather than another and insofar as science is a means which must be to some end. So too this scientific view of education. Repudiating inner value orientations as being an imposition and hence inappropriate, (at least in public school education) it still educates to some chosen end, and is informed in its mode, if not in its content, by some value set.<sup>1</sup>

A second metaphor of widespread importance for education in the Americas is the organic metaphor. Dewey, Whitehead, Jordan, and all who subscribe to the organic metaphor see the learner as a developing organism bearing within it the pattern and potential for the unique individual it alone can become. A plant is dependent for full healthy growth upon the abundance and quality of the right environmental factors: temperature, water, cycle of light and dark, soil nutrients and texture. If the environment is rich and the atmosphere is close and warm the plant will flourish. Although it can be

stunted, deformed, or killed by improper environmental conditions, it is not controlled from outside. Rather its growth is determined according to its own interior, unique, genetic plan.

In this case the role of the educator becomes like that of the gardener. He/she follows the nature of the individual, studies the stages of development, and so arranges the environment that the organism will have what it needs at each stage to stimulate and nurture its growth. Education is seen as a process of development affected by the genetic characteristics of the seed and the dynamics of the interaction between the seed and its environment. (Dewey, 1916, 1964)<sup>2</sup> It is only partially manipulable since only the environment is manipulable, and only negatively so, by the gardener. I say "only negatively so" because how much of the richness of the soil a plant can use depends upon the nature of the plant. The plant also contributes to the richness of the soil for another. An unlimited supply of nutrients will not of itself cause a lily to grow ten feet tall. It is also true that the gardener model leaves so much of the control to the inner predetermined nature of the organism itself that it is conceivable that the gardener eventually might not be needed: i. e., that, having researched the organism and determined optimal environment, the gardener might set up some incubator with timers, materials and feed-back loops, and leave the system to function on its own. So too in the Montessori, or Leicestershire, or other open classroom. The teacher is there as part of the rich environment he/she has established but the controls,

the use of nutrients and the timing are, ideally, all within the individual learner, determined somehow by his/her needs. The type of growth, the extent, and the time of flowering and fruiting can be altered by manipulating the environment but the nature of the resulting plant is essentially predetermined.

The implications for educational practice derived from the organic metaphor have led to widely divergent action. (Praxis is culturally as well as theoretically based, and theory itself derives from culture). Rousseau believed in authoritarianism and advocated motivation by fear, or by reinforcing the child's sense of inadequacy. (1973) Yet he expressed an educational theory consonant with the plant metaphor, the inner determination and natural goodness of the seed, the destructive effects of "civilization." Others blame schools which force children into predetermined modes, hindering natural direction and growth, yet take a strong stand that "natural growth" must not be left unguided--to grow wild. But in spite of diversities, educators who subscribe to the organic metaphor believe that the organism itself, perhaps below the conscious level, "knows" what is good for it and the educator's task is to protect, nurture, and guide but not to force or attempt to determine what direction it should grow.

What is wrong with this view? There seem to be two things that have not been taken into account. Unlike the plant, the human intelligent being is not wholly determined by genes and environment. There is, from a rather early stage, and increasingly with age, a power of choice of intentionality.



Although it is negatively determined by environment, (for example, deprivation of adequate amounts of food in childhood can interfere with normal development of intelligence) the growing human organism is much less dependent on the environment as it matures and is able to overcome environmental deficits. The second important factor is the dynamic between human intelligence and environmental conditions. Freire, Marx, Althusser, have already examined this "man-world entity" and examples have already been cited in this study of environmental (social) conditions affecting awareness and vice versa. It is fascinatingly true that to a limited degree this mutual modification takes place throughout the ecosystem. But in a case such as a climax plant species in some ecological niche, the mutual changes are irreversible and not at all the dynamic kind of balance Piaget notes between the intelligence and the environment, the internal and external structures. Freire moves the dialectic out of the biological into the intelligible social and economic world when he speaks of the man-world dialectic.

Exponents of both mechanistic and organic metaphor must deal with some basic questions. If the learner is essentially predetermined (genetically) and inner-controlled like the embryonic plant, it is inappropriate for society to attempt to determine its final form. How direct then is the socializing role of education? Suppose the child grows up quite other, in values and goals, from what society is prepared to accept. Are there, built into society,



controls to destroy him? The environment over generations promotes the evolution of new species by selecting for or against mutants. The environment also somehow creates mutants. See for example, the effects of radiation or excessive heat or sound at critical biological periods. It is also true that organisms present in a given ecosystem, over time modify the system, perhaps to such a degree that other organisms are no longer compatible with it. This is illustrated in the normal succession of plants in a newly burned field until the stable climax species is reached. It would be interesting, though beyond the bounds of this volume, to follow out this analogy for the educational work of a Dewey or a Skinner.

Secondly, organic as well as mechanistic educators are left with a values question. If the guidance and indirect control over some aspects at least of the growing organism are under the control of the gardener-educator, what values shall guide him? A dwarf Japanese maple grew that way because of a series of intentional choices on the part of human beings, not of maple trees. He who can control the environment can in some degree control life, consciousness, and through consciousness, future environments. And control implies decision-making as to ends and means. It is not necessarily true that to be knowledgeable is to be good, nor that wide exposure to knowledge has no effect on recipients. Undirected it can be moral education by default; directed it may be indoctrination, manipulation, or revelation.

Freire subscribes to neither of these metaphors. He rejects almost violently and with every tool of rhetoric he commands, the mechanistic dehumanization of the first. He seems unaware of, or uninterested in, the vast amount of developmental literature based on the second, although he gives us tools by which to critique whatever is manipulation and outsider-decision. The danger of each lies in the fact that both always presuppose an agent who operates the machine or tends and prunes the plant; a decision-maker outside of the system. And because we allow ourselves to think of students as sub-human things, machines or organisms, we begin to treat them as if they were indeed sub-human beings. So doing, we either stir up resistance, which must be repressed, subtly or violently; or worse, reduce them unresistingly to things, pieces to be moved about, or conforming well-trained plants climbing obediently up the trellis we have chosen. This is the dehumanization built into our educational models, even those most humanistic in content.

It seems to me that there must be a third metaphor appropriate to human beings and their education. It also seems to me that the deficiencies of the two just examined, stem from their non-human assumptions so the model we seek must acknowledge the form of the personal. Persons have in them some of the characteristics of things and some of the practices discussed under the machine metaphor can be useful if included into a more comprehensive model. Persons are alive, unique, and inner-determined and much of the praxis of "organic" educators is appropriate. But the form

of the personal, subsuming both that of substance and of organism, is that of a positive including and constituted by its negative. (Macmurray, Part II)

The positive and uniquely personal characteristic in human beings is intentionality, self-directed action (Macmurray), praxis (Freire). The question I have raised before is: at what stage in our educational models is the recipient to be considered a human being, capable of intentionality? I raise it because I seem to hear that "children" need someone to think and decide for them, and of course this programming "is only for a limited period." I submit that any sharp change of direction or assumptions midstream in educational practice can be justified only by a radical change in the child prior to that point, and the evidence from child development does not support sharp turning points. Rather we find continuous smooth development from awakening consciousness in infancy to the sophisticated social consciousness of committed adult. It is a development that follows a stage pattern, both individually (Piaget, Kohlberg) and socially (Freire: stages of consciousness), one that can be slowed, skewed or frozen, but apparently not reversed, by unfavorable environmental conditions. Given favorable environmental conditions there is no evidence of new humanness in the twelve-year old that was not embryonically, or dormantly, present at eleven. With Freire, I would like to submit that the human infant is essentially different in potential for intentionality from other organisms and in this is closer in nature to the

human adult than to any other organism. Therefore I would like to explore the human "metaphor" in education. Here, in fact, we leave the realm of metaphor since our goal is a design for education that recognizes the essential humanness of the participants.

Before doing so it seems important to repeat that Freire's methodology for adult literacy presupposes a rather advanced developmental stage in the student--that of formal operations. Prior to this stage some aspects of the method are applicable but not all; nor is it reasonable to expect the political insights of which adults are capable. If these insights are the goal of process education rather than the increasingly potent capacity of the learner to control the significant decisions which affect his/her life, then conscientising education can be made as mechanistic and manipulative as any referred to under the machine metaphor.

A humanistic design in education is based on assumptions about human beings already exposed in Part I, and Part III. It requires attitudes of respect, dialogue, and cooperation that stem from the equality in humanness of teacher and learner, regardless of age or "competence." It recognizes a dynamic nature of knowledge, the fact that all are co-learners and the fact that all have something of value to bring to the dialogue. But it also recognizes the need for dissonance and the recognition of contradiction if there is to be creative advance. The form of the personal includes and is constituted by that



of the organism. The methods of dialogue and choice of content are modified by the level of organismal development that Piaget and others have explored. But the control of timing, goal, and mode remains that of the student.

This does not answer the question: what shall be learned? If this learner is to achieve unique self-determination within an environment she/he has chosen or formed, certain analytical, social and educational skills are indicated: communications, decision-making, relating, understanding of structures, structuring. Genetic controls alone will not determine the timing or necessity for these, for the person is more than organism. Enough exposure needs to be given that intentionality can come into play. In the last analysis each person, and each new community of persons is a mystery. I do not know what each uniquely will become and I cannot program for it. But the "content" of the curriculum is connected with the contradictions that emerge whenever alive human beings confront these or other aspects of their social situation. This is the significant content in a Freirean approach. And it elicits a peculiarly human process: that of questioning: problem-posing and problem-solving. The ways of doing this and the adaptations of method to age, psychosocial development, and sociological level of consciousness will be as varied as the target populations. Freire does not give us a method (not really) nor a system. However, the question of content cannot be so lightly dismissed. Freire implies in all of his discussions a political orientation that involves



understanding of the political ramifications of literacy, science, and structures of society. At what age and how are these understandings acquired? He gives us a starting point, a philosophy of person, a set of attitudes. Education is any process that promotes awareness, intentionality and communication. And at this level education is revelation.

### The Life-Word Tension: The Fundamental nature of the Dialectic

The problem with current metaphors in education is their fundamental incompatibility and their implications of external agency. Mechanists and organicists seem to be in opposition. But those who think and program for students, whose ideal is efficiency and predictable results, are only apparently in opposition to the philosophical position of those who believe in genetic determiners and who control development by manipulating environments. Neither see the learner and the environment as mutually developing each other. Both ignore an insight of Marx, Freire, Piaget, Mao-Tse Tung (to name only a few): that reality is not set up in polar oppositions but in dialectic unities. Every reality contains in some measure within it, its contradiction; and there is a balancing, a tension, a leaning now to right and now to left, a self-correction, that is lost if one or the other pole of the dialectic is suppressed. Freire speaks of the "man-world entity," of the non-dualism of subject and object, knower and known. Piaget explains equilibration, the dialectic tension between the structuring of external reality and the structuring of the mind. Marx underscores the dialectic nature of the revolutionary situation, the interaction between objective factors and subjective factors: "the existence of a reality of oppression imposed on classes or social groups who become the living negation of this exploitative system. . . and the consciousness of this oppressive reality on the part of exploited

classes and their disposition to act to overturn the established order."

(Freire, 1974).

Dialectic tension is different from polarity. It is possible to recognize two opponents, clearly in opposition to one another. If one wins the other loses. It is also possible, as we find in organic molecules, to have polar substances where dichotomy does not, and may never, occur. In the opposition between learner as thing-to-be-planned-and-programmed-for, and learner-as-organism, inner directed but immature, we have not yet reached the core of the dialectic. In fact, both conceptualizations are at the same pole and opposite to that of learner as intentional. The true dialectic tension is along this continuum. Here are answered questions about how young and how much self-direction for the learner versus how much planning by the teachers. In the dialectic the balance swings, now too far to right, now to left. Given the conditions of respect and dialogue, the system is self-correcting, for the "right position" is the tension, the dynamic, not the absolutising of either extreme, nor of some intermediate compromise.

Dialogue itself is such a dialectic; truth emerges from the interaction; it does not exist beforehand, it is not imparted by either interlocutor. It is born ("discovered") as word leads word.

The following passage, a portion of Freire's response to a group of students in Paris (1974) reinforces the indications he has already given us of the centrality of dualism to contemporary educational, and political, problems and the necessity of the dialectic vision.

This question (the problematic of the subjective factor as agent of change) places us at the very heart of one of the problems which has always preoccupied philosophy, particularly in modern times. . . the relations between subject and object; knowledge and reality; thought and being; theory and practice.

Every attempt to understand these relations which is based on the dualism of subject-object, denying their dialectic unity is incapable of explaining these relations satisfactorily.  
(Freire, 1974)

Dualism, divisiveness, anti-dialectics, prescription, pervade all levels of knowing and teaching, government and economics while the truth is that even oppressor and oppressed are in a dialectic tension until the system itself is subsumed into some higher form.

Macmurray signaled the dialectic in the form of the personal, that of a positive in constant interaction with its negation. The assignment of "positive" and "negative" to one and another end of the continuum, for example in the dialectics: action/reflection, or knowledge/consciousness or intention/motivation, is based less on a value judgement than on a perception as to which of the two is the more inclusive, the more intentional (human) and the more flexible in its modes of controlling.

The metaphors which lead practice in education themselves exemplify the dialectic of naming and reality. In the measure in which they name, they help to create the reality they name. Yet it escapes their naming, and demands a new naming. This demand in American education is now. Each of the metaphors described in the preceding section has truth; none of them is truth. The human being subsumes the characteristics of substances, biochemical and bio-physical laws, the organic potential for development, training, conditioning and response to stimuli. To make educational use of these properties is not inappropriate--to speak of "developing the whole child." Would it, however, be more accurate, and less prescriptive, to speak of the child developing its whole potentiality? The trouble comes when the uniquely human, intentional pole of the dialectic is suppressed or ignored. As we have said, the growth of the individual takes place from within in the dynamic interaction between its internal structuring and all the elements, especially interpersonal elements in its external environment.

When we speak of the dialectic nature of metaphor and the "leading power" of the world, we can look at the tension from a different viewpoint. In the glossary are words which Freire uses, some in rather special ways. It is an exercise in exploring the life-word tension to attempt to clarify their meaning. Just as we have seen that applying mechanistic or botanical words to human children can cause us to treat them, and so to perceive them, in



non-human ways, so some of the words defined in these ways "lead" our thought.

Let us look at a few examples of the dialectic tension of key terms.

Conscientizacao or conscientisation: can mean the increasing awareness of contradictions in a situation. It can mean the planned educational process by which people are brought to awareness. It can mean the actions committed persons take together by which they come to discover the causal relationships which structure a situation, or their lives, or the relationships of a local episode to a global issue. Freire says:

The effort of conscientisation, which is identified with cultural action for the liberation of the oppressed, (emphasis added) is a process by which, within the subject-object relationship. . . the subject becomes capable of grasping, in critical terms, the dialectic unity between itself and the object. . . there is no conscientisation apart from praxis, apart from the unity: theory-practice, reflection-action. (1974)

The fact is that a dialectic exists between conscientised action on one end of the continuum and fatalistic or oblivious inaction on the other. Action, any kind of action, if reflected on, starts the upward spiral where increasing understanding stimulates more aware actions, which stimulate further conscientisation.

Each of the "definitions" of conscientizacao expresses one interpretation and affects all. To restrict conscientizacao to an educational method is to distort it, to leave the dialectic and become manipulative, by removing it

from the dynamic web of person-person and person-world interactions. It then becomes a gimmick to achieve a limited vision of literacy--limited by a non-dialectic, usually naive perception of a "goal."

Conscientisation is a term Freire reserves for a "true" awareness, a "logos." He calls "false consciousness" any system of ideas which obscures either the self's agency, or perception, or responsibility in a situation. It often refers to a misconstruing of causes from which even highly educated people are not exempt--magical or naive constructions. However, even in magical perceptions there is an action-idea dialectic.

One further example of the dialectic under the word:

Naming is praxis, conscientisation and literacy. Literacy is the ability to read history, and the present historical situation, as well as the ability to decode communication systems. Literacy training is also in tension--between the need for minimal decoding skills that will permit access to history and maximal situational decoding skills that will permit access to comprehension, and change, of the deep structures.

Dialectic complementarity and tension are important in Freire's thought. The dialectic concept speaks to all aspects of persons, to what Macmurray calls the form of the personal, and is the only alternative, at this point in the evolution of thought, to the dualism that pervades social, political, and educational spheres. Dualism is not solved by seizing upon and canonizing one pole, at the expense of the other. I believe the dialectic to be a key insight into the processes of knowledge and education, community and cultural revolution.

## PART III: Chapter 2: Notes

1. See Macmurray: intention vs selective attention and discussion of modes of reflection: art as a choice of ends, vs science as a study of means.
2. Dewey in fact escapes the limitations of a strictly organic metaphor and could be used equally as an example of the dialectic humanistic approach.
3. "These latter years have been marked by a sort of eclipse of the subjective pole of this dialectic relation (with the belief that revolutionary action only becomes possible after the integral attainment of certain conditions of the infrastructure: for example, the development of capitalism in the surrounding countries as a pre-requisite for the transition to socialism) or by a kind of perversion of the subjective element, whether by Stalinist voluntarism or by an over-estimation of the capacity for action of small groups of avant-garde, drawn out of (coups) the befogged masses.  
However, the historical failure of objectivism and of both these subjectivist deviations have put the problematic of the subjective factor as agent of transformation of reality back at the center of contemporary political debate." (from the French, IDAC 1974 Interview of Paulo Freire with militant students of Paris)
4. Naming, see also dialectic of language in Fishman, Josua A. The Sociology of Language.

### Chapter 3: Toward A Theory of Pedagogy

A Theory of Pedagogy is founded on a theory of person and a theory of knowledge. These Paulo Freire has already provided for us. The purpose of this chapter will be to draw together from the more general statements the particular implications which can serve as guidelines to develop a theory of pedagogy/andragogy. Such a theory must contain a working definition of pedagogy,<sup>1</sup> assumptions about the learner, about knowledge, about the learning process, and about the nature, and the role of the teacher, a definition of Goal in light of the above assumptions and an indication of means to reach these goals: appropriate content and processes.

#### Goal

How are persons prepared to take a self-determining part in a free (non-oppressive) society, and more importantly to take part in creating a self-determining, non-oppressive society? Our task is somewhat different from the one Freire undertook in 1963. His subjects were adults who lacked the educational and social tools to function in a democratic society, if or when that opportunity arose. The task was to raise consciousness of the social situation, to begin to develop political skills, as well as to develop the specific adult literacy which was necessary for entry into the democratic process. The task of pedagogy/adragogy in the United States is not unrelated, but is different.



At the child's level, pedagogy's task is to facilitate the structuring of mental, emotional, and physical powers in ways that will enable the child, and later the adult, to function as a free, self-determining, relational human being. This is done by special kinds of interaction with the environment and especially with other persons. The task is also to enable the future adult to participate effectively in a dialogic community: one which promotes the humanization of persons (in the sense defined in this study): awareness of what is dehumanizing, commitment to change at a radical level, and skill in creating that change. If we accept this as the goal, with the built-in difficulties of consciousness and commitment which we have already seen, what would be required in pedagogy to achieve it? The base under a Freirian theory of knowledge is that knowledge is dialectic in nature: not only the man/world and subject/object dialectics already seen, but also the philosophical tension between individual development and group development, individual ends and those of the collectivity. Since dialectic tension is fundamental to Freire's philosophy, it must be also in any pedagogy building on it. It is not here a question of focusing on individual development at the expense of ignoring or delaying group relationships. Individual development cannot happen without relationships. Nor can it be a question of placing the whole focus on the group (even though of itself that is consciousness-raising) without deliberate attention also to the interior liberation of individuals. These are the two poles, both necessary. The dialectic is like a stretched rubber band between



them. The energy developed depends on the existence of, and the distance between, the poles. Dialectical humanism, "Rubber Band Pedagogy", is an education to relationships, balance, and creative use of dialectic tension seeking synthesis.

### Assumptions

The assumptions under dialectical humanism are the relational theory of persons which we have already seen and the fact that they are intentional: able, free, and self-determined. There is little difficulty with these when we are in the area of andragogy. The difficulties arise with questions about the applicability of these ideas to children, or to those assumed to be in some way inadequate to control their own lives. Freire does not speak directly of small children, but there is a compatibility and even a parallel between his thesis as applied to adults and those of structural developmentalists like Piaget as applied to children. For the purpose of this study I shall assume the following position:

The learner is a human being, even from infancy, with the potential, genetic endowment, and tendency to structure its mind, affections, and physiological equipment in certain ways. These ways are conditioned upon the quality of interaction with the environment: human and non-human. This potential development becomes progressively more controlled by the child himself (not necessarily intentionally controlled) as the child moves through the pre-operational stages to that of formal operations. (Piaget) Even in the pre-operational stages there is control by the child in the process of adaptation (accommodation and assimilation)

but the child is susceptible to manipulation by the environment. The environment, by reinforcing some things and punishing others, greatly affects what will be internalized; it does not eliminate the possibility of intentional control. Environmental control can change the timing and the options but not the stages through which learners develop, nor the fact that they move, more or less sequentially through these stages. During the time of stage development prior to formal operations, the child evolves psychomotor skills, "thinking skills, attitudes, values, and a whole range of behaviors. (Piaget, et al)<sup>2</sup>

As it has been explained by Freire, I see the development of societies following a parallel path. This growth also is dependent upon the environment and the degree to which members of the group can affect the environment. (I, 3) At the lowest level of interaction, the environment and quality of life are controlled almost entirely from outside the group. As the group "develops" through experimenting and affecting the environment in small ways, unimportant at first, more significant with time, they arrive at the stage equivalent to that of formal operations in child development: critical consciousness. At this stage individuals within a social group begin to perceive the ways in which the environment is organized and operates, and to engage in more critical, strategic interaction with it. This stage corresponds to, and requires, that the group members be at the level of formal operations, (Piaget) because it demands that the individual hold in mind more than one concept, or dimension of reality, or set of organizers, at a time. This level of operation is potentially present in

every adult, but to achieve it requires the same kinds of environmental structuring on social and political issues that the pre-operational child required in the physical environment. This structuring is part of what Freire calls conscientization or liberation and is the role of education.

### Summary of Assumptions for Theory of Pedagogy

#### Assumption 1:

Learners are potentially self-directed, developing individuals, who make use of the environment to build mental structures and who, alternately, structure their environment according to their needs--if that environment is malleable to their action.

Neither the environment nor the individual is independent of the other. The learner makes use of the environment to build only those mental structures he/she is ready for. But this is subject to outside control because the nature and quality of the environment, including the people in it, determines what can be structured into the mind and how. If the child is to learn to trust and communicate, the people around must provide opportunities and reward trust. Even Skinner acknowledges (1971) that other elements than environmental engineering, affect the level of control of the learner. He does not accept "Purpose" as one of these elements. However, if the environment is deprived, missing social reinforcers, stimuli, or malleability, learning in a particular direction stops and other kinds of learning ("the hidden curriculum") take its

place: for example, frustration, fatalism, feelings of "I'm not OK." The same thing applies to social and political environments where people are submerged in non-malleable, oppressive, or punitive structures.

Assumption 2:

Societies also grow through stages, by means of effective (change-making) interaction with their physical, social, and political environments.

The ability of an individual to effect his/her intention is dependent on awareness and the openness of the situation to change. Awareness of "the deep structures" of the situation depends on experiences of its vulnerability, and reflection on the contradictions in the situation, usually in dialogue.

Assumption 3:

All knowledge is social and dialectic. There is a continuing dynamic evolution of concept in interactions of learners with each other, as well as with the objective reality.

Assumption 4:

The "objective reality" with which learners interact must follow the developmental stages of the learner: from physical, manipulable materials, to generalization about materials and operations; to other people's ideas, operations, and generalizations; to contradictions; between materials and ideas, between situations and descriptors, between ends and means, between ends intended and ends claimed.



### Assumption 5: Nature and role of the teacher

The role of the teacher develops dialectically with the increasing self-structuring of the learners. The teacher is a knowing, hence growing, being also in interaction with the environment which includes other learners. When these learners are young, only beginning to develop mental concepts and affective attitudes, the teacher's focus is on providing the necessary environmental richness proper to each stage, including the enrichment of his/her own interpretations.

Some of the skills enabling the child to use the environment are intuitive: touching, moving. . . but they can be sharpened. There are other skills which are formally taught: decoding, symbolizing, valuing, communicating, deciding.

As the child matures, the teacher's role evolves in the direction of more egalitarian co-learning until, by the time the child reaches formal operations, the mode is dialogue, mutual exploration, reflection, and co-decision making. If the decision-making is real and affects the social situation and the negotiation of power, the action is praxis. Praxis is the mode most appropriate in adult education, whether the group is at a submerged, a naive, or a critical stage. However, at "submerged" stages teachers may need to take more leadership in organizing learning environments and preparing the way for increasingly critical perceptions.

The concepts of dialogue and dialectic are guiding concepts for developmental education and hence reach down into pre-operational stages, to whatever degree the learner is able to dialogue. The norm is not that of the teacher: "The child cannot make a good decision" but that of the learner's



matrix of mental constructs. He/she assimilates information or skills that he is ready to use and leaves the rest.

In the adult social sphere the same thing holds. Revolutionary leadership does not judge: "They would not understand and so we decide for them." If they are not ready for dialogue, Freire recommends dialoguing about dialogue.

Assumption 6:

Knowledge is a dynamic re-presentation of reality co-created by persons, in relation. Praxis is critical to understanding.

Such knowledge is in tension between two positions. On the one hand, there is the position that assumes knowledge is a body of content: facts and interpretations, to be gleaned from the environment (including the human environment) and stored for future use. This position implies that the most effective pedagogy is that which:

- (a) enables learners to glean facts: that is, promotes acquisition skills such as observation, categorization reading. . .
- (b) makes facts readily accessible: by lecture, readings, teaching
- (c) provides interpretations of facts (theory)

On the other hand, we have seen Freire's position that knowledge is the process of continuously analyzing and naming reality, and continuously creating one's own re-interpretation of it.

Here is the dialectic: knowledge is indeed a highly personal creation, arrived at by continuing mutual reflection, but it is also a growing ability to use skills and theory in understanding and interpreting the environment, and so implies the acquisition of skills and theories (tools of analysis).

### Goals and the Utopian Vision

Pedagogy is future-directed and has a double vision: (1) the individual (and group) enabled to interact with the environment in ways that will permit the greatest personal development and self-determination, and (2) the creation of a society which furthers creative self-actualization, and humanization for all its members. (Hereafter identified as an "open society.") It is important, if we are to follow Freire's guiding, to articulate the Utopian vision. Utopia implies denunciation and annunciation. Throughout this work there has been denunciation of practices and situations that prevent growth and self-determination. Educational practice tends to confine itself to the first goal identified above and deduces from it a number of goals and objectives. But

the meaning of education rests with the second. What kind of world will we educate toward? What culture (system of practices) will be maximally reinforcing, individually and communally? I postulate that it is a society characterized by cooperation rather than competition, by communication rather than prescription or isolation, and by sharing of resources, personal and material, on a basis that favors the collectivity rather than individuals at the expense of the collectivity. This is a community in the sense Macmurray and Freire have described; it is based on love.

The promotion of community does not, however, mean the oppression of the individual, nor his rights, needs, satisfactions nor ideosyncracies, nor does communal reflection and public scrutiny eliminate withdrawal to reflect, experiment and write. That would imply polarity and mutual incompatibility between individual and group ends. The model is, once more, dialectic. The withdrawal of a Michaelangelo to pursue a highly reinforcing work alone was stimulated and born in the social context, (even though his motive may not have been community reinforcement but rather satisfaction of an inner "urge") and was supported and reinforced by the community, who gained from it. What is in opposition to community is not the individual but individualistic priorities, the egocentric, competitive pursuit of individualistic ends that necessitate the oppression or deprivation of other individuals and the community, the substitution of competitive for cooperative modes,

the failure to trust the other's competence or good-will, and hence the felt need to provide for self even at the expense of the other.

This articulation is admittedly Utopian. There is a world of change, in societal structures, economic models, and interpersonal dynamics between here and there. But if that is where we would like to be, even though we might not arrive in several life-times, there are some very definite directional changes implied now.

In the light of this end-state, informed by cooperation and personal commitment to the good of others, a community may structure its government, economics, culture--and within it, educational and religious practices, in a variety of ways, experiment with a variety of technologies. Many of these ways are admirable in their potential for effectiveness and are in practice already. The defects of the present metaphorical approach fall into one of the following cases:

Case I It has the cart before the horse; the technology is focused on, before we have envisioned or committed ourselves to an ultimate end-state,

Case II there is an end-state verbalized but there is no significant commitment to it, and the technology is incompatible with it

Case III - - there is a defined, but not public, end desired by the few who are in control, and pursued by the technological

means available, which end state is incompatible with the mythologies that are current and publically acceptable.

Let me exemplify:

The child-development, organic, or horticultural metaphors, focus on technologies that allow "growth" and development of potential. By structuring the environment they presuppose values and control, without having made explicit a total philosophy of the person or the Utopian end-state. (Case I) Lacking a direction, they are presumably less coercive, but in fact, merely less efficient, as they direct (by environmental structures) now in one direction, now in another.

The inconsistencies become evident in the introduction of small competitive practices into a self-pacing, "developmental" mode of learning, in hierarchical, competitive, system organizations of "open" kinds of classrooms where "open" is supposed to mean child-directed.

The mechanistic metaphors in education might seem to escape at least the accusation of undirectedness. But do they? If the end-state desired is the creation or perpetuation of a coercive, competitive, hierarchical society where those in power positions rule, decide for, and reap maximum gains (of wealth, stability and power) from those ruled, then the present mechanistic vision of learner and "system" is



consistent and directed to that end. This end however is  
inconsistent with current mythology. (Case III)

If the end state is verbalized in any measure as a cooperative, mutually benefitting society, the technology of education, described as machine-oriented in the preceding section, is inconsistent and counter productive.

(Case II) I suspect that in all cases our education methodology suffers from a lack of a Utopia.

Freire seems not altogether to escape this criticism. It is possible--it has been done--to read him with an excitement about "radical" psycho-social method and efficiency of approaches to literacy or to politicization, and still not have understood, or verbalized, much less owned, the Utopian vision described in Chapter 4 of the Pedagogy. I believe also that Freire himself was "led by the Word." He began with a "means-orientation." How promote political awareness? How prepare a semi-feudal people to participate in democracy? How promote literacy, mechanical, political or historical? But he was led to evolve a Utopian vision of the human community, an end-orientation--and to posit it as a necessary philosophical framework for cultural revolution, a framework within which denunciation of present political, educational, social and religious practice makes sense, suggests, and monitors, a new technology.

### Content and Process

Both information and skills constitute the content area of curriculum development. Process is a term I shall use to indicate the system organization, including methodology in the classroom but also all the other processes by which students get into classroom, negotiate the system and arrive, or fail to arrive, at chosen goals.

The process, at every level in Freire's approach, is some form of praxis. Let us consider praxis as a subset of what I have called "interaction with the environment." It brings, however, a peculiar characteristic to the interaction: its content is political and its control is within the subjects involved. Only in some measure is this possible with very young children, for whom the environments are arranged by another. But the dialectic tension between this situation and the ideal of complete subject-centered control keeps the process evolving--with the age of the child--in the direction of the latter pole. Praxis is also group action, and as the group become more sophisticated, it identifies more accurately causal relations and directs action to these points. In the evolution of consciousness, praxis is to the group what experimentation is to the child. Both depend upon optimal dissonance (Piaget: "disequilibrium") between what is known and what actually is, between the "is" and the "ought to be," which is another way of viewing the "contradictions."

But praxis is only one detail of the total process. Let us return to the goal and ask: What kind of pedagogy will prepare persons to live as free, self-determining members of a relational society and to create a relational society? The skills and content needed will focus on the dialectic: individual/collectivity, rather than on either pole. The "content" flows from the problems in that dialectic. As adults, the problems to be solved are societal: political, economic, interpersonal and intergroup. Many of these problems, perhaps all, trace to the fear--orientation of individuals composing the societies. If changes for the future are to be in the direction of dialogic community, pedagogy must be relational today. I learn to live by living; to relate by relating. If I want to live relationally in an adult world I need to experience a microcosm of that world in the years of preparation, one where real problems are solved, rather than live in an irrelevant situation which bears no resemblance to the problems and activities with which the rest of life will cope.

The "school" microcosm is selective and sequentially designed; not all the pressures nor the seriousness of adulthood can impinge on children at once, or before skills to cope have been allowed to develop. But the problems, and realities, that are presented must be paradigmatic of the realities of future living, and must grow out of present living, not be contrived or totally irrelevant.

Are reading, writing, and arithmetic part of this schema? Insofar as they are part of the present and adult needs of these children, yes. Decoding, symbolizing, expressing and every form of communicating, as well as analyzing, synthesizing, valuing, problem-solving, decision-making, acting for change, evaluating, are skills needed in praxis. Hence these are direct objects of curriculum rather than indirect fringe benefits vaguely hoped for. Freedom is required in the individual who is to live effectively in dialogic community. He/she is both liberated and liberator in that community--a life-long dialectic. But freedom also is a "conquest" (Freire) and part of curriculum. There is no effort here to detail the curriculum since in every community it must be based on

- a clear articulation of the goal of dialogic, creative community
- a clear diagnosis of where the individual, the community and the "educatees" are now
- the strategies and time-frame that will lead toward the goal
- the perceptions and choices of all the learners involved

This concept of a school is now new. Our "schools" could be structured as real-life laboratories where these skills (and their related content in history, psychology, science, literature. . . ) could be learned in order to negotiate the daily living of the students, learned as they become problems in daily living. In their present structures schools instill concepts of dualism, division,



competition, and inadequacy of pupils as compared with adults: teachers and other authorities. The matrix is one of separation and division--categorization of students by class or track, or even by "learning style" or "problems." These problems are supposedly in the student who cannot fit into the system, and are to be eliminated. The problems I am suggesting in a problematizing education are in the situation, are the content of praxis, and are to be solved. The matrix within which relational learning can evolve by praxis can only be one where the qualities of dialogic community are present: heterocentric, accepting and trusting, cooperating, comfortable with change, communicating.

Such an environment could be progressively created within the micro-cosm of the "school" if these values were basic to the design. Difficulties with it would be among the problems for community praxis. The figure on the following page summarizes some of the appropriate content for curriculum in this model, but unless it emerges from praxis and in response to problems reflected on together it too could further prescription and division rather than the goals described above.



Access to Information

Environmental Matrix

Information

Skills

Attitudes

Decoding skills  
"Thinking skills"

Tools of analysis  
organizers,  
theories

Opportunities for  
Reflection,  
Dialogue, Climate  
of respect, and  
mutual valuing

Relational  
communication  
Reflection

Trust, respect  
love, curiosity  
...

Interaction  
with  
persons

Development of  
personal and  
group potential  
for full human-  
ization

Freedom to  
explore and  
reflect

The "disciplines"  
cognitive and  
affective

Experiences of  
self-competence,  
experimentation,  
acceptance by  
others, discovery,  
...

Valuing  
Decision-  
making...

Self-confidence  
freedom, aware-  
ness of self-  
others-the  
world, the  
unknown

and  
action

Dialectic of  
self-determin-  
ation by  
individual and by  
group

Ability to  
analyze what is,  
to name, to  
compare...

Understanding of  
history, politics,  
economics, be-  
havioral sciences  
Of the mechanisms  
and structures  
that inform  
society

Experiences of  
reflection  
Discussion  
Co-learning  
Experience of  
the malleability  
of the social and  
political situation

Ability to  
create change  
(plan, fanta-  
size, strate-  
gize, etc.)

Awareness of  
possibilities,  
comfort with  
change...

on the  
situation

Creation of  
an open society

Figure 3: Summary of Environment and Skills for Relational Education

## Conclusion

This study has situated Paulo Freire's work in its social and historical context and shown the centrality of praxis to his methodology, his philosophy, and his personal development. By its emphasis on the dialectic it has answered some of the questions raised by serious readers of Freire, but not all. However, the extrapolation of his ideas in this chapter indicates that the solutions lie in the dialectic tension: both/and rather than in the absolutizing of either pole of the contradictions described earlier. Still unresolved but also in dialectic tension are the following:

The contradiction between faith in the people and awareness of the internalized oppressor in the people. This contradiction poses a dilemma for the educator.

The contradiction between the necessity for dialogic action and the urgency of the need for change, which seems to mandate more efficieint, prescriptive methods than praxis.

The seeming impossibility of attainment of the Utopian vision: a cooperative, dialogic, loving community-- in tension with the need for radical change of a system

that is, in essential structures, prescriptive and  
oppressive.

The danger of a quasi-mystical obliteration of the  
rights and needs of the individual in the glorification  
of the collectivity

Macmurray identified the roots of fear and love behind the oppositions and related the organizations of societies to one or the other climate. The basic human dialectic is between the requirements for self-preservation and self-forgetfulness. As already indicated, the latter requires a stronger motive than "should's and ought's," a conviction of the value of the Utopia and commitment to it.

In its implications for pedagogy the study indicates the need for further study:

- (1) to develop and test sequential steps in the individuals' growing awareness of self, others, the world, the social and political situation,
- (2) to develop methods to bring to bear on educational practice, knowledge already available about steps in acquisition of decoding, symbolizing, and information-gathering skills,

- (3) to identify, develop, and integrate into curriculum skills for negotiating the environment: communication skills, valuing and decision-making skills, planning, strategizing and action skills, support skills;
- (4) to diagnose with the learner/community the information required to act effectively upon the existential situation and develop mastery steps, sequences, codifications to transmit it.

In all of these

- (5) to develop technologies and environments for learning that will promote sequential development while eliciting and honoring control and decision on the part of the individual.

There also needs to be well-controlled research to demonstrate conclusively that dialogue, cooperation and mutual sharing maximizes creativity and productivity both of individuals and of the group, rather than lowering efficiency.

But unless there is an integral relationship of these to the content areas of the political situation, we will once again have a humanistic approach that lacks the seriousness, the other-centeredness, and the commitment of praxis.

## PART III: Chapter 3: Notes

1. Properly, Pedagogy refers to the instruction of children; andragogy to adults, but because of common usage and for the sake of simplicity, Pedagogy will be the term used in this section.

2. See: Jordan & Streets, "The Anisa Model" and "Guiding the Process of Becoming" as well as a large body of literature on Piaget.



## GLOSSARY

- AGENT:** a person capable of purposive action effecting change;
- BANKING EDUCATION:** a mode of instruction which attempts to transfer (deposit) items of information from the teacher to the learner, who receives and stores them for future use.
- CONSCIENTIZACAO:** Conscientization: a progressive awakening to awareness on the part of an individual or a group, of the social, political, or economic contradictions of a given existential reality; a perception of alternative structures, and possibly of means of achievement.
- CONTRADICTION:** a key concept in Freirean analysis, corresponding to Marx/ and Mao Tse Tung's use of "dialectic." It carries both the literal meaning: opposing conceptions of reality linked together in the same phenomenon, and the dialectic requirement: the tension to be preserved between these "contradictories" until a higher synthesis is reached.
- CULTURE CIRCLE:** a discussion group led by a facilitator drawn from the same population, in which culturally relevant topics are discussed with a view to increased literacy in all the senses defined below.
- DEVELOPMENT vs. MODERNIZATION:** the movement of a people through the sociological stages and corresponding levels of consciousness described below, usually including technological development and autonomy of economic control.
- "Development is achieved only when the locus of decision for the transformations suffered by a being is found within and not outside of him." (1973)
- Modernization is an increase in technological skill and democratic practices without any real change in the consciousness of the people or the locus of decision-making.
- "Modernization is always associated with the cultural invasion process, through which the central societies attempt to lubricate their preponderance in the dependent ones." (1973)

**FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS:** a psychic condition in which the role of the self's agency (volition, creativity, responsibility) in the production and maintenance of the social world is obscured by interpretations of reality which conceal or disguise these dynamics from the self. (Stanley 1972)

**LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS:** described by Freire as distinctive and more or less irreversible developmental stages, corresponding to phases of sociological development. (See also DeWitt, 1971)

**SEMI-INTRANSITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS:** ("submerged consciousness") a mode of consciousness corresponding to a closed society, and characterized by limitation of attention to biological necessities of survival, by a lack of a sense of history or causality, by magical explanations and fatalism, or by unawareness of oppression.

**NAIVE-TRANSITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS:** ("emerging consciousness") a mode of consciousness corresponding to emerging societies, whose members are aware of, and able to respond to problems posed from the surrounding world, but are unaware of economic structures, real causal relations, the cost of change, or the degree to which their consciousness has been conditioned by the ideas and mode of life of preceding periods of dependence. Naive-transitive consciousness is easily manipulated by charismatic leaders.

**CRITICAL-TRANSITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS:** ("inserting consciousness") a mode of consciousness corresponding to an open society, whose members penetrate beneath the surface phenomena to perceive causal relationships, recognize problems, and evaluate old and new solutions. Critical consciousness is born out of, and gives birth to, on-going praxis.

**FANATACIZED CONSCIOUSNESS:** (irrational or "floating" consciousness) a mode of consciousness corresponding to a massified society and characterized by acceptance of myths and propaganda, illusions of freedom and control, and gullibility in place of criticism.

Semi-intransitive, naive-transitive, and fanaticized consciousness are all forms of FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS.

**FREEDOM:** the ability and opportunity to make and carry out significant choices about one's own life and destiny.

Closely linked to the concept of oppression is that of freedom. Human beings who have long been buried in an oppressive situation ("submerged") are not freed simply by the fact of removal of restraints. While "submerged" they are incapable of seeing alternatives to their situation or to their helplessness. Consciousness-raising over time is needed. In this sense, education becomes a work of liberation.

**GENERATIVE THEME:** the prevailing preoccupation of an entire group or people which is manifest in conversation and metaphor, and is the key to their existing situation.

Example: the theme of "discipline" in a public school.

**GENERATIVE WORD:** a word common in the daily vocabulary of a people, expressive of some facet of the generative theme, and capable, because of this fact and of its syllabic nature, of generating other words.

**ILLITERACY:** unconsciousness of the internalized oppressor.

silence, because deprived of one's own "word" (word = power and right to "name the world" in the sense defined below).

lack of realization that "men's actions as such are transforming, creative, and recreative".

inability to read and to write material relevant to one's own life.

**INTENTIONAL:** able to act with purpose.

purposively choosing the ends of action and the means thereto.

Conscientization is "effective intentionality."

**INTERNALIZED OPPRESSOR:** ideas about the world and one's inadequacy to take a decision-making role in it, which have been introduced by the oppressed, because of what has been said and done to them (or to their forebears) by those in power. Even though the situation may now permit self-determination, this mental conditioning causes the people to choose for themselves the same kinds of things that once were prescribed for them. Similarly, if they attain positions of power, they maintain the same oppressive structures over others.

**LIBERALISM:** (Market liberalism) a mode of social organization indirectly predicated on the assumption that no public consensus on values is possible. (Stanley, 1972)

Freire seems to straddle this position, stating that the educator must not impose his/her own cultural values, yet defining clearly a value position, and also claiming that no education can be neutral; i. e., no education can merely be technical training.

Stanley comments that the result of market liberalism is that values, purposes, and vocabularies dealing with them are relegated to the private, "non-objective" domain, and are not publicly scrutinized or refined. For example, "Civil Liberties" essentially protect the right to determine values only on the private level. (1972)

**LIMIT SITUATION:** a situation which, by the contradictions it contains, imposes limits on human beings that make human development and functioning difficult or impossible, and imply tasks (LIMIT ACTS) to overcome the contradictions.

The LIMIT SITUATION is a boundary. Beyond it lies the area of UNTESTED FEASIBILITY. (see below)

**LIMIT ACTS:** acts which challenge or test the limits of the LIMIT SITUATION.

**LITERACY:** a quality of consciousness by which men together critically perceive and name, analyze and transform, reality, whether socio-economic or humanistic.



"the ability to speak the word and transform reality."

"the ability to read, write and compute with the functional competence needed for meeting the requirements of adult living." (Harmon, 1970)

The first and second definitions are those given by Freire, into which he assumes the third, or common understanding. He rejects the adequacy of the third without the first.

**NAMING:** determining and interpreting the nature of some aspect of reality;

identifying the contradictions in some aspect of reality.

In some places Freire seems to imply that NAMING and PRAXIS are co-extensive.

**PEDAGOGY:** narrowly defined: theory and methodology of teaching or instruction.

used by Freire as coextensive with "education."

**POPULISM:** a new stage of political life for those emerging from the "culture of silence," characterized by manipulation of the emerging classes by popular leadership which mediates between them and the power elites.

**PRAXIS:** reflection-action cycle aimed at transforming reality;

related to "practice" but including the cyclic intervention of reflection on action;

to be distinguished from both ACTIVISM and VERBALISM.

**ACTIVISM:** action without the modifying effect of reflection.

**VERBALISM:** naming, theorizing, reflection, but without base in action or translation into action steps; hence not a true "naming."

**OPPRESSION:** any state or situation in which one person, or group, makes decisions for another, prescribes another's thought, or circumscribes another's action.

So universal is the theme of domination or oppression in Freire's eyes that he divides the world into oppressors and oppressed. The division is criticized on the grounds that it is simplistic, dangerous, and ignores the real-life intertwining of the two categories. However, Freire is aware of this fact and seems not to mean that there is a clean geographical separability between oppressors and oppressed. He recognizes the INTERNALIZED OPPRESSOR and the weight of an oppressive system.

**OPPRESSED:** anyone who lives in a state of "contradiction" with respect to one or more of the aspects of reality over which he/she is capable of exerting control;

those for whom another makes significant decisions without, or against, their will

(not included: those obviously incapable of decision-making such as infants).

**OPPRESSOR:** one who prescribes or dictates to another;

one who, knowingly or not, stands in the way of another person's naming and transforming his/her life situation.

**STAGES OF SOCIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT:** more or less irreversible stages through which groups seem to move as they become progressively more capable of, and involved in participatory government.

**CLOSED SOCIETIES:** a society or portion thereof, characterized by dependence, total lack of popular participation in public affairs (culture of silence) and rigid hierarchical social structure.

**EMERGING ("splitting") SOCIETIES:** societies in transition from total dependence to self-government, still silent with respect to external controlling societies but beginning to demand a voice in public affairs internally; easily controlled by populist leaders.

MASSIFIED SOCIETIES: a deterioration of democracy into a type of society "which makes consumerism, technological development, and law and order, but without exercise of justice or freedom, its goals; "and which excludes, practically speaking, the common people from a voice in decision-making." (1973)

TECHNICISM: (in education) an abortive attempt to teach the means and the tools associated with education/technical training, divorced from cultural and value implications;

the mechanization of education, and so of the educatee.

the radical disjunction between the application of reason to means as opposed to ends; "a situation of society in which human reason is bent to the service of instrumental rationality. The ends or purposes of instruments are not subjected to intensive (public) rational analysis. Rather ends are either taken for granted, left for private determination, or articulated on a level so platitudinous as to be nearly irrational." (Stanley, 1972)

Area of UNTESTED FEASIBILITY: possibilities for action which have not yet been seriously examined or considered viable.

UTOPIA vs UTOPIC:

UTOPIA: an ideal situation, feasible of attainment, the annunciation of which requires the denunciation of the present reality.

Freire calls his vision and method "utopian" by which he means "one that denounces and announces"; denounces the present limiting situation, and announces the ideal to be striven for, at whatever cost. He distinguishes it (1971) from

UTOPIC: a characteristic of those efforts (for liberation) which seek quick ideal results but misunderstand the cost and the depth at which the "internalized oppressor" controls the person.

APPENDIX

## THE USE OF THE NEGATIVE IN MACMURRAY

Macmurray's use of the term "negative" includes both the concepts of "contradictory" and of "contrary" in older terminologies. For example, the negative of "white" is "not-white." The field included in "not-white" ranges from the absolute extinction of color: black, which is the contradiction of white, through a spectrum of colors, all of which qualify as contraries of white, or "non-white." In a sense "white" ends where "non-white" begins. So we might say that the contradictory "non-white" limits and helps to define (constitute) "white." This is the sense in which a positive is defined or delimited by its negative. The color continuum may approach the white end through lighter and lighter tones of grey, pink, blue, green, yellow and cream.

Since black ideally is the absence of all color and white ideally the fullness of all the colors (colors of light transmitted or reflected) we could say that the entire spectrum, including black, is contained in white; i.e., white is a positive which both includes and is bounded by its negative. This is a definition, since to define means, etymologically, to set the boundaries.

Macmurray then looks at human action and concludes that it bears the same kind of relation to reflection that white does to black. Human activity, or action, must include thought. It is possible to abstain from overt action



for the sake of thought. Therefore thought need not necessarily include action. ("Ivory Tower" thinkers) So, to use a quantitative analogy, action is the larger quantity; thought is a subset of action. This subset is what Macmurray calls the "negative" or opposite of action. Consciousness or human awareness of action has a similar subset, habitual and automatic activity. Habitual activity can be brought to the level of awareness but usually is not at this level unless something "goes wrong." Autonomic activity is always below the level of awareness and its malfunction is signaled only by pain. We could consider a number of continua where the model of a positive defined by and including its own negative are exemplified. These are drawn from Macmurray and offered at the risk that taken out of context they may obscure rather than enlighten.

-	+
Reflection	Action
Attention without purpose defined	Intention includes attention + purpose
Organic activity synthesis of nutritional & other activities in child	Personal action found in relations with others beginning with Mother
Fear	Love
Total dependence of one person on another	Mutual interdependence of free persons
Motivation valuation is from another	Valuation of object by self
Autonomic activity unconscious, unintended	Conscious activity reflective, intentional

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