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## Stencilled Occasional Paper

"SOME USES OF ENGLISH: DENYS THOMPSON AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS".

by

Brian Doyle



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Development of English in Secondary Schools"

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

For almost forty years Denys Thompson has been a prolific writer of articles, books and reviews on most aspects of the teaching of English, on the role of "culture" in society, and on much else besides. He has edited numerous anthologies of articles, stories and poems, mostly for use in secondary schools. He edited the journal English in Schools from its inception in 1939 (having previously from 1933 co-edited Scrutiny, of which the new journal was in many senses a specialized offshoot); and, when the new journal became The Use of English in 1949, he continued as editor for a further twenty years.

Under Thompson's guidance a version of the Leavisian "culture" ideology first permeated and then dominated the teaching of English in secondary - especially grammar - schools. Yet his work is little known outside that select group of teachers who have been readers of his journal over the years (there were 5,000 of them when Thompson retired from the editorship in 1969). Although his name is known in connection with the book Culture and Environment (1933) which he co-wrote with F.R. Leavis, it is not often recognised that he has been a principal agent for the furtherance of the positions outlined in that book in the place where these positions have made their greatest impact. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that it has been in the context of the school situation that the ideology of "literary culture" has shown itself in its full force as a generator and guarantor of a level of professional self-esteem and disciplinary unity by virtue of its role as the defining element of "English" as a school subject.

The work of Denys Thompson provides in many ways the most advanced articulation of the "discourse on community" usually associated with the Leavises and the journal Scrutiny.<sup>1</sup> He has produced this work under the day to day pressures of the school situation, a feature of course absent from the life of F.R. Leavis, pressures which have left their distinctive imprint on the discourse as a practical force. Thus he has been instrumental in providing a professional focus for many teachers of English, a focus which led to the formation of the National Association for the Teaching of English on Thompson's direct initiative and with the backing of the various Use of English readers' groups which had sprung up by the early nineteen-sixties.

The purpose of this study is to make sense of this life's work, neither as a tribute to nor as an attack on one individual, but rather as the representative production of a movement both ideological and practical within English in education: it is an attempt to understand this movement within the context of larger historical and institutional trends.

Thus the approach in this study has been to attempt a compressed but comprehensible account of the emergence and rise of English as a school discipline during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and then to look in some critical detail at the impact and import of the movement represented here by the work of Denys Thompson, with respect to developments within English from the early beginnings of that movement in the 1930s right up to the present day.

The Study is divided into two parts. Part I, "The Attack on Classicism", shows how "English" came to be thought of as a subject in the first place and how this was directly related to a challenge to the Classical curriculum launched from a specific class base. This is followed by an account of the way in which English went on to supplant the Classics within the greater part of the school system in the period before the Second World War. Part II, "Some Uses of English", shows how Denys Thompson helped to consolidate English in its new role by developing a powerful set of aims and purposes which both defined the fledgling discipline as a professional "space" and set in motion a mission which attempted the colonisation of the surrounding areas by taking part of the function of English to be the provision of a "significant context" for all other elements within the curriculum.

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### SECTION I ENGLISH IN EDUCATION TO 1902

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the large-scale social and economic upheaval known as the Industrial Revolution had as yet found little response in a structure of formal education in England. University education continued to be offered only by the ancient establishments at Oxford and Cambridge and catered solely, as did the nine "public" schools, for the sons of aristocratic families. The endowed grammar schools, to some extent at least, served the needs of middle class families although the use of the ancient endowments often serviced the financial interest of the teachers rather than their pupils.<sup>2</sup> If any response at all to the socio-economic upheaval of the time is to be found, it is in attitudes to the education of working class, although, in fact, the lower classes had little contact with education except in the form of moral training offered by the Sunday schools.<sup>3</sup> In any event, nothing can be found at this time within the process of formal education which would correspond to "English" as a subject or academic discipline in the modern sense.

In complete contrast, by the time of Denys Thompson's birth in 1907, a national system of education extending to all social classes had been constructed, a system premised upon a basic distinction between a type of education called "elementary" for the working class, and a "higher" type of education from which members of this class were largely excluded.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, to supervise this system a central government department had been instituted and, in place of the mass of individually elected school boards which had developed in the later nineteenth century, 328 local education authorities operated under the control of respectable local residents assisted by representatives of the respective Local Authorities.<sup>5</sup> A system of compulsory schooling now operated on the basis of a clear definition of aims and variable social functions with respect to types of school and different social classes; and a new fledgling discipline was well on the way to occupying the position of curricular core, around which such aims and functions could be articulated in the form of teaching practices. The subject known as "English" was in the process of consolidation at all levels of the national education system.

Much of the real work of consolidation was to take place during the childhood of Denys Thompson and, indeed, in the years following his graduation from Cambridge in 1930 he was himself to play a prominent part in the last stages of a further important phase of reconstruction and definition. However, before looking at the modes by which English was consolidated in its position of central focus within education, it is illuminating to examine the conditions under which "English" came to be thought of as a "subject" or "discipline" in the first place.

Undoubtedly the preconditions for such an emergence are related to that failure of the education system to respond, as it were spontaneously, to larger social and economic developments in the early nineteenth century, which has already been mentioned. Thus, once large scale State intervention was forced by the requirements of the late nineteenth century economy in its battle against powerful competition from, most notably, Germany and the United States, some means had to be sought which would relatively quickly provide a workforce attuned to utilitarian interests but also under the sway of a suitably disciplined social "character". Under such formative pressures "English" developed as a means of providing a suitable "mental training" and basic "literacy" vastly more subtle than earlier and more directly utilitarian modes of education in the forms of monitorial instruction and payment by results. It should be remembered that English, from its very inception, performed a role wider than that of any other "subject", being rather a means of approaching the whole curriculum (against the claims for the potential of "science" for this role as propounded by such people as Huxley)<sup>6</sup>. In order to fully appreciate this process some attention must now be given to the general history of education in the nineteenth century.

At the level of government an interest in education was expressed first not within an autonomous educational context but rather in terms of ad hoc needs within, for example, the armed forces and the industrial factories. Prior to the introduction of a general measure of compulsion in 1876, education of a compulsory kind had already been introduced for the children of soldiers, paupers and convicts<sup>7</sup>. The emphasis on education within such dispersed sectors had in fact tended to be expressed in terms of a combination of industrial utility and such modes of "character - building" as were deemed appropriate to the sustenance of the nation's "constitution".

It is not therefore surprising that one of the earliest (1802) Parliamentary Acts involving education concerned itself with the health and morals of apprentices and was followed fairly soon after by reports of Parliamentary Committees on the Education of the Lower Orders (1816-18)<sup>3</sup>. At a more general ideological level, and more or less independently of the governmental sectors, a particular "marriage" or ideological condensation had occurred which was characteristic of the formation as a whole. This involved a merger between the forces aiming at the inculcation of the lower classes into the dominant moral norms and those disposed towards factory organization, which produced a strange educational "offspring" known as the monitorial system. It was not long

before governmental interests offered financial sustenance (in the shape of buildings grants from 1833) to the two (antagonistic) religious organizations most responsible for operating this system<sup>9</sup>. The Committee of Council responsible for issuing such grants laid down (in 1839) four principal objectives for schools: religious instruction, general instruction, moral training and habits of industry; and followed this a year later by introducing another form of organisation gleaned from the factory system - the principle of inspection<sup>10</sup>.

These moves were but the first of a series of measures which involved progressive governmental intervention in the organization of education. In its first phase this process culminated in the three pioneering Government Commissions of the 1850s and 1860s and provided a prelude to what Eric Hobsbawm has identified as one of the century's major bouts of "administrative spring-cleaning" between 1867 and 1874<sup>11</sup>. Thus, it is in the specific social and cultural relations of this period that are to be found the first significant developments of a disciplinary nexus which was to become "as indisputably the cultural core of a liberal education for the mass of the people as the classics had traditionally been for the elite"<sup>12</sup>.

Something must then be said of the disposition of that cultural moment at least at the level of education. From the point of view of the later move of English to curriculum core the findings of the Taunton Commission of 1868 are of central significance. This was but one of four enquiries which comprehensively investigated the state of education in England at all its levels<sup>13</sup>. The Report of the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge (1852-3) and the Clarendon Commission on the Public Schools recommended only partial reforms and certainly did nothing to undermine the dominance of Classical language and literature within the hierarchy of ruling-class educational values. In contrast the Newcastle Commission on Elementary Education (1861) provided an important precondition for the institution of a completely new system of "sound and cheap instruction"<sup>14</sup> for the lower classes based upon payment by results (the monitorial system by now being discredited) and backed up by a system of inspection. Moral training and habits of industry were to be inculcated in the working class by methods based upon criteria of efficiency and cheapness. In Lowe's words to the House of Commons in 1863: "I cannot promise the House that this system will be an economical one and I cannot promise that it will be an efficient one, but I can promise that it shall be one or the other. If it is not cheap it shall be efficient; if it is not efficient it shall be cheap"<sup>15</sup>.

Up to this point there had been little to indicate the emergence of English as an educational discipline. And here it is that the Taunton Commission on endowed schools takes on importance for later developments. With characteristic mid-Victorian directness the Commission's Report divided the schools under investigation into three grades based upon the social class of their respective pupils. Of these the first two grades of

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school functioned to meet the demands of all the children of the wealthier social groups.

The first grade provided education to 18 years in a manner close to the aims and methods of public schools and operated therefore within a thoroughly classical framework.

The second grade, to 16 years, provided schooling for children of the "middle-middle-class" or mercantile" class ("tradesmen, shopkeepers, all who live by trade"); a schooling which was expected to provide an education useful for business, and therefore having a curricular emphasis based around English rather than the "classics".

Finally, the third grade schools, to 14 years, served the educational needs of smaller tenant farmers, small tradesmen, and superior artisans. In this case the schools were expected to emphasise "very good" reading, writing and arithmetic so as to provide what was described as "a clerk's education".

The Taunton Report shows clearly for the first time the point of emergence of an opposition to the Classical cultural order and the precise class base from which this opposition was being launched, as well as the beginning of a tendency to construct an "English" alternative around which to centralise this opposition. As has already been mentioned, English suffered some opposition here, especially from the claims for science. However, as Terry Eagleton has indicated<sup>16</sup>, science with its utilitarian emphasis was unable to compete with the ideological potency of versions of "English" underpinned by notions of a "culture" which aimed to mobilise "national" effort in the interests of the "common good".

The culmination of this phase of governmental interest in education can be identified with Forster's Education Act of 1870 in its explicit specification of the need for an all-embracing public education system in order to achieve "industrial prosperity" and sustain the "constitutional system"<sup>17</sup>. In all areas without "voluntary" schools, Board Schools were to be set up under the control of elected local bodies more or less independent of the central Education Department. During this period English literature and grammar were made (under Arnold's influence) into a "specific subject" for teaching to individual pupils in Standards IV, V and VI; and, from 1882, "English" was changed from an optional to a compulsory "classic" subject. The 1880s also witnessed a rapid expansion of English in girls' schools and mechanics' institutes, although not in public schools and the universities<sup>18</sup>.

The next round of major administrative re-organization arose out of the general confusion which had developed regarding the responsibilities for secondary ("higher") education both at national and local levels, as well as the increasingly farcical operation of the system of payment by results in the elementary sector (it was finally abandoned in 1865 and replaced by capitation grants). A major outcome was the Education Act of 1902 which made the counties and county boroughs also into education authorities



which were obliged to appoint education committees including non-elected members having educational knowledge<sup>19</sup>.

The important implications of these changes for the teaching of English will be considered below. But, to conclude the present account of 19th century developments, it is worth pointing out that by the end of the century a deeply-rooted class cleavage within society in general was clearly reflected in the strict distinction made between the two formal sectors of education known as "elementary" and "higher". At that time the notion of primary and secondary stages had not been developed, instead "elementary" and "higher" were conceived as completely separate forms fulfilling explicit class-based functions<sup>20</sup>. Within this distinction, education for the working class was articulated and practiced according to a requirement to implant a "habit of industry" and to achieve an ideological "inoculation" against "sedition"<sup>21</sup>. "English", thus far, had only a small place in the process of achieving "mental discipline" or the cultural formation of "character". It had, however, begun to have such a place for some groups within the bourgeoisie, a place which was to become increasingly important in the processes of internal re-ordering within this class during the following half century.

## SECTION 2 THE ENGLISH CHALLENGE TO CLASSICISM 1902-1939

The period in Denys Thompson's life which led to his arrival at Cambridge in the late 1920s was characterised by a massive expansion in schooling provision, a thorough reformulation of the aims and stages of education and, most directly relevant here, a greatly increased struggle for a uniform definition of "English" as both a school and university subject<sup>22</sup>.

This great expansion covers the period during which the so-called Revolution in English Studies took place at Cambridge<sup>23</sup>. While unusual institutional conditions at Cambridge may explain the particular form of the event there, it is necessary, as Francis Mulhern has argued<sup>24</sup>, to see the "Revolution" as but a part of the general process by which relations within the national cultural ensemble were re-arranged during the post-war period. The social recomposition of the group of intelligentsia who inhabited this particular "discursive universe" brought in its wake a parallel recomposition at the level of intellectual or academic disciplinary order. Perry Anderson has shown<sup>25</sup> why it was within literary criticism that the full strains of this restructuring were most in evidence: the peculiarly English absence of either a sociological or marxist framework in which to make a total representation of the socio-moral order allowed such a totalizing force to emerge in the unlikely domain of English Studies. However, it should also be remembered that such had exactly been the role of "Classics" during the nineteenth century, and it was therefore the role of "English" to negotiate a "New Classicism" on behalf of the new social groups in the process of entering the post-war academic intelligentsia. In Cambridge, at least, such re-negotiation was only partially successful and it is worth noting that this "spiritual home" which the

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Leavisites claimed for themselves was in fact less than willing to offer them a place by its "hearth"<sup>26</sup>.

Nevertheless, the Scrutiny movement, initiated by Leavis and Thompson among others, did provide a "professionally-chartered discourse"<sup>27</sup> which helped mediate the entry of a new social layer into the national intelligentsia and, perhaps more importantly, provided a framework on which to construct a curricular core within secondary schools such as to allow a much larger group to develop a unified sense of intellectual and moral purpose and, in addition, a feeling of professional autonomy.

To show this process in operation it is necessary to look at the context in which schooling provision and teacher employment expanded during this same period. The 1902 Education Act had formally launched a unified system of "higher" education and rationalised administrative control over education by replacing the 2,568 school boards by 328 local education authorities. This meant also that some 14,238 voluntary school bodies (responsible for half of the school population) found that the direct access to Whitehall which they had formerly enjoyed was no longer available. Secondary education was now primarily a matter for County Boroughs and County councils who were empowered to raise a rate for its subsidy<sup>28</sup>.

Effectively these measures meant that the less privileged groups within the middle class were enabled to construct for themselves a system of education on the model of the public and higher-grade grammar schools<sup>29</sup>. But this model was utilised in rather more than a mode of simple slavish imitation. An important cultural and intellectual formation peculiar to this construction process was provided by that "bag of bricks" known as English. In fact the thrust towards a hegemony of English over what is today known as "the humanities" is clearly shown to be in construction in the 1904 Regulations for Secondary Schools:

A certain minimum number of hours in each week must be given, in each year of the course, to the group of subjects commonly classed as "English", and including the English language and literature, Geography and History; to language ancient or modern, other than the native language of the scholars; and to mathematics and to science<sup>30</sup>.

The curricular domains and intentions were divided into three basic areas:

1. Literary and linguistic study involving "accurate use of thought and language".
2. Pure and applied science and mathematics dealing with "the structure and laws of the physical world".
3. Practical ability to begin dealing with "affairs" in a manner "fitted" to a "subordinate" social role<sup>31</sup>.

In the years that followed, especially those spanned by the career of Denys Thompson, "English" was to aspire to a greater hegemony merely than that over the humanities: the aspiration (partially successful) was to define the dominant aims and purposes of study within the second and third areas listed above. Practical ability in dealing with affairs was to be achieved by studying the "environment", and science was to be understood in terms of its perceived role in a particular "cultural" history of industrial society.

The history of the career of Denys Thompson is in great part the history of this hegemonic enterprise and of the class relations and cultural forms which were its preconditions.

In the secondary schools the struggle around English began somewhat earlier than in the universities, indeed it was through developments in schooling that the terms of the struggle were largely articulated. By 1907 formal entrance tests had led to an interest in means of measuring the very core element which English was increasingly to take on as its job to define: "general intelligence"<sup>32</sup>. Thus, the early interest in I.Q. tests which emerged at this time, shows the beginnings of another cultural strand with which English was later to do battle for definition. At this time also began the formal construction of the scholarship ladder<sup>33</sup> which would be a central instrument in the reconstitution of certain sectors of the national intelligentsia.

By the end of the first decade of the present century English had begun to construct something of a formal identity. In 1910 the Board of Education issued an eleven page circular on "The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools"<sup>34</sup> which gives a good indication both of existing approaches to English and of the practices that were to inform English teaching until the second World War and even more after it. The booklet points out - in a phrase that was to be central to George Sampson's English for the English (1921) and, in turn, the project of Denys Thompson - that "Every teacher is a teacher of English". Thus, English is considered to require more serious attention than it receives at present in many secondary schools. Such seriousness would be encouraged by an approach to literature based upon actual texts (rather than literary history) which have "real merit" and which are difficult enough to demand "genuine effort". Commenting on this circular the Journal of Education<sup>35</sup> noted that although a body of opinion now accepts English there is no agreement on methods and aims; however, should the recommendations in the circular be put into practice, the result would be nothing short of a revolution in the secondary school curriculum. The "revolutionary" programme was to become a set of dominant practices only in the post world second war period during the high point of Thompson's influence on English teachers.

More generally, during 1914-21 the rate of growth of schools more than doubled to the accompaniment of widespread and sporadic strikes over teachers' salaries, which resulted in a sharp rise in the pay of teachers<sup>36</sup>. 1917 saw the institution of the Secondary Schools Examination Council<sup>37</sup> to give uniformity and order in areas such as university

entrance, the Army, the Civil Service, the sciences, and resulted in the setting up of standard secondary school external examinations. In the same year the Lewis Report<sup>38</sup> introduced what was to be an increasing concern with the "adolescent" as "workman" and "citizen in training". For the writers of this Report, "English should now tend towards a deliberate stimulation of the sense of citizenship". Even in the case of "young persons engaged upon highly skilled work .... the civics and the humanities must by no means be excluded ... [since] it is only a minority .... who find highly skilled work". Gradually as English was to develop as a subject, or, more accurately, disciplinary ensemble, "citizenship" became expanded to include "leisure" activities (especially leisure reading); and indeed even to include the personal growth of the individual measured (for example) in terms of the capacity for general response, delight, appreciation and enjoyment, not only of "literature" but of "life" in general<sup>39</sup>.

In spite of a great expansion in educational provision, during the 1920s educational opportunity was still firmly governed by class. For example, between 1921-4 only 4.6% of State elementary pupils per annum managed to make it to university; for 1,600,000 of the 11-14 year olds (72.5% of this age group) no advanced instruction of any kind was provided<sup>40</sup>. Nonetheless the decade saw a number of important changes. It was during the 1920s that education first became a major political issue at the ballot-box<sup>41</sup>; John Mann has even suggested that the teachers' vote may have defeated the Conservatives in 1923 and been responsible for Labour's control over Sheffield in 1925<sup>42</sup>. In any event the teachers remained active throughout the decade and, in 1931, launched a major protest campaign around their conditions of employment and social status<sup>43</sup>.

The "Great Discovery" of the 1920s was that "education", instead of being divisible into a number of totally autonomous domains (most notably "elementary" and "higher") should be viewed as a continuous process conducted by successive stages, a discovery formalised in the Hadow Report of 1926<sup>44</sup>. This Report (whose remit was given by the first Labour Government) suggested that the "primary" stage of education should be seen as being succeeded by the secondary stage, rather than as occupying a formally distinct educational universe. The transfer from one stage to the next was to be understood in terms of a notion of an "adolescence" common to all members of the eleven to twelve years old group:

There is a tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve. It is called by the name of adolescence. If that tide can be taken at the flood, and a new voyage begun in the strength and along the flow of its current, we think that it will "move on to fortune"<sup>45</sup>.

The Commission then recommended that all children should, at this age, be transferred to a secondary school of one kind or another but generally to be classified as either "grammar" or "modern".

The second Hadow Report, this time specifically on primary education, followed in 1931<sup>46</sup> and called for schools which would "civilize" through "activity and experience", which would "awaken interest" rather than expect pupils to "master subjects". The primary school should be the common school of the whole population encouraging "healthy growth" of a physical, intellectual and moral kind. Although the Hadow Reports provide what was to be a programme rather than a practice until after the 1944 Education Act, it is nonetheless of interest as a means of identifying a number of cultural trends which were intrinsic to the growth of English in schools. The Reports show that the struggle for definition of English as a subject would be fought in the secondary rather than the primary school; that some relation to psychology (whose child studies influenced the Reports' notion of adolescent stages) would have to be staked out; and that "growth" of the largest kind would have to be the concern of any disciplinary ensemble hoping to occupy the curricular core.

Within English teaching itself undoubtedly the greatest impact (at least until the present decade) was made by the Newbolt Report of 1921. For the writers of this Report, English represented the only possible basis for a common educational and national culture. The teacher/pupil relationship should represent a community of interest in which the role of the teacher of English is that of a missionary (Arnold's "apostle of culture"). The themes and even the terminology to be found in this report will be seen to reverberate through ~~the many pages~~ <sup>of the</sup> publications of Denys Thompson and his associates in later years; even the inspiration for their journal's title is to be found there: "the use of English does not come to all by nature, but is a fine art, and must be taught as a fine art". For the writers of the Report this "art" was peculiarly suited to use as the central feature of a system of education which would weld the "nation" in to a single undifferentiated unity:

The purely technical or aesthetic appeal of any art will, perhaps, always be limited to a smaller number, but, as experience of life, literature will influence all who are capable of finding recreation in something beyond mere sensation. ~~These~~ it will unite by a common interest in life at its best, and by the perpetual reminder that through all social differences human nature and its strongest affections are fundamentally the same.<sup>47</sup>

However, if schools were effectively to perform this national task they must take the teaching of English to be the very basis of their whole practice since English "is not so much a subject as the body and vital principle of all school activity". In addition schools face the problem not only of providing a positive force for English teaching so conceived, but also a negative one which will counter the "perverted power" of the children's environment most notably in the case of the working class children attending the elementary schools:

The great difficulty of teachers in Elementary Schools in many districts is that they have to fight against the powerful habits of speech contracted in home and street. The teachers' struggle is thus not with ignorance but with a perverted power. This makes

their work harder, but it must also make their zeal  
the fiercer.<sup>48</sup>

As will be seen from the account below it was this Report, as well as Sampson's English for the English which should be closely identified with it, which gave Denys Thompson and his group a focus for the articulation of that unwieldy ensemble of diverse elements which the discipline of English in schools was to become over the following decades. And it is Sampson who shows particularly clearly the social fears which underlay this particular articulation:

Deny to working-class children any common share in the immaterial, and presently they will grow into the men<sup>49</sup> who demand with menaces a communism of the material.

### SECTION 3 THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CONCEPT OF FUNCTION 1932-1939

During the years which immediately followed his graduation, and of his direct involvement in the movement associated with F.R. Leavis and the journal Scrutiny, Denys Thompson became one of this group's most wide-ranging contributors, covering all the journal's main themes right up to the moment of his departure in 1939 to institute and edit the specifically teacher-oriented journal English in Schools. He attacked advertising as a debasing cultural force; he castigated the press for its irresponsibility; he mourned the loss of the culturally organic community. In addition, he condemned the sterility of classical scholarship; developed the notion of education as moulder of social consciousness; and, in general, directed a double-sided assault on marxism and capitalism.

Thompson graduated from Cambridge in 1930 having taken Classics and English and being taught by Leavis while at St. John's College (Leavis was then a probationary lecturer). During the 'thirties he became a teacher of English at Gresham's, a minor public school in Holt, Norfolk; and obtained the headmastership of Yeovil School in the 1940s. During his thirty year career he taught English over the age range of eight to nineteen years. Finally he returned to Cambridge to lecture for the English Tripos, thereby completing the circle back to the setting in which his intellectual roots had been laid down. During the intervening years he had co-edited Scrutiny from the fourth issue (March 1933) until that of Summer 1939, departing then to edit English in Schools. When, ten years later, this journal became The Use of English he continued as editor until his retirement in 1969. He has been a most prolific writer and campaigner for a particular concept of "English" in schools and in society at large, carrying the Scrutiny mission into the arena of the secondary school (especially the grammar school sector). All this while he was edited anthologies of many kinds (mostly for use in schools) as well as writing and editing a number of textbooks and manuals in the forms both of individual works and whole series.

In the process of taking the Scrutiny themes into the school sector the cultural movemen

which is represented by the career of Denys Thompson has had a substantial influence on the aims, methods and professional ideology of many teachers of English, only finding itself confronted by opposing influences of any moment towards the end of Thompson's career. That the ebbs and flows of the very different non-university environment of the school have had a substantial reshaping influence on the Scrutiny themes and emphases cannot be in doubt (as will be shown in the course of this study). Furthermore, it will also be argued that it is only under such influences that these themes reach their utmost cultural articulation, practical implementation, and even theoretical fruition.

In one of his earliest contributions to Scrutiny (1932)<sup>50</sup> Thompson takes up the themes and the virulent tone that were to characterise his writings in the ever-shifting cultural cross-currents of the 1930s. The nexus within which he pitches his arguments can be identified in five key terms: culture, economy, politics, publicity and education. If advertising (publicity) is a form of activity which is culturally "parasitical" it is nonetheless a necessary "lubricant" within an advanced capitalist order of society. However, publicity always extends beyond this necessity to the point at which, rather than merely informing, it evokes and exploits "undesirable attitudes" within those who respond to it. In general the "uniformly illiterate" admen who control publicity can be seen as generating "a vast impersonal fog" and in this process "debasement of the currency" of the common language. Unfortunately the progress of advertising is part of a process which is not likely to be checked "even by political revolution". In such circumstances the only power adequate to the task of combatting the educative force of advertising is a form of "counter-education" which provides the means for an "active reading" calling into question the whole "economic process" of which publicity is but a single element.

A year later<sup>51</sup> Thompson develops the theme of a particular cultural history which is to stand as an important prop for his general critique of the present-day "power age", or era of "economic progress", as well as providing thereby a unique role for "literature". The historical movement is from an earlier "beautifully sufficient culture, where throve a life-giving tradition", to "the power age [which] destroyed the agricultural basis of life and thereby the best soil for a satisfactory civilization". The result has been the death of this traditional culture and a position reached where cultural sustenance is available only through "literature". However, the formative advertising environment has ensured that modern youth has been "inoculated against living", and education, as presently constituted (an ironic reference is made here to the "fortifying classical curriculum") is failing to provide a sufficient formative counterweight. The same education theme is returned to in a review later in the same issue<sup>52</sup> where Thompson berates the present education system for its "futility", the universities for their "shameful irresponsibility" especially with respect to an irrelevant classical emphasis, and the correspondence column of

The Times Literary Supplement for its displays of "sterile scholarship". The critique is carried into the schools in that same year in two important forms: a manifesto entitled "The Scrutiny Movement in Education"<sup>53</sup> and a school textbook Culture And Environment which Thompson co-wrote with F.R. Leavis<sup>54</sup>. The manifesto clearly shows the "Scrutineer" points of combat to be equally against bourgeois culture and the emerging marxist alternatives which were currently proving so attractive to many middle-class intellectuals of Thompson's generation. According to the manifesto the object must be first and foremost the propagation and enforcement of a "clearly realised" conception of education and its function, if necessary in the most politically explicit terms. An alternative must be sought to the Marxian projection of a future which looks "vacuous", "Wellsian" and "bourgeois". Such an alternative must be grounded on a conception of an "inner human nature" which, while it is admittedly profoundly affected by the economic process, is nonetheless capable of a "disinterested" posture with respect to that process itself. A programme must be developed which will mobilize the "minority" within education to serve these "disinterested ends". Thompson follows up this theme in both the September and December issues of Scrutiny<sup>55</sup> by noting in sum that since "political programmes have not sufficient ends: they are pre-occupied with the machinery merely", the opportunities offered by education must be grasped because "education remains, almost alone, something more than a matter of machine-tending; there are few openings with such positive opportunities, and so unencumbered by the fear of futility or isolation". Culture And Environment is the first of many school handbooks and textbooks with which Denys Thompson was to be directly involved and which took as their theme "the training of critical awareness" in terms of the critique of capitalist economy and bourgeois culture outlined above. The authors here insist that critical awareness requires "discrimination" and "positive standards" which are most easily inculcated in youth, since the young can tell "the quick from the dead"<sup>56</sup> more readily than can adults.

This, fairly romantic, view of "the young" was not to survive the years of the second War and the rise of the secondary modern school, when Thompson was forced to make a clear distinction between the relative "educability" of "the young" based upon differential social class background. However two themes which were to remain central to Thompson's concerns, although in contrasting ways, are to be found for the first time in this particular work: the extension of "English" to include the study of "culture" and "the environment" (which was eventually to provide a tool in other hands for the dismantling of the hegemony over English of literary culture); and the debasement of a national life rooted in an oral culture by incursions from the printed tongue (which was to receive progressively more insistent an emphasis in future years). Leavis and Thompson feel that "a great deal can be brought in under English"<sup>57</sup> and therefore go on to suggest an approach to this disciplinary ensemble which should include measures to combat the effects of "machine civilization". In the past people talked more, speech was "an art", but machine civilization has ensured



that national "life" is "debased" since some of the most important words have become impossible to use "seriously"<sup>53</sup>. The earlier organic community, now lost, had provided full satisfaction of personal needs: "Besides their hands, their brains, imagination, conscience, sense of beauty and fitness - their personalities - were engaged and satisfied."<sup>59</sup> The "substitute-living" which replaced this organic fullness, and which embodies "the adulteration of function", must now be fought by means of an education which demands "energy", "disinterestedness", and a firm consciousness of function as never before.<sup>60</sup>

This position as developed in the pages of Scrutiny throughout the 1930s led to a strange combination of an outright attack on capitalism in the name of an alternative social order with a contrasting sense of critical defeatism. For example, in an article on the wealthy American "Robber Barons", Thompson produced what is probably the most radical prediction ever made by a "Scrutineer". Of one of these "Barons" he says: "Mellon appears as a bloodless automaton. When America or England has a communist regime, this life will provide excellent matter for a propagandist film. The capitalist will not require the kind of blackening noticeable in some Soviet films".<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, the sense of depression at the status of the critic shows through but a few pages later: "Though criticism may only aspire to the humble functions of a louse, it may irritate the animal and perhaps draw attention to its ill-health". It was on the basis of such contradictory impulses that Thompson came to develop a strategy for English teaching in schools whereby sufficient doses of literary culture were expected to inoculate individual pupils against the ravages of this hostile environment.

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#### SECTION 4: LITERARY CULTURE & THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM, PATTERNS OF DOMINANCE & RESISTANCE FROM 1939

Since the end of the 1930s there has been an ever-growing acceptance within the education system as a whole, although most particularly perhaps in the primary sector, of "progressive" as opposed to "instrumental" approaches to teaching, including English teaching. To whatever extent the Use of English movement has aligned itself with progressivism, as, for example, in the form of child-centred "expressive" approaches, it has always been within the context of a literary "culturalism" violently antagonistic to alternative approaches involving the teaching of basic linguistic "skills", grammar, vocationalism and even "citizenship". A general anti-industrial stance has been coupled with notions of English as defined against demands of employment, and increasingly there has been a willingness to allow the "creativity" of the pupils to stand as the central focussing element (although such creativity is always measured in terms of the "Great Tradition"). This approach has been very influential especially within grammar schools and has been instrumental in giving those who have taught English in such schools a strong sense of a discipline unified around literary value and thereby greater professional self-esteem. This process can

be seen as but one element in the post-war construction of an ideology which emphasised the autonomy and professional self-reliance of the teaching profession. Caught between developments of monopoly capitalism and working class advances, this ideology has tended to be constructed (at least within English teaching) in terms of a distantiating from both of these factors<sup>62</sup>. The teachers' role can thus be seen as developing from that of mere instructor to a much more all-embracing one of "childhood's guide".<sup>63</sup> However, since the dominant educational ideology has been one involving the "provision" of education from outside the working class rather than as the "agent" of that class, there has never been any significant production within education of what Richard Johnson has called "really useful knowledge"<sup>64</sup>. Instead, such attempts as there have been to counteract the cultural force of capitalist utility - and Thompson's project may be seen as one important example - have either chosen, or been forced by the logic of their position, to posit a utopian and supposedly classless "culture" as their goal. The general tendency to counterpose "community" to "class" must result in an inability to deal with real conflicts of interest within the educational institutions and indeed within English itself. The over-riding emphasis on the fall from a past golden age, and upon an (almost) lost tradition embracing the "best" of that past, has inevitably meant that models of the dominant order (or at most oppositional elements with an agreed general framework) rather than modes of resistance to that order have provided the bases for present approaches to "culture". This is shown, for example, in the uncritical use of the notion of "civilization" as a uniform state rather than as a process of "civil-ization" into a particular cultured order.

This static version of literary culture, however powerful a device in helping to advance professional unification and to further self-government by teachers, was to begin to falter under those pressures (especially from 1960 onwards) which signalled the beginning of the breakdown of the dominant educational ideology upon which their sustenance depended.<sup>65</sup> Before looking at the specific developments and the response to these general changes made by Denys Thompson and his supporters, some attempt must be made to outline the specifics of the changes themselves.

One important feature which began to emerge in the 1940s was a specialist academic sociology of education which was increasingly to challenge previous views of general intelligence based upon pre-war educational psychology<sup>66</sup>. From this particular stream come ideas of differential "educability" based upon class background. In turn, this was to open a space for the developments in socio-linguistics which were to characterise the 1960s, and call into question the unifying power of literary culture. Furthermore, the call in 1946 by the NUT for the abolition of external examinations<sup>67</sup> signalled an upturn in the drive for teacher autonomy which inevitably called out its mirror opposite: teacher accountability. "Culturalists" were soon to be called upon, in an atmosphere emphasising economic returns for financial investment, to show evidence of the proficiency of their methods for providing a work force increasingly required

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to be more "technologically skilled".

As early as 1943 the Norwood Report<sup>68</sup> had called for a streamlined tripartite system of secondary education: grammar, modern, and technical schools, firmly biased toward different occupations. In the same year, a government White Paper<sup>69</sup> finally accepted the Hadow principle of education as a continuous process conducted by successive stages. Britain's youth were now seen as a "national asset" and the educational system was required to be reformed in such a way as to place this asset at its centre. The 1944 Act<sup>70</sup> implemented the new unified system of stages and appointed a Minister to oversee the Local Authorities in the task of setting up this new system.

But the official emphasis on the relation between social class and educability began to emerge only in the 1950s. In 1954 the Central Advisory Council for Education Report "Early Leaving" noted that

it is beyond doubt true that a boy whose father is of professional or managerial standing is more likely to find his home circumstances favourable to the demands of grammar school work than one whose father is an unskilled or semi-skilled worker. The latter is handicapped.<sup>71</sup>

This was followed in 1959 by the Crowther Report<sup>72</sup> which argued that "available resources of high 'ability' are not fully used by the present system". Since education was "a vital part of the nation's capital investment", it was necessary to clarify the bases of the skills which education could be expected to instil. To this end the Committee coined the term "numeracy" to describe that element which a literary education tended to ignore, in contrast to "literacy", or that which was missed out from an education in the sciences. It is interesting to note here the contrast between the strict curricular division of "science" from "literacy" and the situation a century earlier in which Huxley could argue the unique value of science to "literacy" (in the expanded sense of a civilizing or liberalising core element of the curriculum)<sup>73</sup>. The battle for definition and professional control over the subject or disciplinary ensemble had been well and truly won by the advocates of literary English (not without engaging in skirmishes with the proponents of "grammar" and "democratic" skills)<sup>74</sup> at least in the secondary, and especially grammar, schools (the universities had been finally converted to English, and even the Public Schools were just about ready to appoint their first specialised English teachers)<sup>75</sup>. 1959 was also the year of publication of The Teaching of English<sup>76</sup> a compilation of articles edited by Randolph Quirk and A.M. Smith which showed that grammar, or rather the new "structural" approach to English language, was still prepared to stake a claim for definition of the central "ground of understanding" within the curriculum.

But the greatest impact on English teaching during this period was undoubtedly made by the Newsom Report<sup>77</sup> published four years later in 1963, which concentrated its

attention on "average" and "below average" pupils - who were to become known as "Newsom children". The Report argued that children of this group were held back more by social factors than genetics, and related "inadequate powers of speech" to limitations of "home background". They developed the notion of acquisition of intelligence as opposed to a supposedly static intelligence previously assumed to have been measured in I.Q. tests. Thus the most general solution for the perceived "inadequacies" was considered to involve modification of the social and physical environments in which this intelligence was acquired, in order that the potential pool of talent might be properly availed of in the name of both "human justice" and "economic self-interest". Since modification of environments must be a long-term task, the more practical and immediate steps recommended in the Report included school trips out of the "slums" into the countryside - into "civilized and beautiful surroundings" - and the provision of situations which would offer the "challenge of adventure". The Report further recommended use of group discussion of films and TV programmes, and the collection of information by purpose of specific projects. All this was to operate partially inside the present school timetable, as well as extending outside of it<sup>78</sup>. This process of extension reveals what are, for the present purposes, the two most significant aspects of the Newsom Report: the extension of explanations for educational "deprivation" into the home, and curricular extension beyond the school as a means of "compensation". It was a process which was to challenge the well-developed hegemony of the Use of English group over the curricular core, not least by beginning to dismantle the unified system of relations which had held the English discipline together. It also introduced, in however, liberal a form, considerations of differential educability based upon class background in such a manner as to call into question the capacity of a "literary culture" to overcome "disadvantage" and thus make most efficient use of the pool of available "talent".

Measures to combat the impact of social disadvantage on educational opportunity were taken one step further by the Plowden Report<sup>79</sup> on primary education published in 1967. Plowden introduced the new principle of positive discrimination in favour of "educational priority" areas, thereby enshrining once and for all the belief (which had been expressed by Denys Thompson at the beginning of the 1930s) that education must "innoculate" against the environment. Of course, as was always inevitable in practice, "environmental deprivation" tends thus to be limited to the working class pupil and therefore involves a tacit acceptance (against the Thompsonians) that all was well with bourgeois culture: the civilizing task is limited to bringing some more "talented" recruits into the bourgeois world.

This then is a sketch of the general framework, processes and trends of the post-war period, the period which saw both the point of culmination of the project associated with Denys Thompson and the collapse of the larger educational ideology upon which this project depended. The 1970s were to see the emphasis move on from working class "failure" to the failure of schools - which were thereby called to account for their performance. This was the moment of collapse of the hegemony composed of Labourism, teacher autonomy, and educational sociology which had sustained all the progressivism of the previous quarter of a century. Under pressure, Labour was itself forced to move with the anti-progressive stream, launching the "Great Debate" which made way in 1975 for the general conclusion of the Bullock Report that teaching was too important to be left to teachers<sup>80</sup>. These factors may now be returned to the context of developments in the work of Denys Thompson, upon which they were to have a significant influence. "The idea of a journal for teachers of English has been so well received that there is no need for much in the way of a manifesto". So begins Denys Thompson's editorial in the first issue of English in Schools (Christmas Term 1939) published by the Sharnbrook Press<sup>81</sup>. The general objective of the new journal, he continues, is "to promote the balance of mind and clearness of thinking without which nothing can be achieved". In the following issues it becomes clear that the general function of education - with English at its core - is twofold. It must inoculate the pupil against such forces as advertising which serve the "destruction of personality" and, having thereby cleared a space for the "true" operations of personality, it must allow the development of a depoliticised consciousness which may nonetheless be used to comprehend the limitations inherent in the present social order.

The period of the postwar renewal allowed the inauguration of a number of practical measures aimed at advancing the critique of industrial society which Thompson and his associates had been developing over the previous decade. Most notable of these were the foundation of the London Association for the Teaching of English and of the Bureau of Current Affairs, together with the transformation of English in Schools both in appearance and name.

The B.C.A. had been established in 1946 by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust "to stimulate and 'service' the study of current affairs in discussion groups". The term "current affairs" is in fact used here to include "the wider questions of culture and environment", and the series of pamphlets (on such topics as Advertising, Clear Thinking, Leisure - by Denys Thompson -, Planning, The Reading Habit, Theatre, Radio, Films, The News) published by the BCA were intended to help the English teacher encourage class discussion under the culture and environment heading<sup>82</sup>.

The general move towards such an expanded notion of 'English' in the classroom tended to open out for reconsideration that relation between "politics" and "letters" which

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Thompson had been at great pains to firmly place under the hegemony of literary culture (indeed a journal called Politics & Letters, one of whose editors is Raymond Williams, emerges at this time<sup>83</sup>). In fact, it is around a new coining, viz. "Culture and Environment Studies" and under the influence of marxist approaches, that an as yet frail challenge to this hegemony begins to emerge.<sup>84</sup>

Before looking in greater detail at this challenge it is necessary to outline the changes undergone during this same period by English in Schools. In 1949 publication of this journal was transferred from the Sharnbrook Press to the BCA. In fact having published just one issue under the old title (Vol. 2 No.9, Summer Term 1949) the name of the journal became The Use of English and Thompson was now assisted by an editorial board consisting of Boris Ford (Deputy Director and Chief Editor at the BCA) David Holbrook and Raymond O'Malley. This arrangement continued until Autumn 1951 when, with the disbandment of the BCA, publication was taken over by Chatto & Windus. From the Spring 1953 issue the editorial board was also disbanded and J.H. Walsh took over as Thompson's assistant editor, an arrangement which continued until the retirement of Thompson (and Walsh) in 1969.

Thompson's inaugural Use of English editorial<sup>85</sup> is a comprehensive statement of intention and approach, which gathers together previous concerns and presents a programme for the New English Classicism referred to above. "We intend our publication to be a practical one, written by practicing teachers for practicing teachers and thus the word 'use' (as one might say 'the Use of the Mariner's Compass') seemed appropriate". However English should be seen as more than a mere subject, value or use since "it can create and heighten that critical attitude to our civilization which 'current affairs' teaching should strive after. And thus, in formal and informal education it can give unity and purpose to the syllabus". This emphasis on unity is accompanied by a concern for the operation of English (now as "language") right across the curriculum: "This concern for one's own language is the responsibility, not only of English teachers, but of all teachers. In this respect English can do what the Classics once did .... It is not too much to claim that a training in English can help the individual to make sense of what is for many a meaningless world".

But the curricular space opened up in what, by 1950, had become known as "Culture and Environment Studies", proved itself to be open to an interpretation which in fact attacked the very "minority" principles upon which it had previously been based since the meaningless world outside, as observed from the minority position, looked very different when examined by a sympathetic student of cultural forms in general. This new position finds its earliest articulation within the Use of English in an article by Raymond Williams for whom the central activity of such studies is "analysis" with literary criticism as its "informing discipline". He concurs with Thompson in asserting that such an approach goes "further than logical analysis and offers an analysis of quality - tone, method and effect - in pieces which cannot be faulted on

the score of logic". However, in extending his analysis to "cultural forms", and in finding himself "perhaps nearer to the Marxist than to the Leavis position", Williams firmly separates himself from the "minority":

It is inevitable, after a variety of studies in particular cultural forms, that a desire to undertake a fuller cultural analysis should arise. The orthodox general view, I suppose, is still that of Leavis and Thompson's Culture and Environment... but this position... is by no means the only one which can be taken up after studies such as those that have been outlined ... I feel myself that the assertion of a 'minority' is now largely irrelevant and, in certain social terms, idle and harmful.<sup>85</sup>

Referring to Williams' article, Thompson in the editorial of the following issue<sup>87</sup>, insists that "the teaching of English is not a sideline to 'social studies'. Work on the Press, on advertising, on films, and on the environment generally, should be a by-product, varying widely in method of treatment, of the teacher's own convictions about education, and the place of English literature therein". It should be remembered that, for Thompson, "environment" had always been something from which learning was only negatively available, since it was always a factor against which "inoculation" was necessary. It must therefore be counteracted by an education dependent upon the timeless standards available only within the tradition of "literary culture". For example, in an editorial published in the previous year<sup>88</sup> he had once again insisted on the need for education against environment and, while "most will never have a critical faculty", efforts must be made at least to "bring attention to bear on surroundings". Now, while such an approach may be adequate to attempts by bourgeois teachers at defining their role and attitudes against the experience and environment of their working class pupils, it could never operate other than to arrest the potential of that experience for the recognition and possible change of a social order fundamentally based upon a combination of material and cultural exploitation. Indeed such definition can be seen as a central ideological function of the new English Classicism with its insistence on de-historicised "timeless" standards coupled with a view of working class cultural "deprivation" which defines as totally non-significant or "meaningless" any available contemporary experience of working class living.

A further opportunity for the development of a "cultural studies" approach to English, in some schools at least, was offered in 1960 by the Belloc Report's proposal that teachers be allowed control over a system of examinations of their own in the form of a Certificate of Secondary Education (introduced in 1965)<sup>89</sup> This opened new curricular, practical and ideological spaces in which much of the struggle for definitions of 'English' and 'general education' was to take place over the following decade.

On the one hand teacher autonomy was thus reinforced, and with it professionalisation moved forward one more step; however, on the other, the clear distinction between forms of education attuned to university entrance, and those reserved for the "less-able" meant the fissuring of an all-embracing conception and set of teaching practices around a single literary core.

Thompson's response to these new developments was headed "Enormous and Stultifying"<sup>90</sup>. Insisting that English is the core subject and principle "civilizing" agent within the school, and confronted by a "general illiteracy" and an "O" level paper which is "useless", he describes the new "Use of English" paper as "futile" (all of these measures were part of the same general package). Only one thing can remedy the situation: "the restoration of literature to its place in the teaching of English".

Thus, while the early 1960s saw the calling into question in a most radical way <sup>of</sup> the status of "literature" as the defining feature of both "English" and "general education", it should also be noted that responses to such challenges by the Use of English group led to the formation in 1964 of the National Association for the Teaching of English under the initiative of Denys Thompson.<sup>91</sup> However against this should also be placed more general developments related to the control by teachers over the curriculum during the same period.

In 1961 the DES set up a Curriculum Study Group which, under severe pressure from teachers, was replaced in the following year by the teacher-controlled Schools Council<sup>92</sup>. The causes are to be found in the processes of change, identified by Finn, Grant and Johnson as peculiar to this period:

Particularly in the 1960s, the introduction of comprehensivisation and other reforms opened up areas and spaces within the schools requiring a new content, and it was this area /sic/ which the teachers' controlled.<sup>93</sup>

However, this erosion of external influence over teachers' was accompanied by the development of a stronger school inspectorate. Maclure has summed up this sequence of events and concluded that the overall result was an increase in centralised control:

The formation of the Curriculum Study Group in 1962 was the most important move towards creating some central control over curriculum and examinations. This was followed a year later by the proposals for a Schools Council to plan the strategy of development work, and to act as the instrument by which its results were mediated to the schools. There is no doubt whatever that this is a major strengthening of the central institutions of English education. It must restore to the Inspectorate, or a small section of it, some of the authority which has slipped away over the years.<sup>94</sup>



This move towards centralised control generated questions as to whether or not education was "doing its job", and tended to counteract the increased professional control by teachers over the distribution of curricular spaces within the school itself. It is in such a context that Thompson's "Reflection" of 1962,<sup>95</sup> on "the present state of English teaching" should be understood. He sees the situation as characterised by "hostility" from a "commercial environment" which has caused both the spread of the examination system and a decline in the study of literature. The following year sees an important concrete organisational response to these conflicting pressures when, in a Use of English editorial<sup>96</sup>. Thompson calls for the institution of an organisation of teachers of English. Since, he considers, there has been a failure to consult English teachers on the spread of examinations, the time is particularly ripe for the formation of such an association. He therefore informs readers that he has set up a meeting of interested parties from which a provisional committee has been selected. A conference has been scheduled for September.<sup>97</sup>

This year in which the resulting National Association was founded, 1964 stands conveniently as the moment at which The Use of English reaches the zenith of its influence (a message of congratulation and commendation from Education Minister Boyle is published in its twenty-fifth anniversary issue of that year<sup>98</sup> while at the same time the editorial programme is forced to shift its emphasis from the long-term attention to "general (literary) intelligence", to considerations of "cultural health" - although both had always been present in some measure. Thompson's introduction to Discrimination and Popular Culture (1964) follows up the latter point<sup>99</sup>. Thompson's own contribution stresses the fact that applied science and the power of the "production process" have now achieved a "life of their own". In schooling this has resulted in preparation for industry rather than for real "life". The schools therefore are in great need of "experts in cultural health".

However, the most important attempts at a redefinition of the nature of English arose out of contacts between the NATE and the American National Council of Teachers of English between 1965 and 1967. Writing under the heading "Aims and Purposes"<sup>100</sup> in a piece arising out of the first joint NATE/NCTE Conference in Boston in 1965, Thompson admits that there is now no clear, generally accepted aim for the teaching of English in England. In fact English teaching is caught upon an irresolvable contradiction: the "fitting" of the pupil to existing society as against the need to educate "human beings". Nonetheless he goes on to affirm that English should be seen as "one and indivisible". In marked contrast to his views from the early 1940s,<sup>101</sup> the impact on Thompson of American ideas and methods produces a measure of pessimism regarding future trends.

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A 1969 farewell editorial<sup>102</sup> provides Thompson with an opportunity to review the development of English as a school discipline, and the role played in this development by The Use of English. English has developed out of dependence upon the Classics to become "the most educational subject of all". Instrumental in this development have been psychology, linguistic study and literary criticism, although The Use of English has provided a channel for the latter influence only, preferring "empiricism" to "speculation and enquiry".

From the time of his retirement as editor of the journal Thompson has devoted much effort to elaborating the humanist argument which underpinned the journal's project. With his book The Use of Poetry he reached what must be regarded as the culmination of a lifetime's intellectual work. Ironically this stage of elaboration has arisen under conditions in which the hegemony of literary culture over the teaching of English in schools is constantly under attack and ever, perhaps, on the point of being overthrown. In fact, this period in Thompson's career is notable for a series of returns: to Cambridge to teach for the English Tripos, to poetry as the fundamental element of literary culture, and finally a return to an attempt at theoretical overview of the relation between poetry, culture and society so characteristic of 1930s writers on literature.

Between Directions in 1969 and The Uses of Poetry nine years later Thompson published a number of works of which a high proportion are concerned with poetry.<sup>103</sup> One has to wait, however, until the publication of the latter work to find the developed theoretical position which represents, not only an overview of this particular decade, but of the work of a whole life.

SECTION 5: THE THEORETICAL PROJECT OF DENYS THOMPSON

No better source for an overall analysis of Thompson's theoretical project is available than his later work The Uses of Poetry, since it recapitulates the themes which underpinned the project of the previous three or four decades. The work begins with an attack on the "restrictions" which have been placed on civilization by science.<sup>104</sup>

In the light of such restrictions Thompson considers it imperative to ensure the availability of "emotional education" to compensate for the incursions of science. The purpose of such education is to provide the means for "ordering sense impressions": it is "poetry" that organises "thinking as a whole" thereby "freeing the brain from the tyranny of sense perception" and allowing the proper operation of the innate human proclivity to produce "symbols". But, with the growth of industrial society and, more particularly, machine printing, the growth of "natural poetry" has been inhibited by the development of "literacy": the older "non-analytic" mode has been ousted by the printed tongue.<sup>105</sup> Where pre-literate cultures allowed access to "unprocessed experience" by virtue of direct "contact with the environment", literate cultures are characterised by the loss of the "integration of poetry with daily life".

It has now become imperative to find a means of re-integrating these two human strands or, at least, attempting to counter the forces which have caused their disintegration in the first place. It is therefore Thompson's intention to produce some "propaganda for poetry".

Such a defensive project can be seen as an inevitable consequence of a situation in which "poetry" is the essential element of a conception and set of related practices of education which are themselves under attack. Furthermore, since the moment of professional transition for one generational group has now passed, the role of the teacher has begun to undergo transformations in terms which depend on ideologies other than those previously available via literary culture: for example, the conception of the teacher as proletarian at one extreme, and as highly skilled technician or social worker at the other. Thus an apology for poetry must take the form either of compulsive reiteration of past glories (F.R. Leavis) or suffer transformation into a more systematic anthropology or psychology of mental or cultural health (Denys Thompson). Of course, in Thompson's case, the "health" argument continues to rest on concepts of moral function and poetic truth which, when examined, turn out to be guaranteed, not by technical criteria, but rather by the Leavisian notion of personal "response". As has been shown on many occasions,<sup>106</sup> this approach merely returns the "respondant" to his or her source of ultimate authority, to which passive submission must then be made, whether the authority be found in an individual, a class or group or even a tradition. The problem then remains one of providing a guarantee of the truth of this authority, and once again the whole moral wheel begins to revolve as before. An alternative would be to recognise that authority is never separable from

power or power-seeking, and that the "truth" can only appear through some struggle or other within this arena of power. This is as true of "literary response" as it is of any other response, be it a felt response to racism or sexism or to any powerful emotional complex whose source is power and dominance.

The same point applies to the notion of "emotional education". Thompson fails to recognise that any education of the emotions has to be based upon a understanding of its source in actual conflict. Emotional education can therefore become a technique only where it allows the resolution of such conflict, as for example, where resolution is accomplished by means of upward social mobility or competitive success. However successful emotional education may possibly be within such limits, what it cannot contend with are conflicts of interest across the major class divide, i.e. bourgeois/working class. This is soon apparent when teaching attempts "emotional education" of working class pupils and encounters a resistance not explicable in terms of emotional or cultural "deprivation". The general point is that the concept "emotional education" is adequate only to a group or class already sharing a basic framework of common emotion. Thompson's discussion of "poetic language", in contrast, is truer to a larger domain than that of a single social class; although somewhat limited by the class connotation adhering to the very term "poetry" which tend to allow notions of evaluation by the "enlightened" (see the discussion above of "response") back into the argument. To some extent Thompson's concerns as to the nature of what might better be described as "fictional discourse" merge with those of the Tel Quel group in France, and, in spite of apparently different political orientations in each case, tend to flounder on the same rock: in Thompson's case called "poetic anonymity"<sup>107</sup>, in Barthes' "the floating signifier"<sup>108</sup>. Both positions seek a means within "culture" or "signification" or escaping from the class or power-based self into a more anonymous selfless domain. The tendency is thus towards utopian notions of classlessness or "community" at least at the level of "culture" or "literature", or of "poetry" or "art"; and the result is a refusal to recognise problems of exploitation and real difference operating within fictional as much as in other discursive forms.<sup>109</sup>

Turning now to Thompson's critique of Marxism and to his own alternative cultural history, it must immediately be admitted that marxism, as much as other systems which have attempted to understand "the cultural", have often grappled uncertainly with the problems associated with this level: marxism has notoriously been unable to give an adequate account of the sources of, for example, snobbism and sexism. But what of this "alternative" of Thompson's? As already indicated his cultural history shares much common ground with certain strains of cultural theory within Marxism: his critique of one-dimensional capitalist culture is the most notable example. What this account tends to leave out (as does that of the Frankfurt school) are the progressive features of capitalism and most importantly those aspects of

working class culture which embody modes of resistance to capitalist exploitation of labour; including also resistance to dominant elements embodied in approaches to "literature" and "culture". The account is very much attuned to an understanding of culture from outside working class forms, and therefore tends to ignore the need for struggle if control, including cultural domination, is to be effectively wrested from the ruling order.<sup>110</sup>

It follows that this unwillingness to base his system within present possibilities for change on a comprehension of working class forms (not necessarily systematised "artistic" forms such as the "proletarian novel", but more importantly day to day discursive practices) means that solutions are looked for in a glorified and mythicised "past". The "golden age" (which Thompson almost goes so far as to accept as mythical)<sup>111</sup> is not to be found in any systematic account of the past. In fact this myth does a great deal to inhibit the production of such systematic accounts in a manner true to the actual historical complexities of the past (Fiction and The Reading Public being a good example of the results of such inhibition). This mythicisation of the past in turn carries over into Thompson's account of the descent from "pre-literate" linguistic vitality to the state of loss represented by dependence upon the printed tongue. The important point is not that printed discourse lacks "vitality" but rather that persons in capitalist society may be positioned in a relation to literate forms which may well be one of alienation: doubtless alienation operated differently in feudal and caste societies, where social differences had to be attuned to the spoken often by restricting the use of a particular language to one social group. But surely the printed tongue allows greater possibilities for the removal of such alienation than was the case in pre-literate societies: a printing press may provide, in the right hands, one of the most powerful means of helping to overthrow the dominant order - particularly when access is not limited to "experts".

Thompson's humanism runs into the same trouble as do all systems depending upon human "essences": it tends to embody either needs and wants presently in existence or some ideal alternative and label them "essential" needs. It is not without significance that Thompson is unable to bring his own powerful critique of the creation of "needs" by means of publicity to bear upon the matter of what he sees as essential human needs, thus he is left with no criteria on which to determine what may stand as an "ultimate" need. What I have described as Thompson's evolutionism (an innate human proclivity for symbol generation born out of successes in the struggle for existence) is subject to similar criticisms, although the arguments are more complex. It should be noted that this is one of the areas in which Thompson has attempted an extension of Leavisism, in this case by venturing into the territory opened up by Suzanne Langer's work on symbol production.<sup>112</sup> Apart, however, from the question of whether or not the production of symbols satisfies an innate human need, it is not easy to decide as to the level of validity of arguments regarding the birth of human consciousness; or to establish the order of priorities as between language and

symbolisation, labour and cooperation, within this process. What does seem certain in all this is that arguments regarding innate needs (symbol production or otherwise) return us once again to notions of common human essence shared by all members of present day society, which of course fails to account for real conflicts of interest between different social groups.

And this takes the critique finally to Thompson's account of today's social order, particularly his view that capitalism continues to function automatically in spite of having achieved its 19th century "ends". It must be said that a model of automatic functioning is inadequate, since it doesn't allow for any dynamic contradictions within the system, and cannot adequately deal with the modes by which production and reproduction are achieved, not least at the level of schooling.<sup>113</sup> As for learning from non-industrial societies, no doubt there is much to be learned from this source, but there is also much that they cannot teach us. Faced as we are by a radically different capitalist present, the real need is for solutions adequate to advanced industrial conditions. The drive towards non-industrial solutions when carried to extremes leads to a "displacement" onto such societies of "golden age" myths which are the product of present day conditions and do little to help towards a sufficient understanding of the real conditions in non-industrial societies.

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### RETROSPECT AND CONCLUSION

It has been shown that the disciplinary ensemble or "subject" which is called "English" was generated out of a social transformation peculiar to a particular historical moment. Before this transformation the universities and public schools operated upon a "Classical" curricular basis while the "elementary" schools attempted to instil into working class pupils a minimum of "literacy" adequate to their particular industrial role, but not sufficient to encourage sedition. Within the endowed schools however pressure had begun to mount by the middle of the 19th Century for the inclusion within the syllabus of "modern" knowledge. While the upper middle class expressed satisfaction with a classical core, in that "grade" of endowed schools attuned to the needs of their children some lower middle class factions wanted English instead. Although there was a common acceptance of the need for a "liberalising" core of some kind to the curriculum, a struggle for definition as to the contents of this core developed in the later part of the century - the principal candidates being the classics, science and, increasingly, English. That English became the final victor is to be explained in terms of the nature of the general transformation of which schooling was but a part. Under pressure from the social layer below for advancement and the need for a new infusion of blood in the middle managerial caste, the upper middle class were forced to allow the development of increasingly interventionist state apparatuses, which in-turn required managers and "leaders"; and, by a process of compromise and absorption, freed spaces in the system of employment and social status which allowed an increased mobility to sections of the lower middle class. Conscious of new opportunity and conscious also of a mission to renegotiate the structure of the dominant order so as to allow greater participation by themselves, some of the lower middle class groups helped to develop a "total" explanation of the nature of the "community" which served a number of functions relevant to their new status. In the first place it clearly distinguished their mission of developing a "common culture" from any working class notions of fundamental social conflict; secondly, it posited against residual aristocratic ad hoc approaches to "management" of the state, a petit-bourgeois insistence on a fixed system of social "places", access to which could be gained by successful competition, with equal opportunity for all to compete (at least in theory); finally, in associating the mission for social renewal, at least in part, with an approach to schooling with "literary culture" at its centre, a barrier was erected against too much incursion from extremes of utilitarianism, whether in the form of technicism (Thompson's "applied science") or linguistic "skills".

In solidifying the ideology and associated teaching practices surrounding the English curricular core, Denys Thompson and his associates covered the whole range of oppositional arguments and progressively developed, in this process, a set of attitudes, arguments, and institutional practices which dominated the more privileged sectors of teaching until they began to be challenged in the 1960s. In a sense this challenge

represented a technicist "backlash" in its emphasis on the need to tap the pool of available talent to serve the needs of "the economy". However, at the same time, this more utilitarian emphasis tended to reveal that since successful competition must always be accompanied by numerous failures, the pole of failure always tended to fall to pupils from working class backgrounds. This produced new pressures on teachers to redefine the aims and methods of schooling and tended to result in a dismantling, at least for working class pupils ("Newsom children") of the disciplinary core which allowed English its educational hegemony.

In the meantime the missionary zeal of the "culturalists" had lost a great deal of its force and thus was unable to sustain the totalizing function which had given it much of this force in the first place. At this point English attuned to university studies took on fully the mantle of the classics, becoming a medium of exclusion and scholasticism rather than of mobilisation. Most recently, and like Classics before it, English has begun to suffer numerous assaults on its comfortable hedonistic island from a variety of forces, for example, cultural studies, the sociology of literature, the newer humanities, and even cultural politics.

In schools "literature" still sets its face firmly towards (increasingly irrelevantly) undergraduate success and refuses to cohabit with "language". "Language" itself serves the moderately "bright" pupils and allows itself a modicum of life-giving exchange with the teaching of "democratic skills" - even sometimes the analysis of "rational argument". As for the rest of the pupil-range, they reject, or resist, or simply attack the workers at the "chalk-face", whose job becomes more unbearable in proportion to its decrease in professional status and autonomy.<sup>114</sup> Alternatively, glad to be able to find jobs in the first place, some teachers view their work not as a "profession" at all, but rather as <sup>a</sup> just bearable job in a situation in which to have any job at all is a lucky break.

The work of Derys Thompson has thus spanned the period during which teaching rose to the zenith of its social status, and, as long as a process of growth was in operation, it was possible for this work to fuel a self-confident missionary ideology always fighting for greater curricular dominance. "English" defined itself under such conditions: it still exhibits the scars it received in the fight.



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## NOTES

- 1 The formulation "discourse on community" is from Mulhern (1979) The Moment of Scrutiny, see pp 309-313
- 2 Marwick (1970) Britain in a Century of Total War pp 37-40; Morrish (1970) Education since 1800 p 115; Mann (1979) Education, p 221 and Hobsbawm (1974) Industry & Empire, p 230
- 3 This represents a crude generalisation out of what was in fact a complex relation between English and the education of the "lower orders". Arguably, though, the most significant developments in this area during the greater part of the nineteenth century can be identified with post-school educational practices (for a general account of successive movements such as Mechanics' Institutes, Working Men's Colleges, University Extension and the early phases of the W.E.A. and the Labour Colleges see J. F. C. Harrison, Learning & Living 1790-1960, 1961)
- 4 Hobsbawm (1974) p 169
- 5 Lowndes (1969) The Silent Social Revolution, p 48
- 6 see Mathieson (1975) The Preachers of Culture, pp 17-21
- 7 Mann (1979), p 6
- 8 Morrish (1970), pp 11-12
- 9 Morrish (1970), p 12
- 10 See a letter from Russell to Lansdowne dated 4th February 1839, reproduced in Maclure (1968) Educational Documents, pp 43-4  
See also Mann (1979), p 9
- 11 Hobsbawm (1974), p 230
- 12 Paffard (1962) "The Teaching of English Literature in Secondary Schools", p 18
- 13 For extracts from all four see Maclure (1968), Sections 8, 9, 12 and 13
- 14 Maclure (1968), p 70
- 15 Maclure (1968), p 79
- 16 Eagleton (1976) Criticism and Ideology, pp 102-104. His discussion is more generally about the relationship between "utilitarianism" and "culture". See also Mathieson (1975), pp 17-21
- 17 See Forster's speech introducing the bill in Maclure (1968), Section 14

- 31.
- 18 Mathieson (1975), pp 41-4 & 124
- 19 Maclure (1968), p 9; Lowndes (1969), p 15
- 20 Hobsbawm (1974) p 169. The same author also notes that "in 1897 less than 7% of grammar-school pupils came from the working class" (ibid)
- 21 It is worth noting that from about 1850 the Mechanics' Institutes had become the main source for lectures on literature at college level, organised specifically on the basis of offering "protection against seditious political material" (Mathieson (1975), p 123).
- 22 In 1902 there were 272 Secondary Schools (31,716 pupils) which were grant-aided by the Board of Education; by 1934 there were 1381 (448,421 pupils). The number of certified teachers rose from 53,000 in 1895, to 97,422 in 1909, and to 130,654 in 1934. In 1905 62.7% of secondary school teachers were graduates, by 1934 the figure was 85.5%. The number of students at universities was 9,000 in 1913, in 1931 it was 30,000, and in 1938 40,000 (Lowndes, pp 16, 17, 28, 80, 82 83-4 and 112n; Monn p 221)
- 23 See Tillyard (1958) The Muse Unchained; Mulhern (1979)
- 24 Mulhern (1979), p 312
- 25 Anderson (1968), "Components of the National Culture"
- 26 Wright (1976) "On the Social Responsibility of Literature"
- 27 Mulhern (1979), pp 318-20
- 28 Lowndes (1969), p 48
- 29 Hobsbawm (1974), p 169
- 30 Maclure (1968), p 158
- 31 Maclure (1968), pp 157-159
- 32 Maclure (1968), pp 163-164
- 33 In 1907 the Board of Education laid down the Regulation that all grant-aided Secondary Schools must provide for 25% "free" places or "scholarships". There were 23,000 scholarships awarded in 1906, 60,000 in 1913 and 150,000 in 1927 (Maclure (1968), p 162)
- 34 Board of Education Circular No. 753, "The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools", H.M.S.O., 1910
- 35 Shayer (1972) pp 34-5
- 36 Marwick (1970) p 66; Lowndes (1969) pp 91 & 127

- 37 Lowndes (1969) p 91
- 38 Maclure (1968) p 170
- 39 Compare Thompson's editorial remarks: "Most teachers of English have long accepted the necessity of raising 'the standard of their pupils' private reading'" (English in Schools 1, 4 (Christmas Term 1940) 77) with Paffard's claim that the most important aim of literature teaching is the extension of the teacher's influence over leisure reading, Paffard (1962) p 222
- 40 Marwick (1970) p 179
- 41 Mann (1979) pp 24-5. immediately following the General Strike of 1926, Baldwin wrote to the teaching profession: "one of the strongest bonds of union between men is a common education and England has been the poorer that in her National system of schooling she has not in the past fostered this fellowship of the mind". (Lowndes (1968) p 94)
- 42 Mann (1979) p 24
- 43 Mann (1979) p 25
- 44 Marwick (1970) pp 180-1 & 319
- 45 Maclure (1968) p 180
- 46 Maclure (1968) pp 188-92
- 47 Board of Education, The Teaching of English in England: being the Report of the departmental committee appointed by the President of the Board of Education to inquire into the position of English in the education system of England (Newbolt Report), 1921, H.M.S.O. pp 21-23. This document deserves greater analysis in its own right rather than simply as refracted through the work of Denys Thompson and his associates as had to be the case here. A forthcoming article by Derek Longhurst in Red Letters on uses of Shakespeare in schools contains a fuller account of the "nationalising" tendencies of the 1921 Report.
- 48 *ibid.*, pp 57-59
- 49 George Sampson, English for the English: A Chapter on National Education, 1921, Cambridge (the passage quoted is from the preface which was added in 1926). Sampson was a member of the Newbolt Committee and his book contains numerous passages which are drawn almost directly from the 1921 Report. Thompson edited an edition of Sampson's book which was published in 1970 but does not include the 1926 preface.
- 50 "Advertising God" Scrutiny I, 3 (December 1932) pp 241-6
- 51 "A Cure for Amnesia" Scrutiny II, 1 (June 1933), pp 2-11

- 33.
- 52 "Alderton Pink" (Review) Scrutiny II, 1 (June 1933), pp 104-5
- 53 "The Scrutiny Movement in Education" (pamphlet) un-numbered pages (four) following p 110 in bound Volume II.
- 54 Leavis & Thompson Culture & Environment (1933)
- 55 "The Machine Unchained" Scrutiny II, 2 (September 1933) pp 186-9; "Prospectus for a Weekly" Scrutiny II, 3 (December 1933) pp 247-52
- 56 Culture & Environment, p 4
- 57 *ibid*, p 6
- 58 *ibid*, p 53
- 59 *ibid*, p 75
- 60 *ibid*, p 109
- 61 "The Robber Barons" Scrutiny V, 1 (June 1936) pp 2-12
- 62 The general argument here is indebted to Finn, Grant and Johnson (1977 "Education, Social Democracy and the Crisis".
- 63 The latter term is Mathieson's see pp 119-20
- 64 See Johnson (1979) "Really Useful Knowledge ", and also Finn, Grant and Johnson (1977) especially p 159
- 65 Finn, Grant & Johnson (1977) especially p 194
- 66 Maclure (1968) p 12; Finn, Grant, Johnson (1977) p 164
- 67 Finn, Grant, Johnson (1977) p 174
- 68 Maclure (1968) pp 200-3
- 69 *ibid*, pp 206-8
- 70 *ibid*, pp 222-5
- 71 *ibid*, p 237
- 72 *ibid*, pp 247-57
- 73 See Mathieson (1975) p 17. Also Huxley's evidence to the Royal Commission on Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science (1872-5) in Maclure (1968) pp 110-111
- 74 See, for example, the contributions to Pinto (ed) (1946) which was the outcome of an English Association Symposium. Thompson and his associates always represented an alternative "culturalist" voice to this Association (it was founded in 1906 "to promote the knowledge and appreciation of English language and literature, and to uphold the standards of English writing and speech") eventually to the extent of forming their own National Association for the Teaching of English (see below)

- 75 See Mathieson (1975)
- 76 The Teaching of English was number 3 of a series "Studies in Communication" which were "contributed to the Communication Research Centre, University College, London". The phrase "ground of understanding" comes from the "blurb".
- 77 Maclure (1968) pp 279-84
- 78 *ibid*, p 284
- 79 *ibid*, pp 302-5
- 80 See Finn, Grant & Johnson (1977) p 193
- 81 English in Schools, 1, 1 (Christmas Term 1939), 1
- 82 See English in Schools 2, 8 (Autumn Term 1948) p 145 and 2, 9 (Summer Term 1949) inside back cover; and The Use of English I, 1 (Autumn 1949) pp 55
- 83 See "Announcement" English in Schools, 2, 7 (Summer Term 1948) inside back cover
- 84 See Note 86 below
- 85 The Use of English 1, 1 (Autumn 1949) pp 5-6
- 86 Raymond Williams "Stocktaking I: Books for Teaching 'Culture and Environment'", The Use of English I, 3 (Spring 1950) pp 134-40

Readers interested in the genesis of modern Cultural Studies may like to add to Richard Johnson's recent account "Cultural Studies and Educational Practice", in Screen Education, No 34, Spring 1980, 5-16, the following details gleaned from subsequent issues of the UoE which helps to fill in some of the historical connections between the development of "Culture & Environment Studies" and the foundation by Richard Hoggart of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in 1964. In the same article as quoted above, Raymond Williams had warned that in teaching C & E Studies one must refuse to be overawed by specialisms which surround this new field. Over the next decade a number of UoE readers' discussion groups met in various places to discuss (among other things) the best ways to approach C & E Studies: for example a London discussion group of whom Raymond Williams was one, met in 1959 to discuss the text Culture & Environment (see UoE X, 4 (Summer 1959), 264). However the first directly institutional move is reflected in Richard Hoggart's inaugural lecture as English Professor at Birmingham which was carried in full by the journal (UoE XV, 2 Winter 1963, 75-81; and XV, 3 Spring 1964, 167-174). Beginning with the familiar cry of the need to "connect", Hoggart goes on to call for a new approach to English and allied fields which may provisionally be called "Literature and Contemporary Cultural Studies". In this he sees as his most important ancestors the Leavises, but also expresses

reservations at any continued use of terms such as "highbrow" and "mass" without some further work of definition: what is now required is a vocabulary of the "cultural mode of thought".

Incursions from another discipline - sociology - are detected by David Holbrook in a swinging review of Hall and Whannel's The Popular Arts (UoE XVII, 3 Spring 1966, pp 195-9) in which the authors are described as naive sociologists who are "not disciplined by a sense of human values". The sorts of "vulgar" material (e.g. "Steptoe & Son") which they chose to deal with "must have been an offence in the ordinary decent home, of whatever class". Such loutish habits are finally contrasted with true "working-class vitality" and peasant courtesy. This review drew a letter in reply from Hoggart claiming that neither author was a sociologist, that they were concerned with moral evaluations and, in this, trying to further the UoE "line of enquiry". (UoE, XVII, 1 Autumn 1966, 52-3).

Holbrook's extreme reaction together with Hoggart's response to it are revealing for the transition between C & E Studies and the approaches to Cultural Studies subsequently developed at the Centre under the Directorship of Stuart Hall, in that they pivot around notions of "value". Work at the Centre post-Hoggart can be seen as moving beyond notions of self-evident human and aesthetic values to study the sources of evaluation themselves; thus the emphasis subsequently on understanding the social forces which generate consciousness (including value and human attitudes) within the whole domain of culture and ideology.

- 87 "Cobbett V. Northcliffe" (editorial) The Use of English, I 4 (Summer 1950) pp 179-81
- 88 "Questions Teachers Ask" (editorial) The Use of English, I 2 (Winter 1949) pp 59-62
- 89 See Finn, Grant & Johnson (1977) p 174
- 90 "Enormous and ~~Multifarious~~" (editorial) The Use of English, XII, 4 (Summer 1961) pp 219-21
- 91 For an account of Thompson's role in founding the NATE see James Britton "How We Got Here", in Bagnall (ed) (1973) pp 20-1
- 92 Finn, Grant & Johnson (1977) p 194
- 93 *ibid*, p 174
- 94 Maclure (1968) p 16
- 95 "Reflection" by Denys Thompson, in Thompson & Jackson (eds) English in Education 1962, pp 228-31
- 96 Editorial The Use of English XV, 1 (Autumn 1963) pp 3-4
- 97 Not all of the journal's contributors were happy with the

outcome of this initiative. David Holbrook, in a letter published in XV, 3 (Spring 1964) pp 209-10, stated that the conference had seemed "eccentric", having minimal reference to issues which come up in local groups: "one has the sense of something imposed". The conference was a "jamboree addressed on peripheral matters by those (with notable exceptions) who have left the classroom too long, if, indeed, they were ever in it". The success of future conferences will depend upon their being planned "by those whose motives are disinterestedly those of helping the teacher, as artist, in his exacting work". (italics added)

- 98 "Twenty-Five" (editorial) The Use of English, XV, 4 (Summer 1964) pp 243-4. Part of Boyle's message reads: "The Use of English is one of the good things which we owe in the long run to the Cambridge English School, and its standards have, never been narrow or partisan".
- 99 "In October 1960 the National Union of Teachers held a Conference with the title "Popular Culture and Personal Responsibility". The aim was 'to examine the impact of mass communications on present-day moral and cultural standards'". (Foreword, by Thompson, to Discrimination and Popular Culture (1964) p 7)
- 100 "Aims and Purposes of Teaching English in Britain", Squire (ed) 1966, pp 3-10
- 101 See "Some Trends in the U.S.A." (editorial) English in Schools, 1, 6/7 (Summer/Christmas Term 1941) pp 123-4 & 138: "we have a great deal to learn from English teaching in the States".
- 102 Editorial, The Use of English, 20, 4 (Summer 1969) pp 291-2
- 103 Tell (1971), Matthew Arnold: Selected Poetry and Prose (1971), Compact Poets (1962), Children as Poets (1972), Poetry for Children (1973), Distant Voices (1978), The Uses of Poetry (1978)
- 104 The Uses of Poetry (1978) p VII
- 105 *ibid*, p 52
- 106 See, for example, Lawford (1976)
- 107 The Uses of Poetry (1978) p 225
- 108 "Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers!". Image, Music, Text (1977)
- 109 See Bennett (1979)
- 110 See Willis (1978) and Finn, Grant, Johnson (1977) especially pp 153-9
- 111 "... the legend of a Golden Age is an improved version, perhaps, of a distant past when man had achieved homeostatis in his environment". The Uses of Poetry (1978) p 105

- 112 See Suzanne Langer Philosophy in a New Key (1957), where an aesthetic based upon a distinction between the "discursive" (analytic mode) and the "non-discursive" (non-analytic mode) is developed in terms of an innate human proclivity for "symbol-production".
- 113 See Bourdieu & Passeron (1977)
- 114 Perhaps this, in fact, represents something for a return to the situation of the teacher in the 1890s: "in some parts the teachers of those times would hardly dare to go home alone owing, as one teacher whimsically expressed it, to 'the pelting tendencies and rough humour of the neighbourhood'. When it is recalled that the sole form of local traction was still the horse, 'pelting tendencies' takes on a peculiar significance" Lowndes (1969) pp 11-12



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- (with F. R. Leavis) Culture & Environment, 1933, Chatt. Windus
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