THE LEARNING OF CULTURE:

A REVIEW OF

THE THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

OF

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

AND

THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled **The Learning of Culture: A Review of the Theoretical Contributions of the Anthropology of Education and the Sociology of Education** submitted by **Amman Madan** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other university and is his original work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation and consideration.

Dr Avijit Pathak
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PREFACE

A discussion of the anthropology of education or the sociology of education within a university must begin by reflecting on its own position vis-a-vis its culture. Most academic writing in the social studies in India usually stays locked up in sterile debates or is read only by termites. Few academicians manage to relate themselves and contribute to the transitions that our people are going through. The contributing factors to this state of affairs include our colonial origins, the difficult language that we write in, the high cost of the books that we publish and so on.

This dissertation is part of the trend that seeks to bring universities closer to the problems of the people. My effort has been to provide a text that while being academically sound can also be read by people in voluntary organizations to clarify their understanding of the problem of education. As readers from activist as well as academic backgrounds will note, this attempt to suit two occasionally conflicting demands has not always produced a satisfactory result.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Academicians and activists, farmers and executives, poets and proof-readers, we all live by choosing out of the options that our culture places before us. At times the brighter or more disaffected among us may not simply select but actually create new options. Choices are ever-present even if they are not always made consciously. One of the most basic aspects of humanity is that we evaluate and judge. Do I like to wear kolhapuris or sneakers, do I feel warmly towards a Bihari accent or a Tamilian accent, do I perk up and grin at Laloo Prasad Yadav's rhetoric or do I grimace? Our incredibly complex values have entire worlds and histories of experiences behind them.

Sometimes we are very sure of our views. Our value judgements are so strong that we are swept by a deep-rooted desire to change the world. Well, not all of it and not, realistically speaking, in the snap of a finger. Slowly, gradually, but irrevocably, we want to replace all that offends our values with things that we find agreeable. Such assertions of moral superiority are the stuff of which social reform, social activism and revolutions are made of.

EDUCATION

There are many approaches to social action neighbourhood associations may bring out petitions, villagers may stage dharnas, factions among the elite may lobby, relatives may gossip, and so on. Education is one of them and is a very popular means of social change, if not, perhaps, as dramatic as some others can be. In India the expansion of employment on the basis of educational degrees over the last century has led to a strong faith in education's ability to improve matters. Education is commonly seen as an essential criterion for what people consider to be vertical mobility. Academicians, in particular, have a soft corner for education as a tool for social action. They themselves have spent most of their lives in academic institutions and easily conclude that if others too had had their experiences the state of affairs would improve.

The popular faith in education is not without basis. Education does change people in a fundamental sense, though not just in terms of getting more prestigious jobs or gaining the values and beliefs of middle-class, upper-caste Indian academicians. Education is closely linked, if not identical, with the concept of culture — one of the most basic and important concepts of the social studies — and is, therefore, central to any consideration of human existence,

be it the study of paintings or an attempt to destroy untouchability. Both "education" and "culture" have been interpreted in a number of ways, but central to both of them is a sense of growth and development through interaction with the environment.

The early meanings of education and its sister terms like "educate", "educated" and, at some distance, "educe" generally suggest the creation of the human being of their times. The venerable *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989, vol V, pp. 73-75) traces these words to the Latin *educare*, meaning to rear or bring up children or young animals, and the related word *educere, meaning* to lead forth. In what came to be called the English language, these Latin roots were used in the 15th-17th centuries in forms which meant the physical nourishing and rearing of children and young animals, as well as the bringing up of children to form their manner, habits, mental and physical aptitudes and their employment and station in life. The latter meaning is of great significance. This early sense of education virtually meant creating all the attributes of a human in society. In short, creating a culture.

Of course, the term "culture" was not current at that time (Barnard, 1973, p. 613). But the notion of education represented one side of a great dispute in European thought on whether the more prized human attributes

were inborn or were learnt. Education was a rather ambiguous assertion that human characters were indeed learnt by children but this was only the drawing forth of previously present elements. The polishing of a diamond is a common metaphor used for education. These were the very ideas that were given another expression by the term "culture".

Education, itself, has had a vast range of meanings attributed to it. Since the early part of the 17th century there emerged a gradual narrowing of one meaning to organized learning (Williams, 1976, p. 95) and this came to dominate the usage of the term. Education as organized teaching itself came to be differentiated into different senses of the term. William K. Frankena, for instance, wrote that education could be understood in the following ways (1973, p. 72): "(1) as the activity of the one doing the educating, the act or process of *educating* or *teaching* engaged in by the educator, (2) as the process or experience of *being educated* or *learning* that goes on in the one being educated, and (3) as the *result* produced in the one being educated by the double process of educating and being educated... (4) as the discipline or study" of the above three in academics.

Education usually had a strong moral tone to it. It sought to develop only qualities that were deemed to be

desirable. These desirable qualities led to a further narrowing down of the term education to the particular aims of the individuals or groups who were organizing this education. Thus there could be a Vedic education, as in the few surviving *gurukuls* today, and there could be a public school education as typified by the 50 odd very expensive public schools of India.

All these later senses, it may be noted, are only the result of narrowing down or specializing the early broader sense of education which was equivalent to the inculcating of all the characters of a human. Karl Mannheim (Mannheim and Stewart, 1962) had distinguished between narrower and broader meanings of education on the basis of the *source* of influences on the learner. Narrower meanings saw only the dyadic relationship of a "teacher" influencing a "learner". Broader meanings saw all of society - its economy, religion, etc. - influencing the learner. Narrower and broader senses can also be distinguished on a different basis: the *effect* of the influences on the learner(/s). The narrower senses meant the "improvement" of the learner. What was "improvement" was defined by the individuals, groups and forces which were organizing the learning. In contrast there can be seen the broader senses of education which included all that a person learnt, regardless of whether it had the approval of an organizing agency or ther there was even any consciously organizing agency at

all. Education could occur anywhere and everywhere, in the marketplaces, in the public transport buses, in the playgrounds, sitting alone with a flute in the hand, just about any place.

Another distinction that is of great help is that between education and schooling. This is a popular one especially in the anthropology of education (e.g. Wax, Diamond and Gearing (ed.s), 1971). Nowadays the latter usually sees education in the broader sense described above as all that is learnt by humans through interaction and is not inborn. Schooling is restricted to the activities of specialized institutions which have the avowed goal of teaching people. In the rest of this dissertation, unless specified otherwise, the anthropological convention of the use of "education" and "schooling" shall be followed.

CULTURE

Education, then, is very closely linked to the anthropologists' master concept of "culture". Indeed the early meanings of culture are virtually identical to the root meanings of education. Culture's root word in Latin is *colere*, one of whose several meanings was "to cultivate". Subsequently the Latin word *cultura* took on the meaning of cultivation or tending (Williams, 1976, pp. 76-82; *OED*,

1989, vol IV, p. 121). Cultivation or tending, it may be noted, are virtually synonyms of education's root meanings of rearing or bringing up. The former may lean more towards an operation done to the land while the latter is aimed at animals, but they have a common implicit sense of increasing and developing the qualities of beings. It took centuries for this to become explicit.

In English, culture primarily meant the cultivation of land from the 15th century onwards and was extended to include certain animals like fish, oysters, bees, etc. after the end of the 18th century. With the rise of biology and its techniques of rearing living forms under synthetic conditions, culture became a familiar term in usages like bacteria culture, tissue culture, aquaculture, etc. and this remains an important sense of the term even today.

From the early part of the 16th century culture took on an additional meaning which is of a lot of significance to us. Culture was extended by metaphor to human beings. In subsequent years it became accepted as not just a metaphor but a commonplace usage. The meaning of culture as an independent term for a *generalized process or the product of a process of growth and development of all humanity* became important after the late 18th century and quite common after the middle of the 19th century. The stratified British society added another dimension to culture by

attaching connotations of higher and lower ranks to the term. The presence of qualities that were deemed to be cultured or refined became a sign of high rank. Earlier, rank had had only an implicit presence in culture. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment in Europe had the fundamental premise that humans were necessarily progressing. Culture implicitly meant the process of developing and growing in directions that were positively valued. This connotation closely paralleled the sense of education as the inculcation of desirable qualities in a human.

Culture had similar meanings in French, though the aspect of rank was not as developed as it was in English. In the late 18th century German absorbed this term from French, spelling it initially as *Cultur* and by the late 19th century as *Kultur.* The development of this word in German is quite important as it is from here that has come the most popular sense of the term in modern anthropology and sociology. J. G. von Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* ("Outline of a Philosophy of the History of Mankind") published in four volumes between 1784 and 1791, was responsible for breaking this new ground (Thompson, 1990, pp. 125-128; Williams, 1976, pp. 76-82). The commonly held general notion of culture which was applicable to all humanity was condemned by Herder as ethnocentric and he differentiated it into multiple

cultures, each of which was typical of a particular group, a particular nation and a particular age. This was the source of the anthropological understanding of culture as the way of life of a people.

The general view of culture has a directly corresponding explicit meaning of education. Herder's narrower meaning was more implicit in education even though it was close to education as the inculcation of the ideals of particular groups.

Herder's view came to the English speaking anthropologists through Gustav Klemm's *Allgemeine Cultur-Geschichte der Mennschheit* ("General Cultural History of Mankind") published in ten volumes between 1843 and 1852 (Thompson, 1990, p. 127). Klemm chose to examine the peoples of the world through their customs, skills, arts, tools, weapons, religious practices and so on. His writings were known to Edward B. Tylor who introduced this interpretation of culture to English through his *Primitive Culture* published in 1871. Tylor gave a now classic definition of culture (Tylor, 1871, p. 1, quoted in Thompson, 1990, p. 128):

Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other

capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The condition of culture among the various societies of mankind, in so far as it is capable of being investigated on general principles, is a subject apt for the study of laws of human thought and action[1].

Culture rapidly became a fundamental concept of the newly emerging discipline of anthropology, up there with the other paradigm-setting notion of evolution. It was the hey-day of European colonialism and for the first time the West was in close contact with the non-Western peoples of the world. Besides directly aiding the colonial administrators by their studies of the colonized peoples, anthropologists greatly contributed to fitting the alien ways of life into the West's own worldview. The narrower sense of culture was a crucially important tool in this task. It saw the colonized peoples as discrete, distinct units characterized by unique ways of life. These units (or cultures) were commonly organized with the help of the concept of evolution into hierarchical patterns with the anthropologists' own "culture" at the top (e.g. upper-class Victorian England as the most highly evolved culture). Culture helped to give

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1   The use of the term civilization as a synonym of culture, too, invites discussion. However that would be straying too far from the theme of this dissertation.

legitimacy to the colonialists' view of their conquered peoples as very different and inferior to themselves. They could then be dominated and oppressed with a clear conscience. The broader sense of culture as the general process of growing and developing remained at a very abstract level and did not come into common use by anthropologists as much as the narrower sense did.

Not surprisingly, the broader sense of education was also not commonly associated with anthropologists' notion of culture. Education as refinement was the dominant sense of the term at that time and the early anthropologists saw little similarity between the lofty ideals of their education and the "inferior, primitive cultures" that they studied.

Anthropological definitions of culture proliferated rapidly. Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn published the results of a survey in 1952 which counted no less than 164 different definitions. There is every reason to believe that the 41 years that have passed since then have seen the coining of many more. A comprehensive review of these would probably be more than even a doctoral thesis could handle. Fortunately our purpose would be served by just an indication of the ranges of meanings attached to the term as has been done in the brief historical description presented above. To sum up, then, culture has primarily five senses

current today (derived from Bauman, 1973, and Williams, 1976, pp. 76-82):

(i)   Culture as the cultivation or rearing of living beings.

(ii)   Culture as a hierarchical concept which is used to describe and rank individuals, peoples and intellectual activity.

(iii)   Related to the previous sense is culture as intellectual and particularly aesthetic activity.

(iv)   Culture as a differential concept which is used to distinguish and describe apparently distinct communities of people.

(v)   Culture as a generic concept which is used to examine and describe the essential unity of humankind.

        Underlying all the various meanings of culture is a basic theme from which flows the great importance of culture for any consideration of education and vice-versa. The basic theme is that culture is something that one is not born with. It is developed by intimate contact with the

interactions, be they of a bacteria with its nutrient rich surroundings, of a doctor's with his/her medical college, of a sitar maestro's with his guru and sitar, of a Muria woman's with her own tribe's people as well as some outsiders, of all humans with each other and their living and non-living environment.

In the case of the human species we would be well within the established range of meanings to say that *culture is the product of learning and, in turn, the creator of learning.* It is possible to argue, as Stanley Diamond did (1971), that *culture is nothing but education. Culture is socially and not genetically created and transmitted*[1].

Education/culture produces and reproduces all the equalities and inequalities of this world. Prejudice, hatred, poverty, misery, alienation are all produced and reproduced by learning, as are happiness, love and affluence[2]. Anyone who wishes to actively involve himself

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1 (*cf.* Vermeersch, 1977, for opinions that differ.

2 There is, no doubt, a biological substratum on which all these are built. The relation between biology and culture is a major problem in anthropology, but goes beyond the brief of this dissertation.

or herself with the issues that grip humankind, be it as an academician or a political activist would gain a lot by closely examining the learning of culture.

A "close examination", let it be made clear, is not the only way to tackle education/culture nor necessarily the best way. All too often academicians get so carried away by a form of ethnocentrism that analysis, publication and vertical mobility in academia appears the best thing to do in life. Education/culture may also be approached as a primary school teacher or an activist trying to improve the lot of agricultural labourers or a health worker and so on. An academic examination of the learning of culture, it is submitted, is just another of these approaches and, it is hoped, is in its own way a valid and helpful enterprise.

THE SCOPE OF THE DISSERTATION

The learning of culture has been studied in several ways in academics even if not always conceptualized in this manner. Education itself is well established as an academic discipline in its efforts to understand schooling. Psychology has given us great insights, particularly into the learning processes seated in the individual. Philosophy and economics have also contributed significantly to this theme. The sister disciplines of sociology and

anthropology, with which I am most familiar with, have seen deep probings into the learning of culture. Symbolic interactionism, for instance, was directly concerned with examining individuals and groups as they learnt and relearnt their behaviour every day by very personal interactions within their social environment. Enculturation and socialization are among themes which approach our problem head on in anthropology and sociology. The anthropology of education and the sociology of education have become established as sub-disciplines which primarily concern themselves with the relation of culture with learning in organized and informal situations.

A comprehensive academic treatment of the learning of culture is possible only by a multi-disciplinary study. The constraints of the year's time permitted for writing this dissertation, however, allow me to focus only on anthropology and sociology which are the disciplines that I have received my academic training in[1]. This is for

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1   Anthropology and sociology are usually separate departments in universities although there is an increasing tendency to group them together and to study each other's texts, e.g. in this very Centre for the Study of Social Systems, in Punjabi University, etc. However, the majority of scholars who say they are doing the anthropology of education

practical reasons only and should not be taken to imply any assertion of the superiority of, say, the inter-personal or group oriented studies over the intra-personal emphasis of psychology. The anthropology of education and the sociology of education are comparatively well organized traditions within my parent disciplines. Moreover, they are not well-known in India, especially their more recent contributions. These reasons make the anthropology of education and the sociology of education attractive objects of study.

This dissertation is a review of the theoretical contributions of the anthropology of education and the sociology of education. It has been chosen to do a review of the literature rather than a narrower study. Reviews of the field are present but they do not focus on the problem of culture and are not comprehensive enough (see for e.g. Blackledge and Hunt, 1985; Ogbu, 1985; Pelissier, 1991; Robinson, 1981; Tindall, 1976, etc.) Nor does any review combine together the insights from the sub-disciplines of anthropology and sociology of education. Apart from these

or the sociology of education do not often refer or react to the texts of their sister discipline. These two are therefore treated here as distinct academic traditions, without asserting that they are different in an essential manner from each other in their aims, methods or theories.

academic considerations, there are other reasons as well. As mentioned above, the sociology and anthropology of education are not widely known in India. A review of the literature would be of more use in spreading the insights of this field amongst activists, NGOs, administrators, funding organization and academicians than a narrowly focussed problem-oriented dissertation.

My emphasis is on the theoretical contributions rather than on substantive results. The latter would comprise so vast a body of research that it would be simply impossible to go though even a fraction of it within the span of a year. Theoretical contributions are rarer and have been therefore preferred even though some depth of insight will thus be sacrificed. It is some consolation, however, that the theoretical works have a wider relevance and lend themselves more readily to applications in diverse concrete situations.

It would also be in order here to make clear what is meant by "theoretical". Sciences like Physics have made popular an interpretation of "theory" as a systematic set of generalized propositions from which it is possible to deduce the behaviour of the objects of study. It suggests a neat set of formulae from which calculations can be made to predict what will happen in some given circumstances. Obviously, anthropology and sociology have no such formulae.

And many practitioners of these disciplines have serious doubts as to whether it is at all possible to ever devise such formulae for living, breathing human beings. It is accepted, however, that we can draw lessons from particular situations that can be cautiously applied to other cases. This is the source of a narrower sense of "theory" and "theoretical" as has been used in this dissertation. S.F. Nadel (1986, p. 1) has expressed it nicely by saying that a theory is a body of interconnected propositions "which serve to *map out* the problem area and thus prepare the ground for its empirical investigation by appropriate methods. More precisely, the propositions serve to classify phenomena, to analyse them into relevant units or indicate their interconnections, and to define 'rules of procedures' and 'schemes of interpretation'...'Theory' here equals conceptual schemes or logical frameworks."

CHAPTERIZATION

The principle of chapterization has been that similar theoretical works or works that share similar paradigms have been kept together. For lucidity of presentation, the various traditions have been presented separately in a loosely chronological order and their comparison and collation has been done only in the conclusion. As an exception, the anthropology of education

has been kept as one composite chapter as it does not have
many theoretical efforts and has remained somewhat aloof
from the theoretical traditions of the sociology of
education. The distinct chapters should not be seen as
watertight compartments. Often different traditions
influenced or reacted against each other. Besides, several
scholars drew from diverse sources of inspiration and are a
little difficult to slot into one single tradition. This
dissertation has, therefore, the following chapters:

1.   INTRODUCTION.

A comparison is made of the historical developments
of the concepts of education and culture to show the
relevance of studies of education for culture and vice-
versa. The reasons are described because of which the topic
of the dissertation was chosen. The scope of the
dissertation is outlined.

2.   THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

The emphasis was initially on an evolutionist
framework which soon changed into the culture-personality
approach. This focussed on the individual and used concepts
derived from psychology. Few anthropologists looked at how
the psychological behaviour of the individual constituted
the culture. Margaret Mead was an exception in her insights
on the historical changes in the learning processes with the
rise of domination. The new generation of anthropologists

which emerged after the sixties carried on some of the culture-personality traditions and also developed other approaches. Structural-functionalism emerged in the form of technological-functionalism. Several anthropologists emphasized studies of cognition. The use was also made of cybernetics and ecological principles.

3.   THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL-POLITICAL ARITHMETIC.

The sociology of education is marked by an emphasis on formal schooling. From its origins it has seen a common implicit theoretical and methodological position called social-political arithmetic. This, often unconscious, theoretical position leads to the disregarding of the need to clarify and systematize concepts and wastes a large amount of resources on empirical studies of doubtful relevance.

4.   THE STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALIST SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

The structural-functionalists believed that schooling served the needs of society and led to its integration. Talcott Parsons formulated the two functions of schooling as socialization and selection of which the latter was developed by other prominent members of this school. The technological-functionalists saw the effect of schooling in the West as the maintenance of their technological structures. Karl Mannheim changed the

emphasis by arguing that education did not necessarily lead to the satisfaction of social needs. He sought a place for social conflict as well as the individual within an overall framework of harmony.

5.   DESCHOOLING AND THE SHIFT TOWARD DIRECT INTERACTION.

The deschoolers argued that schooling attacked the autonomy, creativity, freedom and the very humanity of the people in it. At a different level, schooling kept custody, socialized and selected people for contemporary ways of life as well as gave legitimacy to the latter. Basically non-academic in their work, the deschoolers created the space for a shift in academic sociology of education toward studying individuals and groups in direct interaction with each other in schools. The direct interactionists tended to underplay the macro-level dynamics which affected schooling.

6.   THE DURKHEIMIAN SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

Emile Durkheim looked to education to create unity and harmony in society. Education led to harmony as well as greater justice in a changing world by teaching the three basic dispositions of social existence: the spirit of discipline, a sense of belonging to social groups and a sense of autonomy. David Hargreaves saw the groups formed by students in a classroom as means to consolidate the sacred and their dignity through intensified social existence. Basil Bernstein combined a Durkheimian

structuralism with flexible insights on the power relations in schools.

7. THE MARXIST SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

The Marxists emphasized the contradictions between the different parts of a culture. The economy defined the patterns of the culture, including its schooling, although in principle a relative autonomy was believed to exist. Schooling, like the economy, was changing, but usually ended up only reproducing the existing inequalities. It did socialize and allocate roles, but also played an important part in legitimizing the unjust order by influencing the ideology and consciousness of the students through symbols and practices. The later Marxists paid more attention to the autonomy of schooling, especially to the resistance of the weaker sections to the reproductive effects within it.

8. THE WEBERIAN SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

Max Weber saw Western society as moving towards greater rationalization. Education, too, followed a rational trend and was an important instrument for this development. Degrees were increasingly the basis on which status groups protected and increased their rank. Frank Parkin elaborated that processes of exclusion and usurpation of rank took place on the basis of degrees and other cultural traits. Reproduction of status groups and not simply blood-links was sought. Raymond Murphy refined

Weber's concept of power to analyze the relative autonomy of schooling within society. Margaret S. Archer saw schooling as the product of systemic constraints as well as the activities of individuals motivated by their own goals. The dialectic between these created ever-changing patterns of schooling.

9.   CONCLUSION.

The major theoretical contributions are presented with reference to the problems of temporality, patterning of culture and innovation.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY
OF EDUCATION

"Culture, they say, is socially transmitted
or learned behavior; that is, culture *is*
education in every sense of the term"

                    -- Stanley Diamond
                       1971, p. 302

"Learning becomes chiefly a process of
stimulus-response, mental discipline, or some
similar practice devoted mainly to absorption
of and/or training for unity with the already
given cultural environment.   The notion
entertained by some anthropologists that
education is established to guarantee
transmission of the cultural heritage is
welcomed. by essentialists and perennialists
as confirming their own predilections as to
the relation of the learner to the reality
that is learned."

                    -- Theodore Brameld
                       1963, p. 90

Chapter 2

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

The academic discipline which goes by the name of anthropology has traditionally claimed culture as as one of its central concerns. Surprisingly, though, the *learning* of culture and social existence was given a theoretical shape only after the sixth decade of this century.

Early monographs on "other cultures" were commonly divided into sections that dealt with various stages in the lifecycle. These sections were only a convenient way of presenting reports on kinship behaviour, economy, etc. The question of how people learnt their own way of life or learnt to change was not taken up.

Formal education was occasionally discussed in the early decades of this century. Initially, the evolutionist approach dominated anthropology and different societies were willy-nilly pigeon-holed into dubious evolutionary frameworks. Edgar L. Hewett in what were perhaps the earliest anthropological works devoted to education (1904, 1905) looked at it from such a point of view and argued that the natives of America and the Philippines as well as several of the immigrants to America were from "lower

cultures" which led ^{to} their inability to cope with schools that taught them "higher cultures".

In these early years no anthropologist undertook a field study of the transmission of culture. Most discussions were based on observations made during general fieldwork which had considered kinship, religion, politics, etc. more worthy of investigation. Despite this, anthropologists were forthright in arguing against ethnocentric views about education in non-Western peoples. They sought to assist the colonial educators by providing them information about the local culture and the regularities of its transmission. A common refrain was the need to protect local cultures and their educational systems[1].

At the beginning of this century, a strong reaction against evolutionism emerged in America. This was led by Franz Boas who emphasized empirical studies of culture

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1 It would be interesting to learn more about the disagreements that must have emerged between, on the one side, these academics with commitments to both the colonized and the colonizers and on the other side the colonial administrators with an interest in subverting and dominating the local cultures.

history over the evolutionists' theoretical formulations. Boas had a strong interest in the behaviour of individuals within a culture. Himself an immigrant to America, Boas disagreed strongly with the evolutionists and presented evidence to support the claim that differences in school performance were due to cultural reasons and not biological or geographical in origin (Boas, 1948, pp. 11-13). He accepted that biology or race was indeed a factor but "cultural environment is a most important factor in determining the results of so-called intelligence tests" (*ibid.*, p. 12). Some of his students - Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead and Edward Sapir - carried on this interest to help pioneer a new paradigm in anthropology which came to be known as the culture-personality approach.

THE CULTURE-PERSONALITY APPROACH

The culture-personality approach looked at the individual as the locus of culture. It made extensive use of psychological concepts to study individuals as representative of groups. Terms like basic personality, modal personality and so on were used to grasp the psychological characters of groups. Personality was considered to be a learnt characteristic and so a major thrust was towards the study of the learning of the group's

personality (/personalities), especially through child-rearing practices.

Most often culture was treated as an independent variable which contributed towards determining the child-rearing practices and the personality. Less often, culture was seen as a dependent variable and child-rearing, personality, etc. were examined as its determining factors.

MARGARET MEAD

Margaret Mead, one of the most widely read anthropologists of the culture-personality school, published in 1943 a set of generalizations about the changing historical character of education and its relationship with society (Mead, 1963a). These generalizations were, however, restricted to the effects that the mingling of peoples had had on the West's approach to education.

Perhaps the most important effect was the shift from the desire of an individual to *learn* something which everyone agreed that s/he should know, to the will of an individual to *teach* something that there was usually no agreement upon nor a universal wish to learn.

The former case corresponded to a community with self-respecting and self-contained cultural homogeneity. The latter case corresponded to the disappearance of such communities with the mingling of peoples. The urge to assimilate others within one's own fold emerged with great force.

A group of people began to believe that their own cultural beliefs were superior, and when they held that their beliefs could be spread (and not restricted to a descent-based community as in castes) the stage was set for an impulse to enforce their beliefs on others. While earlier the learner's initiative set the society's patterns of learning, now the teacher's dynamism established the learning patterns. A new proselityzing form of education emerged. The paradigm which defined the usefulness of education, its relevance and its worth was no longer the learner's but the teacher's paradigm. Adults and children were bracketed together in this proselytization. Both were sought to be changed by the dominators. The inclusion of adults, however, created the conditions in which it was easier to throw up and debate the issue of the techniques of education.

The emergence of social stratification gave a new edge to the use of learning as a means of gaining rank or of protecting it. Lower ranking groups struggled to raise

their rank by appropriate learning. Various groups sought appropriate learning to at least hold on to their rank. Dominating groups (like the colonial educators, or the American government school networks) pushed for education of the marginalized peoples so that the latter could be of more use to the dominators. Education was also a means for the dominators to gain legitimacy and reduce the challenges to their power.

Stark differences between generations (the "generation gap") tended to be accepted as normal now. There was an increasing emphasis on education for change rather than on education for growth.

Throughout societies there was an increase in domination. Education, from Mead's analysis of it, seemed to be a major tool in struggles for power. At the time of her writing, schooling as well as many of the other aspects of culture were being used in Nazi Germany and elsewhere for blatant proselytization. But Mead refused to believe that education was a tool only for the powerful and could serve only for the domination of others.

Mead argued that alongside the historical rise of domination another strand too had emerged and none could say which eventually would be the future of humankind. The changes and discontinuities of the West had inspired a

vision that education could also possibly help free the newer generations. It could free them from anxiety, from fear, from guilt, from economic chains, from all that bound and restricted human potential. Education could, in these new times, help humans to try and raise their stature by their own lights and not by the dogma of others.

Fifty years after the publication of this article, Mead remains remarkably fresh and relevant. Her grand vision of a change from societies with little domination to modern authoritarianism may seem somewhat exaggerated in the view of recent ethnographic studies which claim to see large amounts of oppression even in the most "primitive" peoples. But the contrast between emphases on learning and emphases on teaching remains a fertile one. Mead's insights on the relationship between education and social stratification matches the most sophisticated Weberian treatments of this problem (see chapter on the Weberian sociology of education.) Her approach to education is non-deterministic, includes space for individual and group initiatives, has a historical dimension, is comparative and has a transformative emancipatory vision. Half a century after its publication, with many thousands of pages printed after it, Mead's 1943 article remains well worth reading. However, her directions of inquiry do not seem to have been followed up by later anthropologists.

In America G. D. Spindler (1955, 1963) and J. Henry (1957, 1960) were the early anthropologists who focussed on formal education.

JULES HENRY

Jules Henry (1960) prepared a cross-cultural outline of the educational process for ░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░░ anthropological fieldwork. Henry was primarily concerned with children over six years of age and their formal , conscious education. He excluded the physiological pathways to learning and the intimate learning by an infant within its family. He also excluded the learning that was done by the child alone, choosing instead to look at the learning which involved a teacher-learning relationship. In this he leaned more heavily toward the observation of the teacher's side. Such was the restricted cross-cultural outline that Henry sought. What he did not realized was that this outline had an even greater restriction: it did not discuss the relationship of learning with the entire culture. How did learning link with the dynamics and heterogeneities of cultures?

Henry's outline had twelve elements which were to be used for systematic description by the fieldworker[1]. They were: 1. On what the educational process focussed (i.e. its content). 2. How the information was communicated. 3. Who did the educating. 4. How the person being educated participated. 5. How the educator participated. 6. Whether certain things were taught to some and not to others. 7. Discontinuities in the educational process. 8. What limited the quantity and quality of information that a child received from a teacher. 9. What forms of discipline were used. 10. What relation there was between the intent and results of education. 11. What self-conceptions seemed reinforced. 12. How long the process of formal education lasted.

Henry reviewed several studies of education through this framework and came out with some "ancient and abiding characteristics of human education" (*ibid.*, p. 301). The main point for him was that there was no such thing as an individual maturing naturally within a society. Efforts had to be made for each new generation to adapt to its culture. Humans organized their lives so that great effort was put into narrowing the spheres of perception of the individual. Culture was formed by its being patterned in definite ways.

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1 Each element had several further sub-elements within it, *cf.* Henry, 1960.

On the other hand there was always an urge in humans to inquire further and further. This always held out a threat to the established patterns of culture. Categories of thought, social institutions, etc. fought against their being disturbed. A dialectic always operated in human existence between curiosity and the fear that it would destroy itself.

The reproduction itself of older patterns meant that humans were always in a state of flux. At all times people were moving from one status to another. Education was the necessary requirement for this change of status. Further, the raising of status depended on the assistance of those who had greater knowledge or rank.

Henry leaned heavily toward the study of individuals or small groups and toward the study of organised learning. Group dynamics and learning in informal situations was underplayed by him. Social conflicts or stratification did not appear in his schema at all. While he did not come up with theoretical schema that could give critical or historical or comparative insights, Henry had a dynamic understanding of culture. For him individuals as well as cultures were everchanging. There was a continuous movement of individuals between statuses as well as innovations that added to the options available in a culture.

Only in 1961 did Melford E. Spiro (Spiro 1961, 1972) come out with a model of social and psychological functionalism, combining the features of British social anthropology's structuralism with those of American culture-personality, tempering both by allowing considerable space for the emergence of social and psychological functionalism. The specific theme of the learning of culture, however, remained undeveloped.

In 1972, Thomas Rhys Williams published his book *Introduction to socialization: Human culture transmitted* (Williams, 1972a). This book drew heavily from the culture-personality school and also harked back to the early anthropological tradition by synthesizing results from physical anthropology, evolutionary theory and primate behaviour. Williams presented a composite view of the evolution of socialization. His use of the term socialization followed Mead's (1963b) distinction between socialization as the learning of the fundamental requirements by the entire species for gaining culture in general, and enculturation as the learning of a specific culture.

In various publications (1972a, 1972b, 1975b, 1979) Williams put forward the view that socialization necessarily involved a cybernetic relation between biology and human behaviour. A stage was supposed to have existed in human

evolution when there seems to have been the absence of such a relationship. He calls such a phase - singularity. In other words, while biology could define behaviour, the reciprocal relation on the part of human behaviour was absent. Williams argues that these early hominids did indeed transmit their culture over generations but this transmission was not efficient enough to enable the required accumulation of skills, social organization, etc. to the extent that they could significantly influence the material conditions of life. He thinks that the breakthrough was provided by the rise of symbolic communication between 3 to 5 million years ago and with it began true socialization. He is not too sure how later developments must have taken place (Williams, 1976, p. 243), but through a comparison of 128 cultures has abstracted and defined a number of structural and functional features of contemporary socialization (1972a, 1972b) all tied together into a dynamic system.

Williams is of great importance as an evolutionary theorist of the learning of culture. However his work does not seem to have been elaborated further by subsequent scholars.

So far as the majority of American anthropologists were concerned, by the 1960s the culture-personality school

was out of fashion. The sixties, however, saw severe turmoil in those sections of Western societies from

which the future academicians were recruited. The post-World War II boom had led to enormous expectations and the slowing down of economic growth fueled frustrations. The Vietnam war and the civil rights movements of the blacks raised profoundly disturbing questions about the morals of American society. Youth counter-culture movements and feminism shook campuses across America. This cultural milieu contributed profoundly toward creating most of the later theoretical approaches which this dissertation will seek to study.

In the sixties, severe crises in campuses inspired fresh looks at what was going on in classrooms and how that was related to the life outside. Stanley Diamond began the Culture of the Schools Study Project in 1963, which was continued under Frederick Gearing and the patronage of the American Anthropological Association from the year 1965. Some of its results along with other papers were published in 1971 as *Anthropological perspectives on education*, edited by Murray L.Wax, Stanley Diamond and Fred O. Gearing. This represented a watershed in the study of the learning of culture. The next few years threw up the first major theoretical writings on the transmission of culture.

The full-blown rise of the anthropology of education in the seventies[1] was also linked with certain developments in institutional anthropology. Since the 1950s anthropologists were trying to infuse their works into the curriculi of public schools. A committee had been set up to develop suitable materials and encourage their use in schools. Soon, ethnographic studies began looking at how these materials were being used in schools. This was a step of far-reaching significance[2]. The transition of emphasis from socialization in apparently harmonious kin groups (as was characteristic of the culture-personality approach) to formal education in the West itself opened the door to more critical points of view. When white, middle-class anthropologists began to study predominantly black or American Indian schools, contradictions rapidly began to accumulate. To this was added the iconoclastic atmosphere of the times.

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[1] cf. Harry M. Lindquist (1971) for writings on anthropology and education before 1971.

[2] Diamond (1971, p. 300) has pointed out that studies of formal schooling in non-Western societies, though rarely performed, could have brought out the colonial character of those schools.

Anthropologists entered into dialogues with school-teachers who were interested in their discipline. Exchanges of ideas began to gain momentum. The Council on Anthropology and Education was formed in 1970 (Lindquist, 1971, p. 310) and proved to be a very influential institution in the consolidation of anthropological thinking on the learning of culture. Several projects and committees were launched by the Council. Its *Newsletter* helped disseminate the results of studies and assisted in the pooling of ideas[1].

A major theme of discussion with teachers and educationists was the application of the concept of culture

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[1] In 1978 it was transformed into a quarterly journal with the title *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*. This continues to be the premier journal in this field. The lack of attention given to this sub-discipline by Indian anthropologists is seen by the fact there is no sign of it in the ICSSR's lists of journals subscribed to by libraries in Delhi. Nor could I find any trace of an equally important journal of the discipline of sociology, *the British Journal of the Sociology of Education*. Several important articles therefore had to be assessed for this dissertation by going through secondary sources.

to schools (cf. McDermott and Hood (1982), Spindler (1982), Wax (1971), Ogbu (1985)). Anthropologists rejected the popular view that poor and ethnic-minority students performed worse in schools because they were "culturally deprived". Culture was considerably more complex than simply the list of traits like poor housing, single-parent families, etc. which educationists called culture. Students lived in a cultural context and had to be treated as social beings, not just isolated individuals. Schools were seats for the transmission of culture and this was by no means the same as the professed goals of the schools and their curriculi.

A new anthropology of education had emerged by the nineteen seventies. But in America the influence of the culture-personality school continued in at least three ways (Ogbu, 1985, p. 279): 1. It supplied many of the major figures of the new approach - F. O. Gearing, G. D. Spindler, J. Henry, J. D. Herzog and others. 2. There was a wider vision of the problematique as the transmission of culture within which schooling was seen as a smaller area. 3. Its strong comparative perspective was carried on.

England and its sphere of influence had always resisted the pre-dominantly American culture-personality school (Richards, 1973). In 1970 the Association of Social Anthropologists (the premier British association) for the

first time brought out a book entitled *Socialization: the approach from social anthropology*, edited by Philip Mayer. This was a structural-functionalist perspective and acknowledged its distance from American approaches[1]. British efforts in this field lacked institutional support, exposure and dialogue with educationists in their own country. Not surprisingly, the major theoretical developments in the anthropological writings on the learning culture continued to emerge from USA.

The landmark American publication *Anthropological perspectives on education* (ed. Wax, Diamond and Gearing, 1971) had several important programmes and manifestoes for the field by Murray and Rosalie Wax (1971), Yehudi A. Cohen(1971), Dell Hymes(1971), Margaret Mead(1971), Sherwood

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1 A. I. Richards considered the theme of socialization particularly suited for discussing the methodological issue of cooperation in Britain between social anthropologists and psychologists. The study of the learning of culture, as I have discussed earlier, is one of the central themes in the study of human beings. A synthesis of many different academic and non-academic traditions is called for. Philip Wexler's (1983) critical and multi-disciplinary approach to social psychology is an encouraging move in the desired direction.

L. Washburn (1971) and Stanley Diamond(1971). The last is particularly notable for its critical perspective.

Stanley Diamond said that the conventional distinction between on the one side socialization[1] and on the other side formal schooling needed to be demolished. The concept of learning was essential to both. He urged that learning be examined in a cross-cultural and historical fashion. Socialization as treated by the culture-personality school had remained locked with traditional societies and no comparison with formal schooling had emerged[2].

Diamond argued that learning should be given the importance it deserved. Culture was nothing but synonymous with learning. The patterns of learning created societies. The crisis in education was nothing less than a crisis in the entire Western civilization.

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1 Socialization is understood here as the learning of values in close kin environs.

2 While this may have been true of the studies of his time, it was certainly not true of Margaret Mead's early work as discussed above.

At a more substantive level, Diamond brought a sophisticated Marxist approach to bear on the learning processes in traditional societies in contrast to contemporary Western societies. The former learnt instrumental, affective and cognitive aspects of life in a holistic manner, whereas the contemporary West had vast numbers of people learning these in isolated ways. Consequently, people in the West had fewer options for fulfillment and had a larger amount of psycho-pathologies.

Concluding his article, Diamond declared (*ibid.* pp. 305-306) "any critical and cultural interpretation of the crisis in education must reach to the root of our society. We are obliged to examine our notions of science, our concept of the person, the definition of mass education, the deterioration of informal learning, and so on. This can only occur in a comparative and historical context. Correlatively we also have the obligation to understand and reveal the exploitative functions of our educational system, as we have exported it to underdeveloped, that is, ex-colonial areas."

Sadly, Diamond's vision of cultural transmission itself remained untransmitted to most other anthropologists. He stood alone in his critically comparative and historical approach and soon shifted his theoretical interests elsewhere.

THE TECHNOLOGICAL FUNCTIONALISTS

Yehudi A. Cohen(1971) and H. C. Wilson (1973) tackled the transmission of culture from an evolutionary perspective, but were functionalist in their premises. Cohen said that kin-based societies relied on socialization for the transmission of culture. Semi-kin-based societies, too, depended largely on socialization as many of their institutions were organized around kinship. Only societies which were organized into states could make full use of formal schooling. Wilson distinguished between 7 types of societies placed in a unilinear evolutionary framework. He argued that formal schooling was a functional necessity for industrialized societies. Such a view came to be called "technological functionalism" by Karabel and Halsey (1977). It took a mechanical view that education functioned simply to maintain a society and schooling, in particular, maintained the West's technological establishment. Cohen and Wilson's rationalization of formal education provides a sharp contrast to Diamond's critical vision.

THE INTERACTIONISTS

Social criticisms did come out in the open in works like those by R. P. McDermott (1974), J. J. Gumperz and C. E. Hernandez-Chavez (1972), F. Erikson and G. Mohatt (1982) and others. They emphasized the study of personal, face-to-face interaction to describe inequality and discrimination in learning. The classroom was seen as a place where the inequalities of society were reproduced through symbolic interaction. The influence of linguistic structuralism, symbolism, ethnomethodology and symbolic interactionism is pronounced in this group of workers. However, the studies tended to remain at the level of face-to-face situations and did not move on to examinations of larger scales or of historical trends. Larger scales of understanding the learning of culture required theorizing at the level of institutions or even whole cultures.

THE EMPHASIS ON COGNITION

The emphasis on cognition, like the interactionists, represented what B. Allan Tindall (1976) called the "intra-psychic" learning of culture. M. Cole and S. Scribner (1973, 1974) approached this task by focussing on the purely intellectual tasks required by different cultures. Of

particular interest were the processes by which tasks, categories, etc. were memorized.

G. D. Spindler (1974) sought a more sophisticated model which incorporated the social parameters of human existence like aims and goals. An early model focussed on learning as it occurred at specific points in the lifecycle. This he soon rejected as he found it unable to tackle the problem of change and individual choice. Subsequently a model was developed which emphasized individual adaptations. This was based on the Rorschasch Test which was a technique that later he himself began to doubt.

Spindler finally came out with a model which made use of the notions held by individuals about instrumental activities. Spindler saw cultures as being created by the choice of "instrumental linkages" by individuals, i.e. the choice of goals and the means of attaining them, as well as the beliefs which supported them. Understanding the intra-psychic dimension of the learning of culture would involve studying the educational institutions and processes which taught the children what the linkages were, how they worked and why some were better than others. The choice of certain sets of linkages gave children their identities and the consciousness of the linkages and identities together gave them "cognitive control". The child grew up to have a cognitive map of his/her culture.

The traditional linkages broke down during periods of rapid social change and people chose and innovated new instrumental linkages to create adaptations of cultures.

Spindler's views were criticized for assuming that people were purely rational and culture involved only instrumental actions (Roberts, 1976). Social and personal identities were not clearly distinguished (Ogbu, 1985, p. 283). The extra-personal forces which constrained individual choices were conspicuous by their absence. Even though Spindler sought to theorize at the level of culture, the cultural constraints and channels were not included in his model. Cultural domination and contestation were not considered at all.

Solon T. Kimball (1973) was heavily influenced by the culture-personality school and retained an inclination toward the intra-psychic learning of culture (1973). For him culture included three elements :

1. The worldview or ethos, i.e., the premises which ordered all thought and feeling.

2. The specific content, i.e., the household skills, kinship behaviour, bodily functions, etc.

3. Cognitive behaviour, i.e., the formation of categories of cognition.

The process of transmission of culture was a variable relationship between the social environment and its assimilation by the individual. Kimball argued for exploring both sides of this relationship - the social as well as the individual. Fundamentally, however, for Kimball learning to be part of a culture meant learning its cognitive behaviour. A child had to learn the categories which enabled it to distinguish its perceptions into the typical cultural pattern. Kimball urged the examination of the learning of the categories, the classification of categories and the classification of these classifications. Change itself was built into the classification systems of the culture.

Kimball, however, lacked an adequate analysis of the social constraints on learning. There was no effort to study what created and gave legitimacy to one particular set of categories and classification systems at the cost of others. He was neither critical nor historical.

THE SYSTEM ANALYSTS

M. Dobbert (1975) argued for the study of the transmission of culture using the methods and techniques of system analysis. By far the most sophisticated treatment has been provided by Fred O. Gearing and his associates with their "cultural theory of education and schooling".

Gearing had been in the forefront of American studies in this field since the early 1960s. In 1965 he took over charge from Stanley Diamond of the Culture of Schools Project being run by the American Anthropological Association, and was one of the three co-editors of the classic *Anthropological perspectives on education* (*op. cit.*)

Frederick Gearing gradually developed a set of propositions on the transmission of culture over several years of interactions with colleagues and students. He insisted that his theory be recognized as the fruit of collective efforts. Gearing *et. al.'s* major formulation of their "cultural theory of education and schooling" was presented at the International Conference on Education at Oshkosh, Wisconsin in 1973. The "theory" was read out as Working Paper 6 and had the distinction of listing 9 co-

authors[1], a rare event in the social sciences (Gearing and
Sangree, (ed.s), 1979). In Working Paper 6 Gearing *et. al.*
developed the argument that human culture was not dependent
on the innate abilities of individuals. These
anthropologists argued that in every society there existed
boundaries which shaped information and skills into distinct
patterns. Social barriers were responsible for certain
persons knowing certain things and not others.

Frederick Gearing was deeply influenced by the
applications of cybernetics to the social sciences,
especially as proposed by Gregory Bateson (1936, 1958, 1967,
1972). His formulations were commonly in the jargon of
cybernetics. Gearing (Gearing and Sangree (ed.s), 1979, p.
2) considered his central question that of determining what
non-motor and non-cognitive constraints reduced randomness
in society. Put in a more familiar way, what he wanted to
know was which forces, other than the physical and
psychological essentials of humans, were responsible for
patterning the knowledge and skills of people. This may be
recognized as another approach to the question of how

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1 The co-authors were Frederick Gearing, Thomas
Carroll, Leta Richter, Patricia Grogan-Hurlick,
Allen Smith, Wayne Hughes, B. Allan Tindall, Walter
E. Precourt and Sigrid Topfer.

culture is created and recreated, or, to put it in the simplest form, how culture is learnt. But it is not clear whether Gearing himself saw his task in terms of the concept of culture.

Gearing took as his starting point a version of symbolic interaction (*cf.* Kendon 1967, 1970, 1972, 1973, Kendon and Ferber 1973) which saw dyadic interaction as the fundamental unit with dance-like regularities in alternative turn-taking by the participants. A strong patterning was seen in interactions and messages were passed in both directions.

Gearing used the term "transaction" for the passing of a message which changed the relationship within the dyad. The content of the message was called the "agenda".

On the basis of these concepts Working Paper 6 put forward eight propositions which were the "general cultural theory of education". They can be summarized as follows: A society has a variety of skills and information. Some classes of items were distributed randomly throughout society; some were distributed in a systematic way so that they were present in patterned ways in certain parts of society but absent in others; and some were distributed randomly in a part of society while being only loosely absent in the rest.

Information and skills might be treated as property or could be available to all. Depending on whether the item was treated as property and on the intra-group character of the interaction, two types of agendas took shape. One was the open agenda which could flow free of social restrictions while the other was restricted so as to filter the flow of information and skill.

The restricted agendas were further of two types - stable agendas where the transaction was of a well established and predictable kind, and troublesome agendas where the transaction was not predictable. The initiation and response patterns of the transaction occurred in a subtle manner and were its most powerful components. Where these were regular, stable agendas got established, and where the initiation and response were erratic, troublesome agendas were established.

In bureaucratic situations where one party monopolized the initiation of the transaction, the party on the receiving end would inevitably begin to get rebellious at some point or the other. The degree of the rebellion, however, could vary considerably.

Stable agendas involved a great many barriers but at the open channels, information and skills flowed freely.

Complex information, too, flowed smoothly wherever permitted. Behind the barriers to the flow were shared and mutually accepted cultural premises. Troublesome agendas, on the other hand, saw very irregular flows of information and skills. Complex information could rarely get through successfully. Cultural premises of the interactors were commonly in conflict with each other.

During transactions control was usually held by the initiators. In other words, education usually served to propagate the status quo, irrespective of all the claims to the contrary. In open and stable agendas little resistance or resentment surfaced into the open. But in the troublesome agendas, conflicts and resentments were always present.

Gearing *et. al.* saw societies as moving towards steady states or equilibrium. New skills or information, though they emerged quite regularly were channelized into the pre-existing patterns by educational systems.

Gearing *et. al.* made a commendable effort at formalizing interaction theory. However, it seems to have become a little too formal. Perhaps the most hard-hitting criticism of Gearing *et. al.*'s work has been that it does not envision a changing society. Education ends up reproducing the culture. There is simply no room in this

"theory" for societies to transform themselves. Neither can individuals really express their individuality. They remain puppets on strings. The interaction between individuals appears to be far too heavily patterned. Innovation has not been adequately worked into the conceptual scheme.

Changes of status even within the lifecycle have not been visualized by Gearing *et. al.* The allocations of different statuses to different individuals is more than simply a differential transmission of information and skills. It also involves processes of selection, which are absent in Gearing *et. al.*'s work. Their emphasis on the filtering of information is restricted only to the transmission of information and skill without the role of domination in it. Nor is the importance of legitimization realized. Gearing *et. al.*'s excessive emphasis on just information and skills is also very uni-dimensional. What about emotions, values, etc. ?

CULTURAL-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

Scholars like J. U. Ogbu (1979, 1981a, 1981b, 1983) have proposed what they call a cultural-ecological approach to the study of the learning of culture. The cultural-ecologists emphasize the importance of the interlinkages between behaviour and its settings. The settings may be the

social network in which the behaviour occurs or the physical environs.

Ogbu believes that schooling in the West is "strongly linked" to its economic environment. The economic and all other institutions are interlinked and form a "status-mobility system". The status-mobility system is specific to each culture and defines the social ladders which its inhabitants seek to climb. Beliefs about this system define the strategies and choices of people in their daily lives. The beliefs are shaped at least in part by the views of the dominant social group. Considerable scope for negotiation and innovation also exists for a subordinate group. The actual performance by members of a community in schooling represents its adaptive efforts.

Ogbu has tried to integrate structural-functionalism, ecological notions, interactionism and conflict perspectives. He has not, however, been able to come out with a historical and comparative treatment. An environmental determinism can be seen in his works.

The functionalist tradition maintains a strong presence in the work of the cultural-ecologists. Cultural traits are usually concluded to be "adaptations". Despite their assertions to the contrary, such a facile conclusion does not help us any more than declaring a trait functional.

More rigorous methods of establishing the adaptive quality are sorely needed. Assessments of the potentials for conflict and harmony would give better answers when trying to understand how societies are changing.

Chapter 3

THE
SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION
AND
POLITICAL-SOCIAL ARITHMETIC

Chapter 3

THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND

POLITICAL-SOCIAL ARITHMETIC

In contrast to anthropology, the academic discipline of sociology has had a pronounced leaning towards studies of the centres of Western societies. This has often led sociologists to come up with conceptual schemes as well as substantive studies that have had less universal relevance than the efforts of the anthropologists.

The sociology of education has focussed itself primarily on the formal institutions of education which are a prominent feature of the kinds of society that created this sociology. The universal aspects of education are all too often missed out or underplayed. The overarching concept of culture does not get the attention it deserves. Only in comparatively recent times have sociologists begun to reflect on culture as central to the sociology of education.

Despite this, the sociology of education has always maintained a more critical approach to its field of study than the anthropology of education. The anthropologist's cultural distance from the people s/he studied as well as the West's fond images of "noble savages" could lead to a rosy, harmonious picture of non-Western or even non-

cosmopolitan peoples.   The sociologist studying his or her

own people's schooling could not hide behind such tinted

glasses. A sociologist from an academic institution was, by

definition, personally involved in the dynamics of schooling

in the West.   Moral positions were, therefore, much sharper

in the sociology of education. Certain traditions within

this sub-discipline even focussed their entire energies

around the perceived immorality of schooling.

POLITICAL-SOCIAL ARITHMETIC

From   the   earliest   studies   of   educational

institutions in UK and America, down to the 1990s a certain

type of research can be regularly seen. This is "political-

social arithmetic".   Many would argue that it is not right

to call it a theoretical approach at all.   In the academic

discipline of education it is well known that the most

effective pedagogy   transmits without appearing   to be

teaching at all.   Similar is the case with political-social

arithmetic.   It has no formal theoretical manifesto and yet

guides vast amounts of research. This makes the task of

describing and criticizing it all the more urgent.

Political-social arithmetic may be reduced, without

doing it too much harm, to the simple policy of collecting

information on the political, economic and social aspects of

the formal education of individuals with special reference to egalitarianism. Quite innocuous on the face of it. The fatal flaw lay in what political-social arithmetic did not have: a clearly articulated and rigorous theoretical basis for the studies. In the absence of a model of society and education political-social arithmetic consumed vast slices of the resources available to sociologists, churning out mountains of figures which were of little significance or relevance (cf. Davies and Kandel, 1981).

Political-social arithmetic had emerged from the anti-theoretical trend in western academics. Apart from the assumptions of this trend it also absorbed some hidden assumptions from the dominant theoretical perspective of the day.

For instance, after the end of the second world war there was an emphasis on gathering data about access to schooling. It was assumed that schooling was necessarily a good and desirable thing. Data was gathered and presented to discuss the "educational opportunity" as well as the "educability" of different social classes. Gender and ethnicity were relatively unimportant issues. By the turn of the eighties education was no longer considered necessarily good or desirable. Data was being gathered on the now fashionable theme of what schooling actually did.

Gender and ethnicity became much more important to the sociologists of education (Brian Davies, 1983).

Political-social arithmetic combined methodology and theory in a way that was reminiscent of the empiricist traditions of Western social studies — a method with an implicit but still very influential notion of how the world worked. Never would it come out with a model of its own, resting content with statistical data collected under categories which had been inadequately conceptualized. The categories never got the benefit of becoming part of a coherent, systematic framework and more rigorous theoretical approaches find it difficult to relate themselves to these.

Political-social arithmetic continues to be with us in India even today. It is good to be forewarned about it.

THE
STRUCTURAL—
FUNCTIONALIST
SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

"Our main interest, then, is in a dual problem: first of how the school class functions to internalize in its pupils both the commitments and capacities for successful performance of their future adult roles, and second of how it functions to allocate their human resources within the role structure of the adult society. The primary ways in which these two problems are interrelated will provide our main points of reference."

-- Talcott Parsons
1972, p. 199

Chapter 4

THE STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALIST

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

The early sociology of education had focussed on empirical data-gathering on the basis of disjointed and implicit theoretical positions. Structural-functionalism was the first clearly articulated and conscious theoretical approach that emerged in the sociology of education. It dominated sociologists' theoretical discussions of education in the 1950s and the 1960s. Some aspects of structural-functionalism are common in academic and administrative circles even today, especially in debates on the usefulness of schooling for society.

Structural-functionalism has been presented with different intonations by its various proponents. Central to structural-functionalism seems to be the question of how societies manage to maintain the pattern of their institutions, rules, values, in short, how their very structure maintained. It is argued that societies have fundamental needs which must be fulfilled for them to survive. Various institutions, etc. serve the "function" of fulfilling those needs. The structural-functionalists sought to analyze society in terms of such functions, and

did not pay much attention to the conflicts or contradictions of society.

Talcott Parsons is commonly regarded as one of the giants of structural-functionalism. Indeed, his statements are usually cited as typical of this approach. For Parsons (1971, 1972) the most prominent function of education was the maintenance of order in society. This was done in two ways:

1.   By teaching children the capacities and the commitments that they would need to hold on to their adult roles. In other words, through what he called socialization.

2.   By allocating individuals to various roles, i.e. by selection (Parsons, 1972, pp. 199-200).

Parsons typically gave primacy to the inculcation of a consensus of certain values among the people. In countries like the U.S.A. a consensus was established on the values of "achievement" and "equality of opportunity". This consensus seems to have extended over all the categories of persons in society even if these people were in conflict with each other. Parsons accepted that society as a whole was changing (*ibid.*, p. 218), but he did not develop his views on what role education was playing in these changes.

Structural-functionalists like Ralf Turner (1972) paid closer attention to the processes of selection. Turner made a typology of modern Western educational systems in which he described U.S.A.'s system as mobility on the basis of active competition. U.K.'s system was described as allowing mobility on the basis of sponsorship by elites. Turner related these to the corresponding characters and requirements for maintenance and integration of the societies of these countries – U.K. still had a strong presence of feudal forces while U.S.A. lacked them.

Earl Hopper (1973a, 1973b) examined selection in greater detail. Hopper prepared a typology of selection in contemporary western formal educational systems on the basis of how and when it was done, who made the selection and on what criteria. He pointed out that there were usually people left over who were not selected and their aspirations had to be "cooled off" if the system was not to be put under threat.

Structural-functionalism has been challenged on several grounds (see, for e.g. Dawe, 1970; Gouldner, 1970) and by the late sixties it was under severe attack. Its basic orientation was towards explaining how societies remained the same and not how societies changed. Change in systems of education was something that structural-

functionalists were ill-equipped to deal with. The importance of conflicts and contradictions in changing societies was ignored.

The concept of function was not rigorously linked to empirical situations. Little effort was made to see exactly how much educational institutions actually contributed to maintaining societies. In any case, functional explanation was teleological, explaining the presence of an educational institution by virtue of its effect. The origin of the institution itself was neither demonstrated to be linked with its purported effect (integration of society) nor were other possible causes explored.

Talcott Parsons' emphasis on value consensus has been the target of numerous theoretical and empirical attacks (e.g. Berger and Luckmann, 1976). Instead of a consensus, today's sociologists see heterogeneity and conflict in the values of a stratified society. People within educational institutions may have values that are quite different from those of people outside them. And in the same classroom persons from different social backgrounds could have differing perceptions of education and its goals.

I. Davies(1973) has criticized Earl Hopper extensively. Along with the issues raised above, she also pointed out that Hopper did not properly examine the role of

the market or economy in the activities and selection processes of the formal educational institutions. The dynamics of ideology, in particular, were of great importance and had not been examined with the depth that this theme deserved.

Despite these and several other shortcomings, structural-functionalism made a very important contribution to the study of the learning of culture in academic institutions. Education was placed squarely in the realm of the social forces and was affirmed to be influenced and in turn influencing the very foundations of society. Structural-functionalism led to education being recognized within the discipline of sociology as a social or cultural issue and not simply a moral or philosophical one.

Talcott Parsons must be ranked as a genius in the sociological or anthropological treatments of education. It was Parsons who formulated two of the central concepts of the learning of culture: socialization and selection. His identification of these two as the fundamental processes in education and , thence, culture, opened the doors to a tremendously powerful stream of research. Indeed it may be argued that most of subsequent sociology of education rotates around these very themes, whether directly influenced by Talcott Parsons or not.

Most sociologists of this period, however, made no efforts to develop the insights of Parsons and the others any further. Usually the concepts were picked up in an isolated manner and applied in the tradition of political-social arithmetic. Some of the premises and concepts of structural-functionalism were developed into an influential approach called technological-functionalism.

TECHNOLOGICAL-FUNCTIONALISM

Like structural-functionalism, technological-functionalism, too, emphasized the instrumentality of schooling and its ability to fulfil the "needs" of society (e.g. Becker, 1964; Clark, 1962; Trow, 1961). Schooling was seen as the institution which supplied the skilled manpower needed by industrial society. A large number of studies emerged which revolved around this belief and were used by policy-makers, especially in the ex-colonial countries (cf. Ball, 1981), to justify increases in spending on higher education.

Little effort was made to check the functional link postulated between formal education and social justice or economic growth. Nor were the causes of this "link" explored. Deeper questions on the character of

industrialized society, its origins, its contradictions, etc. were altogether missed.

KARL MANNHEIM

In 1961 when structural-functionalism was still at its height and technological-functionalism and political-social arithmetic dominated the research which went by the name of sociology of education, a small book was published. W. A. C. Stewart had painstakingly stitched together the fragmentary notes, lectures, even drawings of Karl Mannheim on the sociology of education (Mannheim and Stewart, 1962). Mannheim, famous for his works on knowledge and ideology, had synthesized themes from several approaches and there was much that his contemporaries or even the next generation of scholars could have learnt from him. Sadly, this book could not find heirs to carry on the lineage.

Karl Mannheim, while still at the London School of Economics, had been lecturing on a part-time basis at the University of London's Institute of Education. In 1946 he took up a Chair of Education at the Institute, but died the next year at the age of 54.

Mannheim's interest in education lay in academic issues as well as in a keen awareness of education as a tool

for social change. He sought to (_____, p. 160) "understand our time, the predicament of this age and what healthy education could contribute to a regeneration of society and man". Mannheim had a broad vision of the nature of education which was in many ways an extension and deepening of his understanding of the sociology of knowledge. Like Weber before him, he argued that a rational approach had to be combined with an understanding of moral issues.

Mannheim shared some of the structural-functionalists' interests but also made significant departures from their work. He did not see his world as operating simply to fulfil needs and to maintain harmony. His world was one of conflict and contradiction although in the long run the movement was indeed towards harmony. Mannheim, a refugee from Nazi Germany and a critic of the Soviet Union gave the individual a place of honour in his conceptual framework. Studying individuals and their relation to external controls with the tools of psychology was an important safeguard against authoritarian tendencies. He was influenced in his emphasis on the individual by G. H. Mead and Max Weber among others.

There was an effort to synthesize the social and the individual, but neither was reduced to the other. W. A. C. Stewart in his introduction wrote (_____, p. xi) "Mannheim saw man, a biological, social and psychological organism,

influenced by, 'conditioned' to the stimuli about him, moving towards a greater comprehension of his own impulses and mastery of the social keyboard."

Mannheim distinguished between narrower and broader definitions of education. The narrower definitions, like those by Wilhelm Dilthey (cf. Hodges, 1952) and Sir John Adams (cf. Adams, 1912) saw in education (Mannheim and Stewart, 1969, p. 16) "the influence of person upon person in which the older generation wishes to prepare the younger generation in terms of idea, knowledge and attitudes."

Mannheim aligned himself with the broader definitions by scholars like J. S. Mill (cf. Mill, 1931) who paid more attention to something implicit in the narrower definitions: education also involved the interplay of more distant forces and influences. Virtually any aspect of society could potentially influence and modify the subject. But for Mannheim this influence was not like distant strings controlling a puppet. The influence of education actually found expression through choices and acts of will by the individual.

One of the tasks that education sought to perform was to enable people to live with each other. In a characteristically sweeping manner Mannheim argued education operated through every little act and institution of

society. At times it led to harmony and at times to conflict. Each group or community or virtually any level of social organization tended to create its own kind of education, all being finally acted out by individuals. Surprisingly, Mannheim chose to highlight the role of individuals in creating conflict and tended to underplay the importance of structural contradictions in society. In the few specific examples that he takes up, the Greeks, for instance, consist for him entirely of the elite thinkers. No mention is made of the education of the slaves.

Such ambivalence makes Mannheim a difficult person to pigeon-hole. He spoke of conflict and the need for harmony; of social forces and the individual causes of conflict. Perhaps Mannheim was still moving towards a major synthesis and maybe such contradictions were inevitable in what was, after all, a posthumous assembly of notes. There were, at any rate, the seeds of ideas which could have made important contributions to the structural-functionalists with their rather deterministic tendency to ignore face-to-face interactions. Mannheim's version of dialectics could have also helped them break out of their simplistic need-and-fulfilment orientation. The relation between the individual and society remained a troubled area for later sociologists of education, and Mannheim could still teach us a thing or two.

Mannheim's views on the sociology of education, however, simply faded away, with hardly even a mention in most textbooks and overviews of the field.

"DESCHOOLING"
AND THE SHIFT TOWARD
DIRECT INTERACTION

"Many students, especially those who are
poor, intuitively know what the schools do
for them. They school them to confuse
process and substance. Once these become
blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more
treatment there is, the better are the
results; or, escalation leads to success.
The pupil is thereby 'schooled' to confuse
teaching with learning, grade achievement
with education, a diploma with competence,
and fluency with the ability to say something
new. His imagination is 'schooled' to acept
service in place of value. Medical treatment
is mistaken for health care, social work for
the improvement of community life, police
protection for safety, military poise for
national security, the rat race for
productive work. Health, learning, dignity,
independence and creative endeavour are
defined as little more than the performance
of the institutions which claim to serve
these ends, and their improvement is made to
depend on allocating more resources to the
management of hospitals, schools and other
agencies in question."

> -- Ivan Illich
> 1981, p. 9

Chapter 5

"DESCHOOLING" AND THE SHIFT TOWARD DIRECT INTERACTION

The later parts of the 1960s saw clear signs of movements away from the dominant paradigms of structural-functionalism and technological-functionalism whereby attention used to be centred on how schooling maintained the ways of the industrialized Western societies. The sixties, as described in the section on the anthropology of education, were a disturbing time for those sections of the West from which future academicians came. Interestingly, the greatest challenge to dominant views in Western society on the significance of its schooling did not come from its own sociologists. The challenge came from outside the system in the form of a devastating critique that has come to be called the "deschooling" group of writings.

"DESCHOOLING"

Deschooling arose from the experiences of academics and activists in Latin America with the boom in Western education in areas previously untouched by such institutions. They doubted the worth of Western education for their peoples, arguing that it was at the same time too

oppressive of local cultures and too inefficient.
Deschooling, i.e. the dismantling of schooling as an
oppressive structure was called for. Such ideas found a
warm reception in the ferment that the Western youth was
going through. Awareness of deschooling spread quickly,
helped by the fact that these writings were published in
cheap popular paperbacks and written in a dramatic, polemic
style (e.g. Illich, 1981; Freire, 1970, 1972, 1976; Reimer,
1971; Lister, '1974). Their wide exposure made sure that
Western academics could no longer brush such notions under
the carpet (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1982).
The relationship of school with society had become a subject
of debate by thousands of people who were outside the
narrow, select band of sociologists of education.

Part of the appeal of deschooling was because it
stressed the importance of the individual. Unlike the
structural-functionalists who were pre-occupied with the
fulfillment of the needs of society, the deschoolers were
more interested in the creative powers of human beings.

Paulo Freire (1976, pp. 3-5) argued that humans were
different from animals primarily on the basis of their
ability to independently construct their own living
environment. Animals were submerged in the world but humans
distanced themselves from it. Human beings were
characterized by a separation from the world and at the same

time an openness to it. They related to their environs by
critically perceiving it, by critically reflecting on it and by
acting on it. "They organize themselves, choose the best
response, test themselves, act and change in the very act of
responding" (ibid.) It was this active, reflective
character of humans which led the creation of culture.

People lived within a culture by integrating
themselves into it or by adapting to it. "Integration
results from the capacity to adapt oneself to reality, plus
the critical capacity to make choices and to transform that
reality" (ibid.) In contrast to this, adaptation meant the
loss of the ability to make choices and humans were driven
to act under the choices made by others. Adaptation was
characteristic of animals and of people under oppression.

A dialectical view of the universe formed the base
of the deschoolers' view of education and culture. It was
expressed in the human context by the dialectic between
subjectivity and objectivity. The active, conscious human
subject was in continuous interaction with its objective
environs. The subject created its objective world and the
objective world created the subject.

Humanity was characterized by an active subject and
dehumanization meant the objectification of this subject.
Both humanization and dehumanization were real alternatives

in human existence but only the first was our true vocation (Freire, 1974, p. 20). In a world of conflict and struggle this "vocation is constantly negated, yet it is affirmed by that very negation. It is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the oppressors; it is affirmed by the yearning of the oppressed for freedom and justice, and by their struggle to recover their lost humanity" (*ibid.*)

Oppression created people who had become passive objects "waiting for oppression to disappear by itself" (*ibid.*, p. 27). The culture of silence emerged. The oppressed imbibed the oppressor's opinion of themselves. "So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything — that they are sick, lazy and unproductive — that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness" (*ibid.*, p. 39). They fear the notion of freedom itself.

Even when the oppressed sought to overthrow the oppressor all that they could imagine to be the consequence of this was that they themselves became the new oppressors. They were unable to transcend the fundamental contradiction of a society with oppressors and oppression and were unable to move toward the freedom of rising above injustice. They could not learn to think and dream in new and different ways. They oppressed continued to seek the security of the

familiar and shied away from their own humanization (*ibid.*, p. 24).

Dehumanization was occurring all over society. Schooling, too, was discouraging creativity and freedom. Ivan Illich (1981) while looking at schooling through such a conceptual framework agreed that schooling also had the "latent functions" of selection, learning and indoctrination (*ibid.*, p. 32). Socialization for him effectively meant the indoctrination of children with dominant values of the group. Besides this schooling also took care of children and relieved parents of this task for a few hours. Generally speaking, the Western institutions of schooling did away with "personal, creative and autonomous interaction" and strengthened the control by technocrats over humanity (*ibid.*, p. 9).

It was not as if the deschoolers saw only misery and dehumanization in the world. Their writings ring with optimism in a way that has been rarely paralleled. But when it came to an analysis of schooling as it existed in their society, they saw their own primary task to be the presentation of a devastating critique of it. They were engaged in a polemic against what they perceived as ruinous tendencies. The deschoolers did not systematize their theoretical formulations on schooling. Socialization, selection as well as the significant themes of

indoctrination and custodial care remained undeveloped in the shadow of their larger problematique of dehumanization. In spite of this their impact on academic sociology of education was tremendous. The deschoolers spearheaded the introduction of a new direction of inquiry which emphasized the active interaction of living human beings.

THE TILT TOWARDS DIRECT INTERACTION

In academic institutions, the sociology of education began to change with the turn of the decade. The attacks being made on structural-functionalism in sociological theory were extended to this field, too. One group of such attacks emphasized the importance of looking closely at more direct interaction between individuals. Nobody denied in the ultimate analysis the importance of system-level studies as popular with the structural-functionalists, but the focus of attention now shifted elsewhere.

The people who pushed towards a more personalized sociology of education were quite a diverse group themselves. They were inspired by phenomenology, cognitive sociology, ethnomethodology, G. H. Mead's symbolic interactionism and Irving Goffman's dramaturgical sociology as well as their variants. But, modifying Bernstein (1977d, p. 163), it can be proposed that the sociologists of

education who chose to emphasize direct interaction had three uniting characteristics:

(i)   A strong opposition to structural-functionalism. This opposition was perhaps more a result of academic rivalry than of contradictions in their fundamental understandings of human existence. Both acknowledged that it was important to study the individual as well as society. The new generation of sociologists could never demolish Parsons' formulation that education led to socialization and the allocation of roles. They only added refinements to it. However, they were sharply critical of the notion that education was a means of fulfilling the needs for social maintenance.

(ii)   Interest in meanings and cognition, with an awareness of their origin in social institutions. Special emphasis was laid on schooling as a source of the beliefs and values current in a culture.

(iii)   Emphasis on individuals as the creators or imposers of these beliefs and values. The broader, more encompassing social forces were usually not made the focus of study, even though these sociologists acknowledoed their existence and importance.

A watershed in the changing times for the sociology of education was the conference of the British Sociological Association held at Durham in April 1970. Discussions held here and at subsequent occasions between Michael F. D. Young, Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein produced the now classic *Knowledge and control: new directions for the sociology of education* (Young, 1971a). This brought together writings from quite different theoretical approaches. Young (1971a, 1971b) presented here his programmatic statement for what he called, perhaps a little too optimistically, the "new directions" approach, which emphasized the sharing and imposition of meanings held by individuals in schools. This did not pretend to be a definitive outline of the sociology of education (Young, 1971a, p. 2) and was only a statement of certain problems which Young thought had earlier been neglected.

Young made it clear that he was proposing a historically specific and particularistic approach. His concern was action and not systems (*ibid.*, p. 4). Young sought to focus on the "available meanings" which were neglected in school. The structural constraints which created those meanings, while important, were not believed to be accessible through such interactionist studies.

Young held that people in positions of power attempted to define what was legitimate knowledge and who

had access to it. The relations between those who gave access to knowledge, those who had access to it, and the very character of knowledge, all rested on underpinnings of power (Young, 1971b, pp. 31-32). This is a popular principle of the sociology of knowledge (cf. Berger and Luckmann, 1976) and it was Young's firm belief, too, that the sociology of education could not possibly be separated from the sociology of knowledge (Young, 1971a, p. 3). Both were identical as they dealt with the relationship between power and socially created categories. Young claimed inspiration for such a formulation from Dawe (1970) and C. Wright Mills (1939, 1940, 1940b). In schools the specific focus of such an approach was on the shared and imposed meanings of school personnel and their possible congruences and discrepancies with non-school meanings and activities. Young tended to believe that placing the meanings constructed in schools within their social contexts was enough to demolish the structures of inequality which bound society.

In subsequent writings (Whitty and Young, 1976; Young and Whitty, 1977) Young extended his studies to the institutional context of the classroom. But the "new directions" continued to lack the larger perspective.

Young's "new directions", for that matter had nothing new in it. Its critical approach to schooling was

but a pale shadow of the fire-breathing deschoolers. And
Mannheim had long ago made strong forays into the realm of
face-to-face interaction. But the name of Young's book came
to symbolize the change of mood that the sociology of
education was undergoing. The other writers who emphasized
direct interaction, like the cognitive sociologists (e.g.
Cicourel, *et.al.*, 1974) and the ethnomethodologists (e.g.
Leiter, 1974) also shared Young's tendency to leave
untouched the problem of broader influences on classrooms.
Ethnomethodology, for example, sought only to abstract the
methods by which patterning of behaviour was created in
classrooms.

THE DURKHEIMIAN
SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

"We decided to give our children in our
state-supported schools a purely secular
moral education. It is essential to
understand that this means an education that
is not derived from revealed religion, but
that it rests exclusively on ideas,
sentiments, and practices accountable to
reason only - in short, a purely
rationalistic education.

Such a change would not take place without
disturbing traditional ideas, disrupting old
habits, entailing sweeping organizational
changes, and without posing, in turn, new
problems with which we must come to grips."

-- Emile Durkheim
1968, p. 3

Chapter 6

THE DURKHEIMIAN

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

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The central problem for the deschoolers and the direct interactionists was the social construction of values, beliefs and practices in the school classroom. Emile Durkheim and some sociologists who took their inspiration from him many years after his death developed a different kind of approach to the learning of culture

EMILE DURKHEIM

Emile Durkheim, the French scholar writing at the turn of this century was one of the founders of both the academic disciplines of sociology and anthropology. He was also one of the earliest thinkers in the sociological and the anthropological tradition to closely examine the learning of culture. He conceptualized education in a wide sense, approaching it as the process of the learning of social existence. This, for him, was the key to the solution of the problems which plagued the France of his time. The greater part of Durkheim's academic career directly dealt with education as a Professor of Sociology and Education at Sorbonne. His last books to be published were concerned almost

entirely with education (Durkheim, 1956, 1968). Surprisingly, this aspect of his work is the least well-known of his writings.

Durkheim's theoretical work on education is firmly based on his philosophical position as a rationalist. Durkheim saw himself as part of a great struggle in Western thought between on one side those who drew from theology to say that the universe existed and changed because of the Hand of God and, on the other side, those who argued that all things existed and interacted independently of any divine intervention. Durkheim believed that history demonstrated a gradual shift was occurring toward the latter. Durkheim's creed of rationalism was gaining an increasing amount of support and strength.

The basic principle of rationalism (Durkheim, 1968, p. 4) was that everything in reality was fundamentally within the scope of human reason. Everyday the physical sciences increased the evidence for this by bringing rational understanding to bear on the material world. Durkheim wanted to extend the use of rationality to a greater explanation of human affairs, as well. He rejected divine or mystical explanations of human behaviour and sought to understand it through reasoning.

Rationality was for him closely associated with individualism. Indeed, it was nothing but the intellectual aspect of individualism[1]

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1 Durkheim's books on education have been the basis of several reinterpretations of his sociology and his

(*ibid.*, p. 12). When applied to moral affairs rationalism had the ability to liberate humans by stripping away the superstitions, injustices and indignities that human beings had accumulated. Rationalism encouraged people to question and to check the validity of morals. This led to newer values that were a better expression of our nature.

Durkheim held that human nature was essentially good (*ibid.*, pp. 35-37) and it was the job of morality to guide and channelize it further to the best effect. Rationalism was the best guide for this purpose as it was itself believed to be the expression of the very nature of things.

Rationalism led Durkheim to society as the major source for the explanation of human affairs. It was neither divine, nor mystical and yet overarched all individuals to be omnipresent and immensely powerful. It was made up of individuals but was greater than just their total. Society was a *sui-generis* reality.

Durkheim's writings on education have a strong element of dialectics in them. Society was an external *sui-generis* entity as well as present in every individual who was its member. Individuals felt society as an imposed fact as well as created it from within themselves.

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epistemology. A less deterministic, more interactive and radical Durkheim emerges through them (*cf.* Alexander, 1988; Besnard, 1983).

Society restrained individuals and at the same time liberated them. Individuals were bound by society and also had an autonomy (e.g. Durkheim, 1968, pp. 95-126, *en passim*).

Society's features were created by the learning of morals by individuals. Morality was of central importance to Durkheim. He defined it as (*ibid.*, p. 24) "a system of rules of action that predetermine conduct. They state how one must act in given situations; and to behave properly is to obey conscientiously." He qualified this at length: rules were always specific to the given circumstances and could never be generalized to an abstract Rule from which the rest could be derived (*ibid.*, pp. 24-26). Nor did the rules create perfectly rigid patterns of behaviour. There was always considerable (but not unlimited) leeway for individual initiative (*ibid.*, p. 23). Further, no individual could have in him/her all the rules of society so it was very difficult to claim from introspection or a given sample that a truly general rule had been formulated.

Having rejected the idea of general rules from which specific behaviour could be deduced, Durkheim proposed that those general dispositions should be sought which created the abilities of humans to adapt to different circumstances (*ibid.*, p. 21). These were what should be taught to children and not simply a long list of virtues and morals. In effect, what Durkheim seems to have meant was that the basic characters of social existence should be sought and then taught to children with specific reference to their own society.

Durkheim identified three basic characters of society or "general dispositions" (Durkheim, 1968):

1. A spirit of discipline or authority. Society necessarily required some patterning or regularity. A spirit of discipline was, therefore, essential.

2. Attachment to social groups. The patterning of society necessarily restricted interactions of individuals, giving rise to different groups. A sense of attachment to social groups was, therefore, a second basic disposition.

3. Autonomy or self-determination. The above two dispositions emphasized the constraints that individuals were put under in society. But society was dialectical: individuals and groups had an element of autonomy or self-determination with which they challenged their circumstances and creatively adapted their own behaviour to it.

At a less abstract level, but still on the same foundations, Durkheim believed that changes in education were caused not so much by the changes which originated in the realm of the educational institutions alone, but by the changes occurring in the wider society. Durkheim wrote "Educational transformation was always the result and the symptom of the social transformation in terms of which they are to be explained." (Durkheim, 1977, p. 92)

For example, the transition from a rigorous study of logic to the personalized study of Greek and Roman classics at the end of the Middle Ages in Western Europe was not simply the result of the discovery of the classical texts by the West. More important were the economic changes which created a new class, the bourgeoisie, in search of ways to emulate the aristocratic ways of the feudal elites and hold their own before them. Studying the classics was one way of being able to sound impressive. Another factor was the rise of individualism in Europe. This was closely linked with the divisions that occurred in the unifying ideology of the Catholic Church in Europe and the emergence of nation-states, each carrying its own rationalization of its existence.

Durkheim used his theoretical framework to suggest ways of modifying schooling so as to unite the crisis-ridden elites of his France as well the rest of the nation behind them. He portrayed a vision of society which had no room for variations in behaviour, but stopped short of conceptualizing and confronting the roots of conflict in society. Power relationships, class conflicts, ethnic assertions and colonialism were all underplayed by him. To be fair to him, Durkheim did believe that the need of his times was greater unity and worked in the direction that would bring more justice with unity (cf. Besnard, 1983).

The emphasis on unity was part of the positivistic discourse that dominated his age. Rationalism, secularization, unity are all notions that are increasingly under attack from groups like the critical theorists who can by no means be called part of the old vested

interests.   Significantly, Durkheim   himself rejected   the reductionist
technique of   abstracting specific moral   rules to a   general Rule which
was later transmitted through education.   Much later Basil Bernstein and
Pierre Bourdieu   were also to reject   the idea that   the transmission of
norms and beliefs were the final product of education in favour of their
own versions of "basic dispositions".

Durkheim's own ideas   on the sociology of education faded   away
into   the   oblivion.   The   first world war .shattered   the *Annee*
Sociologique, the   journal that Durkheim had   so painstakingly built up.
Along with   the *Annee Sociologique*,—the group   of scholars that   he had
gathered along   himself was also blown   apart by the winds   of war.   And
only a   distorted view   of functionalism continued   to claim inspiration
from him.   Two   generations passed before some sociologists of education
turned to Emile Durkheim again for inspiration.

BASIL BERNSTEIN

Basil Bernstein has inspired many thinkers who went   on to work
with very diverse approaches in the sociology of education.   The bulk of
Bernstein's writings came out in   the sixties and they are still sources
of   inspiration in   this field.   His   work explored themes   which were
unique   for his   time but have   later developed as   major concerns in
efforts to understand education   from a sociologist's point of view (*cf.*
Bernstein, 1971, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1977d, 1982).

This British don declared Durkheim to be his intellectual guru (1977a, p. 17) while staying away from the kind of grand theorizing about society that the latter was given to. Bernstein preferred to restrict himself to one institution - the school in West Europe and North America.

Bernstein saw a fundamental change occurring in schools which he called a transition in the emphasis of the principles of social integration from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity (Bernstein, 1977b, p. 67). Mechanical solidarity was characterized by a restricted number of roles, rigidly held and ascribed by society. "Mechanical solidarity is emphasized whenever individuals share a common system of belief and common sentiments which produce a detailed regulation of conduct" (*ibid.*) There were few contradictions between an individual's various roles. In contrast with this, organic solidarity meant a more elaborate set of roles, which were mostly of an achieved character. "Organic solidarity is emphasized wherever individuals relate to each other through a complex interdependence of specialized social functions" (*ibid.*) Possibilities of contradiction were more common and people had more sophisticated ways of living together in schools. Indeed, Bernstein preferred to use the terms open and closed schools in place of organic and mechanical solidarity (*ibid.*, p. 74).

Mechanical and organic solidarity are two of Durkheim's major contributions to the conceptual resources of the social studies. His influence on Bernstein is obvious here. But Bernstein kept open the

question of how this shift in schools was related with the changes occurring in the whole of society (*ibid.*, p. 75).

Bernstein believed that school education was changing its emphasis from an education of depth to an increased stress on education of breadth (*ibid.* p. 74). This was leading to the dissolution of the purity of categories. The new broader education was mixing up the previous categories of school knowledge. More people could now learn things that had earlier been restricted to carefully selected individuals. This was leading to more open schools and, perhaps, more open societies.

The focus on categorization was quite significant. It drew from some of Durkheim's most profound insights on social existence. Categorization was held to be central to all social life. The very ordering of society, its patterning and channelizing through the individual as well as larger forces operated through categorization. Bernstein argued that the educational processes which taught classifications were a major source of organization of human experience (*ibid.*, 1977c, p. 85). Both power and social control were shaped by education.

Bernstein applied this insight to schooling through his concepts of classification, frame and educational code. His exact definition of classification would change in his various writings but it may be interpreted as an expression of the concept of categorization. Classification, for Bernstein, meant the distance or separation between

categories created by schools. This could range from strong to weak
(see, for e.g., Bernstein, 1977c, p. 88).

A sister concept was that of framing. This meant the degree
of control that teachers and pupils had over what was transmitted or
received and what was not (cf. Bernstein, pp. 88-89). It could vary
between strong and weak.

Schooling contributed to the human experience through three
message systems: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation (ibid., p. 85).
Classification was a concept that could analyze the curriculum and
framing was meant to analyze the pedagogy. Evaluation was to be
understood through both classification and framing (ibid., pp. 88-89).
Underlying both these concepts were the notions of openness and
closedness.

Strong classifications led to certain kinds of categorizations
which Bernstein called collection or restricted codes (ibid., p. 90).
These restricted access by people to only certain categories of
knowledge. There was a greater distance between school knowledge and
daily life. Collection or restricted codes corresponded to mechanical
solidarity and more closed relationships.

Weak classification led to forms of categorization which
Bernstein called elaborate or integrated codes (ibid.) The links
between various categories were made explicit and the categories were

seen as part of an integrated whole. Elaborate or integrated codes corresponded to Durkheim's organic solidarity and more open relationships.

Bernstein correlated the social organization of schools with their codes and classifications. Strong classifications were linked to schools with clear and pronounced hierarchies. Weaker classifications were linked to schools with diffused hierarchies. Roles were more complex and had to be achieved. "Code" is Bernstein's most complex concept. He has defined it in various ways. The early definitions were in terms of linguistic indices and there has occurred a movement toward definitions that emphasize the underlying semantic (Bernstein, 1982, p. 306) In his essay "On the classification and framing of educational knowledge" (1977c, p. 90) it was "fully given at the most general level by the relationship between classification and framing".

A clearer understanding of code can be had from his 1982 article "Codes, modalities and cultural reproduction". Here he defined a code as a regulative principle, tacitly acquired, which selects and integrates relevant meanings, the forms of their realizations and their evoking contexts (Bernstein, 1982, p. 306). Codes were the central concept of Basil Bernstein and were responsible for directly selecting and organizing human communication and experience. Like Durkheim, he rejected the method of listing human traits or their abstractions in favour of a different kind of abstraction that kept space for a great deal of specific variations. Codes regulated not specific contents of behaviour but the relations between the contents, process and contexts.

Codes were a concept aimed directly at distinguishing power relations and social control. Codes with greater regulatory capacities meant relationships of greater power and stronger social control.

Power and social control were the problems around which Bernstein's work revolved. He was sensitive to the class dimension in schooling,. In his linguistic studies class emerges as a major theme. He argues that schools are dominated by the upper classes because their language is characterized by elaborate codes. In contrast, the working classes have fewer social roles available to them and its language has a restricted code. Since schools were moving towards elaborate codes the upper classes were better able to benefit from them. The new middle classes who were gaining in power because of their skills in manipulating symbols (the engineers, teachers, accountants, etc.) were benefitting the most by this movement toward organic solidarity.

Basil Bernstein developed Emile Durkheim's ideas in a remarkable way. The problem of power which, for the most part, remained implicit in Durkheim was brought to the fore, especially in Bernstein's later works. He drew much from Durkheim's conceptions of mechanical and organic solidarity as well as his methodological strategies of formulating central patterns. Bernstein came up with a conceptual scheme that could tackle ongoing processes and analyze them. His codes were a masterpiece in their ability to capture dynamic relations of power. However the problem of why and how large scale social changes were occurring remained a weak spot with him. Historical changes and multicultural comparisons were both neglected by this British

sociologist of education in his courageous and lonely furrow of the sixties and seventies.

DAVID HARGREAVES

David Hargreaves is one of those who have examined issues popular with both interactionist as well as society-level perspectives. In his early works (Hargreaves, 1967, 1975, 1978) he tended toward the face to face relationships between teachers and pupils. Hargreaves' later writings (Hargreaves, 1980, 1982) have shown an increased interest in wider issues. Emile Durkheim has strongly influenced him and although Hargreaves never sought to theorize in Durkheim's sweeping manner, he found contemporary applications for some of the latter's most important concepts.

At the heart of Durkheim's sociology is the notion of social existence. Society or collectivity gives intensity and feeling to life. Social existence creates the sense of the sacred and the profane, and its collapse leads to anomie. For Hargreaves, the sacred was expressed in the form of dignity as created by social existence and he used dignity as the cornerstone of his analysis of contemporary educational institutions. The rise of individualism led to the weakening of traditional social bonds and working-class pupils felt increasingly threatened in the alien atmosphere of schools. In a micro-level application of the principle of social existence leading to collective strength, Hargreaves argued that pupils sought to regain their sense of

dignity by forming rebellious groups with counter-cultures in the classrooms as well as outside it. Such an analysis synthesized a sense of conflict in society with a Durkheimian appreciation of the significance of social existence as applied to the goings-on within a classroom.

THE MARXIST
SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

"My reaction then was associated with a
general revulsion against what I saw and
still see as the extreme narrowness of Welsh
nonconformism. Its attitude to drink, for
example, was very difficult for an adolescent
to accept. What I did not perceive at the
time but now understand is that the grammar
schools were implanted in the towns of Wales
for the purpose of Anglicization. They
imposed a completely English orientation,
which cut one off thoroughly from Welshness.
You can imagine how this combined with my
hostility to the norms of Welsh nonconformist
community. The result was a rejection of my
Welshness which I did not work through until
well into my thirties, when I began to read
the history and understand it."

-- Raymond Williams
1981, p. 25

Chapter 7

THE MARXIST

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Karl Marx himself did not directly explore the
ramifications of the problem of the learning of culture even
though all of his thought is permeated with the principle
that human alienation and misery is learnt and not divinely
or biologically given. His few direct comments (Marx, 1973,
pp. 615-616; Marx, 1979, etc.) concern themselves with the
form of education that the working class should struggle
to get for their children. Marx argued that after the age
of nine years all humans should participate in production
and the work itself when carefully planned would aid the
total development of the child. The working hours should
vary from two to six hours upto the age of eighteen.
Besides the participation in production, Marx also proposed
that mental, physical and technological education should be
imparted. It was, therefore, left entirely to later
scholars to interpret Marx's other writings and apply them
to the field of education.

FLOUD AND HALSEY

An early view that stood between the sociology of education popular in the early sixties and a loosely Marxist approach was that held by Jean Floud and A. H. Halsey (e.g. the introduction to Halsey, Floud and Anderson, 1962).

Floud and Halsey shared their peers' ambiguity on the problem of cause and effect in social relationships. They saw formal education as being both the crucial input for as well as the result of advanced industrialized societies. The state of industrialization, however, was the dominating factor in determining the form of education. Floud and Halsey gave a specific economic content to the generalized "American society" that Parsons had spoken about. This was an emphasis which became very prominent in some later writers who drew heavily from the Marxian tradition. Where Floud and Halsey broke rather sharply with Parsons was in their insistence that schooling was perpetually changing. Industrialized society was characterized by rapid innovation and change and its formal education, too, had to create innovations along with the usual passing on of culture. But, as with the structural-functionalists, and unlike the interactionists, little attention was paid to the challenges that this economic domination had to face. The problem of system-level

contradictions remained untouched as did that of the relation between different levels of social relationships.

THE REPRODUCTION OF CAPITALISM

In the mid-seventies of this century, scholars with avowedly Marxist leanings came to attract attention and followers. The seventies was the decade when scholars with leftist sympathies in the West increasingly began to seek answers as to why the upsurges of the sixties had failed to live up their expectations. What came to be known as the Marxist sociology of education related the conservative tendencies of society to supposedly conservative practices within schools and classrooms. Such an explanation found sympathy among many radically inclined academicians and teachers.

S. Bowles and H. Gintis are the most influential of these Marxist sociologists of education and have come out with the most comprehensive and lucid writings (1976). Relatively minor variations in their basic theme are presented by scholars like Althusser (1971), Gorz (1977), Hall (1977) and Poulantzas (1972, 1975).

The Marxist sociologists of education took as their central problem the issue of how schools were contributing

to reproducing Western society with all its inequalities and injustices. They decried the structural-functionalists as the conservative "other" who were perpetually brushing their society's conflicts under the carpet and painting an artificial picture of an ordered, disciplined society at peace with itself. Paradoxically, these Marxists, too, ended up with the same problem of "order" at the core of their studies. They chose to call it by another name, though - reproduction. This was inspired by Karl Marx's use of the term (cf. Marx, 1954, p. 566), but did not fully inherit Marx's dialectical and historical understanding of it. Their more restricted vision dealt only with why their own society refused to melt under a supposedly revolutionary onslaught.

Bowles, Gintis and the rest argued that it was futile to expect education to be of any major help in changing society. It merely served to reproduce the capitalist system. This function it shared with other institutions like the state, family and so on.

Reproduction of the capitalist system, in general, depended on two key factors: one, the presence of an ideology which justified and legitimized the existing state of affairs. Two, a set of everyday social practices which validated the ideology as well as fragmented the oppressed. Formal education in the West contributed to reproduction in

both these ways. It created an ideology which rationalized the status quo. An important role was played in this by what Bowles and Gintis called the techno-meritocratic theory. Simply put this was the belief that people who were rich made their money because of their own capabilities which were, in turn, based on education and appropriate skills. Social forces or hidden mechanisms of discrimination were ignored in such an ideology.

Formal education taught children the values, attitudes, beliefs, etc. which let them fit effortlessly into the capitalist system. This was done more through the structuring of relationships in schooling than through any deliberately framed curriculum. In effect, this was what came to be called the "hidden curriculum". The social relationships of schooling corresponded to the work conditions of capitalism. This came to be called the correspondence principle and represented the economistic and deterministic element in the Marxist sociology of education. It was held that generally speaking the division of labour, alienation, inequality of power, etc. of the workplace correlated with the similar problems of classrooms and schools.

The economistic and deterministic bias was not absolute. Bowles and Gintis, for instance, did not see a direct correspondence between schooling and capitalism in

the concrete examples discussed by them. Althusser, too, acknowledged that there was a relative autonomy of schooling. But this was not worked into their explicit theorizing. The structural Marxists (Althusser, Poulantzas and Hall) were particularly emphatic about the importance of the structuring of relationships in determining the actual behaviour of people. A somewhat different emphasis was that of Pierre Bourdieu.

PIERRE BOURDIEU

Bourdieu presents an amalgamation of interactionist, phenomenological and systemic views. The sweeping range of this scholar is shown by the fact that e has been called at various times a Durkheimian (DiMaggio, 1979), a Marxian (Kennett, 1973) and even a Weberian thinker (Collins, 1977)[1].

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1 It may well be asked why Bourdieu has been included in the Marxian tradition. As is the case with several other scholars discussed in this dissertation, this is an unhappy solution. Bourdieu's notion of culture and master-patterns seems to be a development of Durkheimian thought. His writings on the mechanisms by which schools reproduce the ruling classes appears to have drawn richly from Weber's works. But throughout

Like Durkheim who stressed the moral integration of
societies   by   schools,   Bourdieu   emphasized   the   overall
cultural integration performed   by school.   He   calls it the
"logical integration" of society (Bourdieu, 1976,   p. 193).
In the West, at least, "'Programmed'   individuals - endowed
with a homogeneous programme of perception, thought and
action -   are the most specific product of an educational
system."   School is a "fundamental factor in the cultural
consensus in as far as it represents the sharing of a common
sense which is the pre-requisite for communication" (*ibid.*)
Surprisingly in a person know for his conflict perspective,
this is more homogenizing and deterministic than Durkheim's
own view of the place of schooling in society.   Durkheim saw
schooling only as creating the basic dispositions of society
(see above.)

In Bourdieu's theoretical works we see the full
expression 'of a view of schooling as the learning of
culture, even though he may have restricted most of his

Bourdieu's work there is a strong emphasis on conflict
and the legitimation of domination, which are issues
that have been most prominently dealt with by the
Marxist tradition. Placing him in this chapter seemed
to be the best solution short of creating a new chapter
with only him in it.

substantive comments to the learning of culture in the specialized institutions that his own society had for this purpose. At the back of all of Bourdieu's thinking on schooling and culture is the question - do the patterns of thought and language transmitted by school perform the same function as the unconscious patterns which govern the thinking and the entire activities of people belonging to the non-Western societies that have been the traditional material of anthropology? If so, then Bourdieu tentatively places the sociology of the institutionalized transmission of culture at a high place in the route to a general sociology of knowledge (Bourdieu, 1976, p. 193)

Bourdieu's concept of culture is central to his analysis of schooling: "Culture is not merely a common code or even a common catalogue of answers to recurring problems; it is a common set of previously assimilated master patterns from which, by an 'art of invention' similar to that involved in the writing of music, an infinite number of individual patterns directly applicable to specific situations are generated" (*ibid.*, p. 194). In the societies with which Bourdieu was primarily concerned, it was the school that fundamental to the learning of these general patterns. Thus, for Bourdieu, the learning of culture was a very important part of the general study of culture itself.

Schooling was responsible for the individual's most basic, deeply interiorized master-patterns of thought and action. These basic master-patterns formed the foundations fro the subsequent acquisition of other patterns. The specific character of the system of patterns by which the individual's thought was organized was the result of not only the nature of patterns constituting it, but also of the frequency with which they were used and the level of consciousness at which they operated. All these properties, according to Bourdieu, were probably connected with the circumstances in which the fundamental intellectual patterns were acquired.

The "basic master-patterns" were a very important concept and Bourdieu called them - cultured habitus.   In societies where the transmission of culture was monopolized by schools, it was the habitus that was handed on by the schools.

Schools organized reality for their students, structuring all the thoughts of those who passed through them in an invisible and very subtle way. Schools provided the reference marks for human thought as well as the very methods or programmes of thought. For this purpose schools themselves had to be organized in fashions appropriate to the habitus that they transmitted.

Bourdieu placed this view of schooling and the learning of culture in the context of a profound analysis of society as a whole. A very important concept for him was that of capital. Bourdieu argued that capital or accumulated resources were not just economic in nature. They could be cultural as well. To understand the mechanics of the reproduction of capital it was necessary to look at the inter-relationships of the different forms of capital and their respective autonomy.

In the now classic *Reproduction in education, culture and society* (1977b) Bourdieu and his colleague Jean-Claude Passeron looked toward education for insights on the reproduction and maintenance of the capitalist social system. They argued that the dominant class within any society established its own habitus as the natural order through symbols like language, status, artefacts and practices. The social structure and its inequality was therefore not established and reproduced through physical forces alone. Such symbolic violence had an important role in the creation of a structure and the dominant role in its reproduction.

Symbolic violence was an important concept that Bourdieu used. It implied an arbitrary use of force that had no moral or logical basis. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977b, p. 4) defined it as the imposition of meanings as

well as their legitimization by the hiding of the power relations which created that violence. To the extent that symbolic violence reproduced a group's or a class' culture, the latter was arbitrary in character. It could not claim that it was derived from any universal principle, be it biological or spiritual (*ibid.*, p. 8). Force and violence, thus, took on a primary role in Bourdieu's vision of society.

The symbolic violence was usually applied in a hidden manner. The agent of this violence had an autonomy from the underlying social forces. The agent had its own symbolic violence, too, which created a sense of legitimacy. The symbolic violences of the hidden forces as well as the agent were felt in a cumulative fashion by those subjected to these (*ibid.*, p. 4).

Schools were shaped by the need to communicate the habitus of the powerful (*ibid.*, pp. 54-55 and *en passim*) as well as to disguise the first need. Schools provided justification to the established order as well as gave recognition to the ruling habitus as the natural one and not simply a socially created one.

Schools created a pretext of neutrality. Even though they were biased in favour of the established order, they maintained a facade of objectivity by failing some of

the privileged and passing some of the unprivileged. Since there was a proliferation of degrees, the actual selection continued to be on the basis of the habitus of the rulers. Schools passed on the aristocratic habitus and established that as the natural way of making sense of things. But this was now done in a less visible and more subtle and, consequently, very successful fashion.

Pierre Bourdieu deserves credit for placing the sociology of education squarely in the realm of the problematique of culture. His conceptual elaboration of culture, habitus, culture and symbolic violence added considerable depth to his studies of schooling. Two major themes, socialization and selection, emerged clearly in his writings on the reproduction of his society, along with the dimension of legitimation. The other major issue in the learning of culture is the innovation and it was not fully developed by Bourdieu. He did not conceptualize the resistances that were offered in school classrooms by the groups who did not share in the dominant habitus and it remained a minor theme for him. Nor did he, for all his sensitivity, deal with the problem of how a critical consciousness could emerge within society. He did not deal with the changes that were occurring at fundamental levels in schools or indeed at every level in his culture. Bourdieu then remained a theorizer of reproduction and not really one of change.

Pierre Bourdieu and other Marxists brought the concepts of ideology and consciousness to the fore in the debates on the sociology of education. Both concepts have been interpreted by Marxists in various ways (*cf.* Therborn, 1980). For our purpose it is not necessary to go into the nuances of each interpretation. It is sufficient to note that consciousness is the wider of the two and usually subsumes ideology within it. Consciousness as used by Bowles and Gintis (1976) involved a vast array of mental and social characteristics like beliefs, values, attitudes, etc. To the extent that these were learnt and not biologically inherent, consciousness approached the concept of culture. The notion of legitimation and its importance in consciousness was, however, a new element in the sociology of education, even if it be argued that this element is actually subsumed under the concept of socialization.

Parson's clarity in isolating socialization and selection as the functions of education was not made full use of by the Marxist sociology of education. An exploration of the relationship between these and consciousness and legitimation would undoubtedly add depth to their works. The question of how societies changed and what relation systems of the learning of culture had to this was not tackled by these thinker, either. Even resistances

to the dominations by ideology at the micro-level were not explored.

In spite of the strong deterministic streak in the Marxist tradition of the sociology of education it allied itself with the interactionists against the educational establishment. All too often the two traditions joined hands in attacking whoever did not share their views. Interestingly, neither the reproduction theorists nor the interactionists lent their efforts toward the formulation of policies. One held that all policy-making within capitalism was useless while the other could not stretch its analyses to a scale broad enough to be of use for the framing of policies for society as a whole (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1982). Tragically, then, the most radical perspectives in the sociology of education in the West remained marginalized in practice.

The Marxists who were exploring the notions of ideology and consciousness began to pay more attention to the writings of Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist. He proved to be a great source of encouragement to those who were uncomfortable with a blanket economic determinism.

Gramsci (1971) had a sophisticated understanding of the way the different aspects of human existence related with each other. He did not subscribe to a simplistic model

of the economic base mechanically determining the superstructure. Society had several superstructures whose relation with the economic base was complex and variable and could only be known through the examination of concrete situations. This society was created by daily activities, through the beliefs and values that people shared and the relationships that reaffirmed or challenged the beliefs, values and activities. Society and the consciousness of its members was dynamic and continually being reproduced as well as changed.

Educational institutions in the West performed the important function of creating the intellectuals. By intellectuals Gramsci did not intend the conventional meaning of people who use their intellect, as journalists, professors, etc. Intellectuals were defined not on an intrinsic quality, but on the basis of their relationship with others. The distinguishing feature of intellectuals was that they created and organized social relationships, motivating people and so on for this purpose. As distinct categories of people emerged in society, they gave rise to their own intellectuals (organic intellectuals). It was not necessary, however, that every social category had to have its own intellectuals and nor did every kind of intellectual have to be aligned with a unique social category (e.g. the traditional intellectual).

The daily life practices, values and beliefs, as at least partially organized by the intellectuals, was analyzed by Gramsci into the base and various levels of superstructures. Two major superstructures were the civil society or the realm of the private and the political society or the realm of the state. In civil society the domination of one group over the others was mediated through certain intellectuals. They helped to create and maintain the hegemony of the dominant group. Hegemony became the most celebrated concept of Antonio Gramsci. Its influence lay in the sophisticated conceptualization of society as described above.

Scholars like Raymond Williams (1961, 1976) drew from Gramsci's hegemony to argue that the task of changing society was not simply a matter of replacing on "false consciousness" by an approved set of ideas and knowledge. Culture and consciousness created and maintained by a much wider range of elements involving daily life practices, and the formal institutions of cultural transmission, the close kin, the work-place, etc. all contributed to this.

Gramsci, especially as interpreted by Raymond Williams, proved to be a very important influence on the later Marxist sociologists of education. The concept of hegemony brought them closer to the theoretical position of the interactionists without sacrificing their own

institution or society level formulations. It helped
balance their bias towards economic determinism with a more
holistic notion of culture.

RESISTANCE AND THE NEW MARXIST SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

By the end of the 1970s the new Marxist sociologists
of education had arrived. They paid increasing attention to
the dysjunctions between the economy's needs and the forms
of consciousness operating in schools and classrooms.
Encouraging this awareness in the West were the linkages
that were emerging between the Left, the minority groups and
the women's movement in the face of a renewed onslaught by
conservative forces as exemplified by the rise of Ronald
Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. The "other" voices began to
be increasingly important for the Marxists and they now
recognized that schooling was not just a mechanical churning
out of unresisting victims.

Michael Apple (1982; 1985; 1986a; 1986b) and Henry
Giroux (1981; 1983a; 1983b; Giroux and Aronowitz, 1987) are
the two most important representatives of this trend. They
formulated a vision of classrooms where students were often
in conflict with teachers and were not passive receptacles
for the school's version of consciousness and culture.
There was an active as well as a passive resistance to the

hegemony which schools attempted to establish and maintain. Different cultures were operating within a classroom and schooling could be understood only through an understanding of their interaction and their conflicts.   The relation of the economy with schooling, too, was mediated through such resistances.   Apple and Giroux looked to these resistances as representing future possibilities of revolution.   The consolidation and elaboration of the counter-cultures were the major hopes for a fundamental transformation of Western societies.

THE WEBERIAN
SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

"The reorganization of exclusionary codes is at the heart of the historic process of formal rationalization. In fact, the most important thing that is being rationalized in this process is exclusion itself. In the past exclusionary codes were explicitly related to the collectivity within which one was born. This was true of lineage exclusion, as well as caste, racial, ethnic, and gender exclusion, etc....With the growth of formal rationalization the collectivist criteria of exclusion came increasingly to be seen as irrational (not founded on the means of achieving) and hence illegitimate. Individualist criteria of exclusion, such as credentials, experience, property laws governing capitalist market competition, and rules governing advancement in bureaucratic hierarchies, including that of the Communist Party, came to be accepted as more legitimate than collectivist exclusionary criteria with development of formal rationalization, because the former are believed to be based on individual accomplishment and to be the means of attaining material goals."

-- Raymond Murphy
1988, pp.219-220

Chapter 8

THE WEBERIAN SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

The resistance theorists were not the only sociologists of education to explore the variable character of the relation between schooling and the rest of society. A less popular but very fertile tradition has been that which derives inspiration from Max Weber's writings.

MAX WEBER

Max Weber, like Karl Marx, had the learning of culture as the underlying premise of all his writings but did not make a systematic exposition of this premise. Weber approached this problem the closest in two passages which were concerned with formal education. One passage is his discussion of the relationship of bureaucracy with education (Weber, 1978, pp.998-1002) and the other passage is part of his discussion of education and examinations among the Chinese literati (Weber, 1970, pp.422-434).

Weber viewed education from the perspective of his master-theme of rationality. Virtually all of his writings

were engaged in a historical and critical study of the rise of rationality, i.e., of an emphasis on calculations, of the decline of the "magic" and the meaning of life[1].

Education, as Weber understood it, had in earlier times tried to create the "cultivated" person (Weber, 1978, p.1001). Being cultivated had meant different things at different times and places. It may have been directed at the creation of "a knightly or an ascetic type, at a literary type (as in China) or at a Gymnastic-humanistic types (as in Helles), or at a conventional "gentleman" of the Anglo-Saxon variety" (ibid.). A certain way of life, even a personality was sought to be transmitted.

In contrast to this, Weber saw his own times as emphasizing the transmission of technical skills rather than a way of life. This was closely linked with the rise to dominance of rationalism in the West and the spread of its premier type of social organization, the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy sought the specialist or the technical expert and not the cultivated man of older times.

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1   This is only a loose interpretation of what Weber meant by rationality. Entire books may be devoted to this subject. See, for instance, Brubaker (1984) and Schluchter (1981).

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Examinations were the increasingly indispensable means of assessing the transmission of the technical skills. Examinations granted a "patent of education" (*ibid.* p.1000) to those who were successful in satisfying the examiners. This patent also led to positions in the prestige systems of society. Earlier prestige and economic privilege were created only by birth, but in Weber's times they were created by the examination systems.

The examination system, however, was not a barrier-less route for the upward mobility of those who possessed the technical skills which suited the bureaucracy. Status groups formed within the bureaucracy which sought to protect their own privileges. The status groups tried to systematize and routinize their cultural peculiarities and thus tried to justify their own power. This further implied that they sponsored only members of particular status groups for upward mobility and not others. What was a cultivated person or a specialist or deserved to be selected for entry within a bureaucracy were all ideals "stamped by the structure of domination and the conditions of membership in the ruling stratum of the society in question" (*ibid.* p.1001).

Weber generalized the above to give a typology of the forms of educational systems as they corresponded to

different types of society and domination[1]. He proposed
(Weber, 1970, p.326) that the sharpest contrast between
educational ends was that between education for specialized
expert training and education for charisma. These were
ideal types representing two opposite poles. They
corresponded, respectively, to the imposition of rational
(and bureaucratic) domination and to charismatic domination.
Like all of Weber's ideal types there were many combinations
of these in between the polar extremes. The educational
ends actually led to the cultivation of particular conducts
of life which were typical of the relevant status groups.
Examinations were only disguised techniques of selecting
those who most closely approximated the conduct of the
examining group.

Brief though Weber's comments may have been, they
represented a tremendously fertile approach to the learning
of culture. Here was a theoretical vision which had a
historical and comparative scope that spanned continents and
millennia. He wrote as penetratingly of the Chinese
literati as he did of the Prussian bureaucracy. Throughout
his work is present a discomfort with what he thought was

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1   It should be noted that Weber accepted that this was
     not a complete typology. The following description
     is only of what he called a "few comments" on
     "pedagogical ends and means" (Weber, 1970, p. 326).

the fundamental movement occurring in society — a process of rationalization.. He was fiercely critical of it, but, unlike Karl Marx, stopped short of pointing toward an escape route from the misery created by capitalism.

Weber's writings had several elements which may be of great help in understanding the learning of culture. His vision of humanity had space for individual initiative albeit within a context of social forces. The themes of socialization, selection and legitimization were all present here. Weber did not view education as mechanically reproducing society but as a dynamic process which could be conservative or could lead to the mobility of social categories in various directions according to the specific historical circumstances.

Weber's approach emerged in the sociology of education only after 1970. Several scholars writing in the seventies and eighties have interpreted his writings on education as well as his concept of power to develop a distinct Neo-Weberian tradition of considerable promise.

RANDALL COLLINS

Randall Collins (1971, 1976, 1979) was an early exponent of the Neo-Weberian approach to the sociology of

education. Collins took as his central problem the task of understanding   links   between   education   and   social stratification.   He considered structural-functionalism as well as technical-functionalism inadequate for a complete understanding of the place of education in society.   The functionalist approaches shared the postulate that education was fundamentally the means of servicing the technical or functional needs of society.   Collins argued that this postulate[1] did not fully account for patterns of educational and industrial development in USA.

Collins was inspired by Max Weber to propose a conflict model for social stratification and its links with education (1971, pp.1009-1011).   He argued that the basic units of society were status groups, i.e., "associational groups sharing common cultures (or "sub-cultures")...In general this comprises of all persons who share a sense of status inequality based on participation in a common culture" (*ibid.* p.1009).   Like most of Weber's concepts, status groups too were ideal types. They were derived from a number of sources, three of which were the economic conditions, the political or power positions and cultural

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1   Nor, for that matter, did its underlying principles

as elaborated by Davis and Moore (1945). *Cf.* Collins

(1971), pp.1004-1007.

conditions. Any number of combinations of these could create various degrees and types of status groups.

Individuals were the points where the decisions and choices which drove society were made. The identities of individuals, however, were created by their respective status groups. The status groups were the primary resources which individuals tapped in their interactions and struggles. Society was characterized by struggles essentially between status groups to acquire or defend their wealth, power or prestige.

Such a model of conflicts in society avoided the pitfalls of economic base and its superstructures. It recognized a great deal of free play between the social factors of economy, polity and prestige as well as between them and the individual.

Various status groups cooperated with each other in complex ways to form society with its patterns of domination and subordination. Dominating groups attempted to monopolize their positions and tried to permit entry to these positions only by members of their own status groups. They also tried to restrict entry to subordinate positions to only those who respected the dominators' superiority. Such strategies were also used by status groups at middle and lower ranks. The subordinate groups tried to raise

their ranks by emulating the higher ranking status groups, and also furthered their own interests by resisting the latter's domination in various subtle or blatant ways.

Education had an important role to play in all this. Its primary activity was to impart status cultures to the students, both inside as well outside the classrooms. The credentials obtained through schooling represented status culture more than technical skills. Employers and others discriminated between the products of schooling essentially on the basis of culture. Technical skills were, no doubt, important, but played only a secondary role.

Collins believed that such a conceptual framework was more consistent with the empirical evidence of a continuous rise in educational credentials required for employment. The dominant status groups encouraged schooling (the white Anglo-Saxon protestants in USA) so as to obtain duly socialized subordinates and the lower ranking status groups found this a valuable means of upward mobility. The resulting proliferation of higher credentials threatened the exclusiveness of the dominators. To protect their own privileges they raised the level of credentials required for entry into their organizations. This led to a continual cycle of proliferation of higher credentials - raised standards of entry - proliferation of higher credentials.

Collins' work is remarkable for its rediscovery and adaptation of Max Weber for the sociology of education. At a time when the dominant paradigms were those of the voluntarists or the determinists (be they of the structural-functional or the Marxian varieties), Collins put forward a more comprehensive view that tried to integrate action initiated by individuals with their social constraints.

Collins made an important attack on the myth of meritocracy. His rhetoric may have at times been a little unfair to the position of technical skills in the 'credential society' but it was a significant contribution nonetheless. Unfortunately he did not extend his work to encompass Weber's critique of rationality as a general process of Western civilization.

FRANK PARKIN

Frank Parkin (1979) presents an approach similar to that of Randall Collins. He differs mainly in the emphasis he places on certain concepts.

Parkin's central concern, like Collins' is with social stratification. Weber's concept of power is fundamental to his work. Weber (1978, p.926) wrote 'In general, we understand by "power" the chance of a man or a

number of men to realize their own will in a social action
even against the resistance of others who are participating
in the action'. Parkin drew from Weber to propose that two
major patterns of the exercise as well as protection of
power were the processes of exclusion and usurpation.

Exclusion   meant   preventing   certain   groups,
identified on the basis of cultural traits, from gaining
access to the privileges of the excluder group.   Power was
exercised in a downward direction in an effort to monopolize
rank.

The   flip side   of   exclusion was   usurpation.
Usurpation meant the efforts by the excluded groups to share
the privileges of the higher ranks.   This often involved
changing the cultural traits which identified the groups as
inferior. Power was, in the case of usurpation, applied in
an upward direction to appropriate rank.

Modern capitalist societies had two major forms of
exclusion: exclusion through property and exclusion through
credentials. The latter is of special relevance to us.
Credentials were symbols which were used to demarcate groups
for discrimination.   Parkin believed that these were
primarily generated through the formal institutions of
education. Credentials were not in any way synonymous with
technical skills and their significance was largely

arbitrary in nature. And yet, credentials, and through them, the formal educational system controlled and directed the entry of individuals into the key positions of the division of labour in modern capitalism (Parkin, 1979, p.54).

Examinations were the instruments of selecting who got a particular credential. The popular belief was that examinations selected people on the basis of individualistic criteria like IQ, skills, etc. Parkin argued that behind this popular myth there took place discrimination on several collectivistic criteria. Religion, race, cultural heritage, sexual orientation and many other characters could be used to exclude individuals from credentials which they sought.

Parkin did not see education as simply reproducing the domination of certain status groups. It was true that many individuals from privileged sections did indeed benefit by continuing on in the same strata as their parents. But there were also many who did not. Modern capitalism was characterized by a multiplicity of forms of property and credentials and they were all open to fluctuation and decline (ibid. p.61). Families which wanted their children to get into higher ranks of capitalism had to be ready to adapt to changing conditions. It would be more accurate to say that education and its credentials reproduced sub-cultures in particular ranks than to say that they led to

the persistence of blood-links in similar roles. The origins of individuals could vary but they themselves shared similar ways of life. What was being reproduced was the way of life and not simply the control by certain families.

Parkin extended the alternative position on reproduction that Collins had initiated. Here was a model of society that was continually changing. School was no longer simply a matter of reproduction. And the reproduction or recreation that took place was, significantly, the reproduction of the occupation of certain strata by blood-links. Rather it was an impulse towards a the reproduction of the control of particular positions by particular sub-cultures. This was an important new insight which held much more promise than the conventional views of reproduction.

RAYMOND MURPHY

Raymond Murphy (1982, 1984, 1988) has elaborated on the basic themes of Weber, Collins, and Parkin. He has reviewed their perceptions of exclusion and usurpation. Murphy's own major contribution has been the application of Weber's concept of power to analyze the relationship between schools and society.

Weber's 'power or domination' has been the focus of considerable discussion[1]. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of this concept, Murphy found its subcategories more useful than the concept itself. Weber (1978, p.943) had written that 'in addition to numerous other possible types, there are two diametrically contrasting types of domination, viz., domination by virtue of a constellation of interests (in particular, by virtue of a position of monopoly), and domination by virtue of authority, i.e., power to command and duty to obey'. Being ideal types, these two subcategories were to be found in almost any combination in real life. One pole represented the complete submission by the dominated to the interests of the dominator while the other pole represented their independently following their respective interests, yet with the net result of the dominated having no choice other than to bend to the dominator's will.

Murphy added to these two subcategories a third which he called 'the power to profit from' (Murphy, 1988, p.136). This was 'the capacity of a unit to profit, in order to realize its goals, from the autonomous actions of other, which the unit did not itself initiate and which may

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1   Murphy (1982, 1988, pp.132-134) has responded in particular to the criticism levelled by Baldus (1975).

be oriented to goals other than its own' (*ibid.*). Although the power to profit from was apparently similar to domination by virtue of a constellation of interests, Murphy saw it as representing a different kind of power altogether. In Weber's power the initiative in both the ideal types remained in the hands of the dominator. The power to profit from, in contrast, resulted not from the initiative of the dominator but that of the dominated or of a third party[1].

Murphy used these three categories of power to go deeper into the relation between schooling and society than the usual formation of 'relative autonomy'. The first subcategory, the power to command, was comparatively rarer in capitalist countries than in socialist countries (*ibid.* p.158). Schools in the West were more commonly influenced by domination by virtue of a constellation of interests. Schools were formally autonomous but had to operate through a number of constraints which the rest of society created (economy, traditions, etc.). Schools, were, due to various reasons, configured in such a way that without really having

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[1] The power to profit from, strictly speaking, cannot be a third subcategory. It is the third pole of an at least 3-poled flux. Or is one pole of a 2-pole system where its opposite would be a form of power which was characterized by the dominator's initiative.

to manipulate affairs certain privileged groups got preferential treatment. Schooling sorted out members of certain groups for the sharing of privileges. Several groups benefitted from schooling without obviously trying to influence or constrain it. They had 'the power to profit from' schooling.

Murphy's three subcategories of power provided a more systematic set of concepts with which a deeper understanding could be had of schools in society.

Another major contribution of Raymond Murphy was to place the Neo-Weberian approach to the sociology of education within the context of a process of Rationalization. Rationalization had been the master-theme which had over-arched all of Max Weber's writings. As Murphy interpreted him (1988, pp.195-217), Weber had distinguished between two major ways in which rationality could be understood. The first was rationality as the correct choice of means to attain ends. Weber called this formal rationality. In contrast with this was what Weber called substantive rationality which was characterized by a concern with the moral character of the means and ends. Capitalism was saturated with formal rationality, with the values or morals which had earlier guided human activities taking a back-seat.

Formal rationality led to the rise of intellectualism and it depersonalized human relationships. Relationships tended to be reduced to a blind obsession with efficient means to gain ends, with little regard for the morality of these acts. Control became a fundamental feature of such societies. The 'efficient' conduct of human affairs required that people behave in a carefully regulated manner. Any variation from the requirements of formal rationality would lead to obstructions in the flow of the system and create 'inefficiency'.

Societies with an emphasis on formal rationality had widespread exclusions and usurpations. Such societies were continually changing with groups struggling to achieve greater formal rationality by adapting their relations with each other.

The West had seen the rise to domination of an emphasis on the efficacy of means for largely amoral ends. Schooling and credentials were primarily a means for excluding people or usurping positions so as to create greater formal rationality. Credentials were important earlier, too, but now they represented a new type of knowledge. Today's West had created a new form of knowledge — the systematic, codified, generalized knowledge of the means of control of nature as well as humans (*ibid.* p.245). This form of knowledge was different from the earlier

'status-cultural' or 'practical' knowledge (*ibid.* p.246). It was more efficient and powerful in the new rationalized world. It was, therefore, an important resource for which struggles between groups took place. Credentials were a key form of protecting or usurping this resource.

Murphy, thus, returned to the Neo-Weberians the dimension of a critique of rationality which had been the hallmark of Max Weber's own work. However, he could not transcend the problem that had frustrated Weber himself: how to reconcile an open-ended, non-deterministic view of history with the postulate of a master-pattern of ever-increasing rationality.

Still, Murphy had the most comprehensive theoretical framework among the Neo-Weberians[1]. He kept space for individual and collective initiative, he kept in mind the social constraints, he paid attention to socialization, he analyzed the allocation of roles, he had an open-ended macro-vision of a changing society with struggling conservative and transformative forces, and he even had a theory of where society as a whole was moving.

Like the rest of the Neo-Weberians, however, his primary focus was on the formal institutions of education.

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1   Of course, Murphy had the benefit of being the last to write.

Further, there was a distinct theoretical orientation towards the problem of social stratification. Life, needless to say, is more than just equality and inequality. A larger vision of the learning of culture was not developed, which would have had to include other agents than schooling and have explored the other dimensions of life, too.

MARGARET S. ARCHER

Margaret S. Archer is a Neo-Weberian who does not take social stratification as the starting point. She used a Weberian perspective to make a study of the systems of formal education of England, USSR, France and Denmark (Archer, 1979). Her emphasis was on the formal institutions alone and not on the manifold paths of the transmission of culture.

Archer delineated her fundamental problem as that of how educational systems developed and changed. Her study was an attempt to (*ibid.* p.1) 'account for the characteristics and contours of national educational systems' and their processes of change'. From Weber's German, dialectical, perspective educational 'systems' were never seen as static, but as continuously changing. An explanation had to account for the characteristics and their

changes at the same time. The scope of this study was then necessarily historical and comparative.

Archer argued that the explanation of the national educational systems revolved around the goals of the people involved. The educational systems were created and changed by the actions of people following their respective values. But it was not as if things could be completely transformed at will because goals existed in a context of structural constraints.

The educational systems which were created by this interplay of goals and constraints had three aspects - the inputs, processes and outputs. These involved the problems of who could get entry into the systems, and what forms of selection and discrimination operated; what kind of knowledge was transmitted and how it was managed; how and where the people who emerged fitted into society and how the social stratification was influenced by these systems.

Archer may have used the term 'system' a lot in her writings, but she did not see the educational institutions as having a pre-determined effect on society or being mechanical reproducers of society. Their relationship with society was kept problematical and could only be known after empirical investigation.

The goals and constraints which created the systems were the result of conflicts and struggles within society. No one group could ever do just whatever it wanted. Complex social interactions, with consolidations of groups, their fusions, divisions and conflicts were responsible for the changing patterns in education. In short, power and its dynamics was an important dimension of the analysis of formal education.

Archer used her Weberian framework to produce a now classic substantive study (*ibid.*). National educational systems emerged as non-deterministic, driven by goals and structures, the products of complex power plays. However Archer stopped short of formulating a systematic theoretical framework for understanding the formal institutions of the learning of culture. Unlike Weber, Collins, Parkin and Murphy, she restricted herself to the development of formal institutions and did not go on to build an integrated analysis of changing schools and changing societies acting and reacting on each other.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION

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A large number of the theoretical traditions of the parent disciplines of sociology and anthropology have guided research on education. Studies of education, too, have developed insights from which the parent disciplines, in turn, can benefit. Education as a concept is very closely related to anthropology and sociology's master theme of culture. Insights on education may well have many applications in the realm of culture. This conclusion tries to bring together the diverse strands of the theoretical approaches described in the preceding chapters as applied to the problem of culture and not just schooling.

The various approaches together present a heterogeneous and at times conflicting scenario. The heterogeneity, it should be pointed out, is not a limitation, but an asset. The different emphasis of research can be seen as complementing each other and thus allowing a more comprehensive understanding to emerge. The conflicts between the approaches, too, are of benefit to us. They direct attention to places where the interaction between different approaches is problematic and where research can be particularly fertile.

TIME

The majority of the scholars reviewed have seen the learning of culture through a temporal perspective. Definite trends are believed to have emerged with the passage of time. Edgar L. Hewett long ago proposed that schooling was better suited to the more evolved racial types like his own community of white caucasians. Although Hewett's conclusions may be highly unpopular today, this represented an important direction of inquiry in its examining the relationship between biology and behaviour. T. R. . Williams seems to be the only other scholar to explore this direction with his analysis of why a transition occurred in human evolution from the preponderance of biology in human affairs to the prominence of behaviour. He argued that this was due to the emergence of symbolic communication which allowed the transmission of the accumulated lessons of life from one generation to another.

Several thinkers have approached the learning of culture through a less evolutionary and more historical perspective. Emile Durkheim saw a movement towards increasing rationalism in society. He believed this would lead to the freedom of individuals from arbitrary constraints and the injustices and oppressions of feudal times. Closely paralleling Durkheim was Basil Bernstein who made elaborate use of the former's distinction between

mechanical and organic solidarity. He saw a transition occurring toward organic solidarity and greater opennness. In contrast to Durkheim, Bernstein showed a greater sensitivity to the power relations of society and the patterns of social control.

The technological functionalists had a rather cruder version of this perspective. They argued that humanity was moving towards greater industrialization and the learning of culture was a means of contributing to its manpower needs.

Against this favourable view of the historical movements in culture were the positions of the deschoolers, the Marxists and the Weberians as well as Margaret Mead from the culture-personality school. They held that the learning of culture was moving toward a more repressive and regimented world. The deschoolers saw creativity, depth of feeling and autonomy being squeezed out of humans. Several Marxists emphasized the importance of economic forces in the form of capitalism for the learning of alienation and exploitation. People learnt beliefs and practices which legitimized the status quo. The Weberians generalized this as a historical movement toward rationalization.

SOCIALIZATION

Learning, as the subject's imbibing of traits through reflection as well as interaction with its environment has underlaid all the anthropology and sociology of education. A simple interpretation of learning which did not go into its larger implications for the dynamics of culture has been formulated as socialization. Talcott Parsons saw this as the learning of the capacities and commitments of adults. The concept of socialization has usually led to the distinction of simple learning from its causes and consequences, i.e. the dynamic patterning of culture.

THE PATTERNING OF CULTURE

The learning of traits never occurs in a homogeneous and random way. Frederick Gearing holds that barriers exist which give shape to different distributions of knowledge and skills. These flow toward homogeneity where the barriers are low and accumulate heterogeneously where the barriers are high. Culture always has patterns and forms in it. Emile Durkheim says that social existence, which is necessary for humans to survive, cannot exist without some patterning in it. A sense of discipline and belonging to

social groups creates the contours of society. And this is
learnt, not inborn.

        Images of selective processes have been common in
the sociology   of education   and the   anthropology of
education. Certain beliefs are selectively transmitted over
others in   a particular   context.   Certain   kinds of
individuals are rewarded with higher positions than others.

        Talcott Parsons formulated this as "selection", but
gave it a static meaning.   Individuals learnt traits and
were allocated by schooling to different social roles as per
their socialization.   There   were few conflicts in the
selection and it seemed to occur largely on the basis of
"merit".   The process of selection led to the maintenance
and integration of society.   Earl Hopper paid some more
attention to those who were at the receiving end of
selection and were left out.   He sensed their unhappiness
and argued that there were also processes of "cooling-off"
their aspirations, so as to maintain their society's way of
life.

        The deschoolers, the Marxists and the Weberians
approached the learning of culture by highlighting the
conflicts that arose in society. Learning was organized so
as to create contradictory patterns in cultures.   The
economy, in particular, played an important role in giving

shape to the learning of culture, though its exact role has remained a matter of dispute. The selective processes were driven by unequal social relationships and not by any absolute notion of merit. A lot of attention was given to explaining why despite all the contradictions of society and its selective processes those who were left out in the cold did not rise up in rebellion. The concept of legitimization was an important answer. People learnt and were taught beliefs, values and practices that led them to accept the status quo to a large extent. The Marxists and, to a lesser degree, the deschoolers, saw the learning of culture as leading to the reproduction of capitalism. The interest in legitimization and consciousness led the later Marxists to explore non-school sources of the learning of culture, especially the media. They also took up the exploration of the resistances to reproduction.

Basil Bernstein brought a Durkheimian structuralist perspective to bear on the learning and patterning of culture. He added notions of power to the Durkheimian insights on the social classification of knowledge. People had varying strengths of boundaries between their categories as well as a varying freedom to define them. The relation between these created the underlying codes or the regulative principles which led to the selection and integration of meanings, their realizations and their evoking contexts.

The codes were responsible for patterning the learning of culture and social control.

The Weberians developed extensively a somewhat narrower aspect of the learning of culture. They saw patterns as created by exclusion on the basis of the traits of status groups. The patterns were dynamic and continually changing. The converse of exclusion was the attempts by the excluded to gain entry "usurpation" of cultural traits. Such a perspective of exclusion creating the dynamics of culture was complemented by the Weberian notion of power. Power was an important feature of the conceptual schemes of all those who did not underplay the conflict in society but none elaborated it as much as some of the Weberians did. Raymond Murphy applied Weber's two types of power, the power to command and the power to shape opportunities, to an analysis of the relation between schools and society. Along with this he also made use of a third type of power, the power to profit from others' activities without actively constraining them.

INNOVATION

If there is a patterning of culture through learning, there must also be challenges to the patterning. Emile Durkheim posed autonomy or self-determination as the

"other" of discipline and belonging to social groups. It enabled individuals to challenge their circumstances and also to adapt their own behaviour to it.

Jules Henry had a similarly dialectical view of the relation between traditions and fresh inquiry. The exploration of new categories, new ways of life posed a continuous threat to older ways. And the new itself soon became the old and in turn felt threatened by and resisted the newer inquiries.

The Weberians had a general conception of human enterprise as being constrained by external factors as well as driven by subjective interpretations of reality. However, they did not go beyond this to conceptualize the character of innovation itself.

Innovation is a poorly developed field of the sociology and anthropology of education. The deschoolers, the Marxists and the Weberians restricted themselves largely to the analysis of how innovation was being squeezed out of human lives. Some, however, pointed out that consumerism in the West was leading to innovations and proliferation of commodities. But at the same time there was a decreasing space for variations in social relations. Several of the interactionists dealt with the negotiations that occurred in

direct relations but ultimately no major theoretical work emerged.

THE THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND WE

We are continuously creating, applying and criticizing our ways of "seeing". Our categories of cognition are fixed when we apply them and at the same time are in a state of flux. We use them to organize our perceptions of the world, they influence our emotions, our biology, our activities and practices, and so on.

The theories of sociology and anthropology are only a specialized form of "seeing". At one level they relate themselves to the patterns of academics. Their worth becomes a question of logical coherence, heuristic potential or whatever the various schools of thought emphasize. Somewhere down the line academic values merge into the values of life. But how compatible are these to each other? How does one, for instance, compare Gandhi, Aurobindo and Tagore's emphasis on spirituality in education to the theories of the sociology of education? And yet, the former are no less important to us than the latter. Education is one field where we can hardly afford to ignore wisdom (whatever that might mean) that is not phrased in sociological jargon.

This review of literature in one sense helps us within the logic of academics. It has brought together for studies of culture the possible theoretical contributions that can be made to it by two sub-disciplines. In another sense it can also help the activities of those who are not concerned with the elaboration of conceptual schemes. It brings together a rich variety of ways of seeing things. Selections can be made from concepts described here to help understand reality and act on it in a better way. They can help to clarify perceptions of the world and organize cognition to give greater insights. And, thus, hopefully, lead to more effective social action.

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