

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS
OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON ADULT EDUCATION (TOKYO, 1972) IN
THE LIGHT OF PAULO FREIRE'S PEDAGOGY
OF THE OPPRESSED

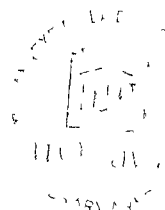
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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Brian K. Murphy was born November 21, 1944 in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree, major in English Literature, from Waterloo Lutheran University, Waterloo, Ontario, in 1968.

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1972 Unesco convened a major international conference in Tokyo, the Third International Conference on Adult Education. In late fall of 1972 the Final Report¹ of this conference was published. This report makes thirty-three recommendations based on its summary discussions; these recommendations could well serve as guidelines to further developments in adult education globally in the coming years.

Two years previously, in 1970, Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed² was translated and published in English, and has since that time had considerable impact on the world of adult education.

Comparative study of these two documents, the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference, and Pedagogy of the Oppressed, reveals striking similarities, yet at the same time reveals very significant differences. These differences offer valuable insights into the ultimate practicability of the Final Report as a potential blueprint

1. Unesco, Final Report, the Third International Conference on Adult Education, Paris, Unesco, 1972, 101 p.

2. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, (trans. Myra Bergman Ramos), New York, Herder and Herder, 1970, 186 p.

for adult educational activities throughout the world.

The intent of the present study is to examine the conclusions of the Final Report in the light of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, first, in an effort to assess the coherence and practicability of the educational philosophy implicit in the Final Report; and second, to examine whether Freire's analysis offers certain insights which might supplement the analysis in the Final Report.

Integral to this study are four basic assumptions. One, adult education, in the context of continuous lifelong education, is soon to become a very central part of the educational endeavour of every nation; this development signals the possibility of basic transformations in education, in societal structures, and in the role of the individual in society.

Two, the Final Report of the Third International Conference on Adult Education is a significant indicator of present thinking in official circles regarding the nature and future of adult education; this report will likely wield considerable influence in future planning.

Three, given assumptions (1) and (2), the conclusions of the Tokyo conference should be subject to close and critical examination and analysis.

Four, Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a significant addition to the literature of adult education, indeed of education in general. It is a book which has had a profound impact on the educational community in the last few years.³ It contains an analysis of, and an approach to, education in general and adult education specifically, which should be dealt with honestly, realistically and critically by those concerned with human education. When compared with the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference it offers insights which are valuable in assessing and supplementing the conclusions reached by the delegates to the Tokyo Conference.

The main problem, then, that this study will examine can be stated in the question: "Is the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference a viable and practicable blueprint for future planning in adult education throughout the world?" A supplementary problem can be expressed:

3. See Stanley M. Grabowski (ed.), Paulo Freire: A Revolutionary Dilemma for the Adult Educator, Syracuse, Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education and ERIC Clearing house on Adult Education, 1972, iii - 136 p.; especially quotational bibliography, p 96-136.

"Does Pedagogy of the Oppressed offer any insights into the questions raised by the Final Report which might augment the findings of the Report, or might suggest ways of approaching these questions in a more comprehensive and practicable manner?

To study these two complementary problems the paper is divided into four main chapters. The first chapter provides a critical analysis of the implicit educational philosophy of the Tokyo Report. The second presents a parallel analysis and critique of Pedagogy of the Oppressed. The third chapter compares and contrasts the main educational concepts contained in the two documents as explicated in chapters one and two. The fourth chapter synthesizes the results of the comparison in an attempt to underscore certain basic questions which the comparison raises and which relate directly to the coherence and practicability of the recommendations in the Tokyo Report. This chapter also presents a number of basic insights offered by Freire's analysis which may be helpful in solving the problems, or answering the questions, which the comparison has raised.

In chapters one and two the documents are analysed in terms of the four classic concepts involved in an educational philosophy: the concept of man, the concept of aims of education, the concept of content and method of education, and the concept of agents of education. The critique of these documents is based on a criterion of internal consistency.

CHAPTER I

ANALYSIS OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE TOKYO CONFERENCE

1. Background

Today's concerned educationist may well take heart in the heightened interest in adult education which seems to be emanating from almost all sectors of society, both public and private. The trend can be seen on both national and international levels and is so comprehensive in scope that one does not have to be a quixotic visionary to see in it the seeds of a long-awaited revolution in education and its integral interactive role in progressive, changing society and, indeed, in the evolution of a mutually inclusive global community.

At the heart of this exciting movement is the concept of continuing lifelong education, "l'education permanente", a concept which rejects the sequential-unit, lock-step, static and formal preparation-for-life-and-work approach, postulating instead a continuous, organic growth process involving the whole individual and social man and his interactive relationship with his environment in a rapidly changing world.

Education is seen as an integral, continuous and permanent part of life, not as a one-shot, formalized preparation for it.¹

Within this concept, "adult education" as we now know it is a misnomer, implying as it does a dichotomy between "child" education and "adult" education, as though such a distinction was natural and necessary in terms of content and process. The distinction between "formal" and "informal" may be more apt, but even this distinction does not do justice to the profound implications and potential of the concept of continuous lifelong education.

Today, however, such dichotomies do exist and continuous lifelong education is not a working reality, nor does it seem to be a universally understood and accepted approach to education, or life. As such, the adult educator must examine his role and philosophy in terms of today's reality and tomorrow's possibilities.

1. See: Paul Lengrand, An introduction to Lifelong Education, Paris, Unesco, 1970, 99 p; and Unesco, Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Education, Paris, Unesco, 1972, 34 p.

In the summer of 1972 (July 25th to August 7th) the Third² International Conference on Adult Education was held in Tokyo, under the auspices of Unesco, to take on exactly this task. The theme of the conference was "Adult Education in the the Context of Lifelong Education".

As a forum for discussion on future planning in adult education this conference was of vital importance, and the study of its deliberations is essential for the student wishing to appreciate the state of the art. The conference was attended by delegates from eighty-five states and forty-two international organizations, almost four hundred adult educators and government or organizational officials close enough to the "power-centres" to provide some indications as to where adult education stands today, and where it is likely to go in the near future.

It is the purpose of this chapter to analyse specific sections of the final report of this conference³ in an attempt to extract from it a general philosophy of education and the

2. The first conference was held in Elsinore, Denmark in 1949, the second in Montreal, Canada in 1960.

3. Unesco, Final Report, Third International Conference on Adult Education (Tokyo, 1972), Paris, Unesco, 1972, 101 p; hereafter referred to as "Final Report".

place of adult education within this philosophy. The task has not been simple, for the approach of the report is such that the philosophical consensus of the conference is not explicitly stated but, rather, is implicit in the "General Report", the "Summary and Main Conclusions", and the "Resolutions". Similarly, because the report does represent a consensus of such a large number and vast variety of peoples it is assumed that the language has been chosen carefully to reflect consensus. However, certain positions do emerge, and they are definitive; others are less clear.

The background papers for the conference⁴, and the augmentary material in the Final Report have been used to provide as comprehensive an understanding as possible of the deliberations and conclusions of the conference and reference is made, at times, to these to augment comments concerning conclusions of the conference. However, these generally compile a variety of approaches and opinions; they reflect diversity. The interest here is in the consensus, the common

4. Unesco, Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Education, Paris, Unesco, 1972; and Unesco, A Retrospective International Survey of Adult Education, Paris, Unesco, 1972, 135 p.

grounds, concepts, ideals, which were shared by all, assuming that this will give the least subjective indication of the present status of adult education in official national and international circles. Accordingly, this analysis will restrict itself to the "General Report",⁵ the "Summary and Main Conclusions",⁶ and the "Resolutions".⁷

2. The Philosophy of Education
Implicit in the Final Report.

The philosophy of education implicit in the Final Report will be approached from the standpoint of four basic questions: (1) What is the concept of man in the report? (2) What are the aims of education? (3) What is the content and method? (4) Who, (what), are the agents of education?

5. Final Report, p. 11-16

6. Ibid, p. 17-19

7. Ibid, p. 39-58

(a) Concept of Man.- The question "What, or who, is man?" is treated least explicitly in the report. However, one can infer an idea of how man was conceived by the conference by examining statements of aims. When the report states that education facilitates such and such activity or habit of mind or consciousness level, it is safe to infer that the authors of the report consider it part of the essence of Man to be capable of such activity or states of mind.

The concept that emerges can be summarized as follows. Man is an aware (i.e. self-aware), social, historical and cultural being. He is capable of continuous learning and intellectual and social growth, and has an intrinsic right to exercise these capabilities to the fullest. Man has the capability to freely perceive his environment with a critical eye and to actively engage himself as an agent for change within that environment. The opportunity to take on this active role as agent of change and progress is an intrinsic right.

The report stresses man as a social being, as part of a community, part of a nation and, to some extent, as part of the global community, and perceives him as exercising his rights and abilities within this social context. Man as citizen is a central concern; "national" development and

personal or "individual" development seem intrinsically bound together, two sides of the same coin.⁸

These basic preconceptions regarding Man can be seen in the preamble to recommendation one where it is stated that the conference recognizes:

...education as the means whereby everyone can be equipped with the knowledge to understand and participate in social change and to improve the quality of human life.⁹

This section goes on to recommend that:

Member states adopt a general policy for adult education oriented towards creating in adults a critical awareness of the historical and cultural world in which they live so that they may be able, by creative action to change the world;¹⁰

It is also recommended that such education be regarded as a human right.

...public access to education including literacy should be expanded so as to provide learning opportunities for all citizens without regard to race, colour, creed, sex, age, social position or educational level;¹¹

8. This conceptualization causes some philosophical problems interpreting the consistency of the report and its implication. These will be dealt with in the critique at the end of this chapter.

9. Final Report, p. 39.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

These statements certainly imply that part of the essence of man is that he is a learning, changing creature capable of critical awareness and creative activity directed toward changing his environment and improving the quality of life, and that he has the right to develop these capabilities.

At the same time the conference recognized the real situation for a wide segment of the human population:

People in the villages and outlying areas are often disadvantaged socially, politically, culturally, and not least educationally. The basic causes of this were felt by many delegates to be such factors as the system of land tenure, dependence of the countryside on economic interests in the urban centres and lack of real opportunity for the people of rural communities to participate in decision-making for society as a whole.¹²

It can be considered a healthy sign that the conference recognized the gap between potential and reality, and that there was a willingness by some delegates to see faults in present structures. However, the almost exclusive concern of the conference, in terms of the deficiencies

12. Final Report, p. 14, paragraph 31; emphasis added.

of social systems and corresponding lack of opportunities for the people, lay within the realm of so-called "Third-World" nations, and was thought of mainly in terms of illiteracy. There is almost no reference to similar, perhaps more subtle, problems within the social structures and environmental reality of peoples in "developed" nations.

In the preamble to recommendation two, the conference recognized other undesirable aspects of the human condition at present, notably, the tendency to "resort to war in an attempt to solve international problems" and "the tendency for the gap between rich and poor to widen both internationally and nationally".¹³

It is this recommendation which includes the statement that

...peace, democratic participation and a congenial environment are primary and vital conditions for all human development.¹⁴

This is a very important preconception as it states preconditions for human development; it is perhaps the essential motive force behind the conference and the first premise behind all its conclusions.

The conference also noted further inequalities in human systems, notably, that there are, in many societies,

13. Final Report, p. 40, Recommendation Two.

14. Ibid.

various handicaps which "inhibit women from playing their full role in society";¹⁵ that "educational resources are unequally shared by privileged and under-privileged groups;¹⁶ and that workers have "relatively limited access to education".¹⁷

In regard to the felt-needs of workers, the conference "noted"¹⁸ that:

...the primary need felt by workers is the need to be able to pursue an occupation in keeping with their inclination and talents, remunerated in accordance with the value of their work and offering possibilities for advancement...¹⁹

15. Final Report, p. 41, Recommendation Three.

16. Ibid, p. 41, Recommendation Four.

17. Ibid.

18. The author has a great deal of difficulty accepting this generalization - an opinion commonly held and not easily validated - and fears that it may be a facile reflection, and projection, of middle and upper class bias, a bias which could well reduce the likelihood of developing a system of education, let alone a society, which is truly human-oriented and geared to serving the needs of the human individual and a healthy social environment. The point will be discussed later on in the paper.

19. Final Report, p. 42, Recommendation Six.

The conference stressed the mutuality, commonality, and interdependency of man, and, in the preamble to recommendation seven "considered" that

...the fact that mankind shares common problems and a common destiny obliges all countries and all peoples to act on fellowship, concerting their efforts and pooling their resources in order to devise adequate solutions with the aim of assuring man's all-round fulfillment.²⁰

It was the opinion of the conference that the international community is "duty bound" to "complete the process of decolonization" to bring about "peace and progress for all mankind" and that "aid to the vast majority of the peoples in the Third World" was "both a vital necessity and an act of justice, wisdom and historical restitution".²¹

In the preamble to recommendation sixteen,²² we find the statement that "illiteracy divides people into virtually two 'worlds' ". This is a significant concept as it implies that for man to achieve growth and self-actualization

20. Final Report, p. 44.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid, p. 48.

he must be literate and be able to take part in an on-going education process. Today we have two worlds, one made up of those able to exercise their human potential, the other made up of those whose human potential is stunted by their life situation. It should be noted here that the conference again tended to attribute these kinds of problems almost exclusively to the "Third World".

In recommendation twenty-six²³ we find the assertion that "men, cultures and peoples are all interdependent", implying that the growth and development of any peoples is the responsibility of all. It is probably this belief, in conjunction with the premise contained in recommendation two (see above, p. 9), which is the prime motivation and perhaps greatest contribution of this conference; Man has certain intrinsic potentialities and it is the collective responsibility of all men to ensure that mankind, as a whole, has the opportunity to continue to develop these potentialities and achieve a world where every man can grow and learn in a

23. Final Report, p. 53.

peaceful but continuously changing and evolving world.

(b) Aims of Education. - What are the aims of education as perceived by this conference? It is this area that is dealt with most explicitly in the report. It must be remembered that the conference was dealing specifically with adult education, and the aims which it articulates refer to adult education. However, the conference conceived of adult education as part of a lifelong process which has, as a general aim, the development of critically aware individuals who have the abilities and attitudes to be active participants in social change and the general improvement of the environment of all men. The report states:

The conference considered that it was becoming misleading to overplay the distinctiveness of adult education, since education should be conceived as a continuous process relevant to all age groups.²⁴

As a corollary to this point the report states later on that "The schools should prepare for lifelong education.

24. Final Report, p. 16, paragraph 55.

They should not be an end in themselves."²⁵

While the objectives of specific activities at specific times in an individual's life may differ, the general aims of education remain the same. The report states:

Learning is life-long; the education of adults and children and youth are inseparable.²⁶

What then is the aim of education? The report describes education as:

The means whereby everyone can be equipped with the knowledge to understand and to participate in social change and to improve the quality of human life.²⁷

This is the overall aim of education as conceived by the conference; all other aims are subsidiary to it.

Recommendation two deals most explicitly with the aims of education, stating in the preamble that:

25. Final Report, p. 16, paragraph 60.

26. Ibid, p. 19, paragraph 60.

27. Ibid, p. 39, preamble to recommendation one.

...it is a vital function of adult education as well as education in general to increase public awareness of the economic, social and political factors which underlie these conditions, and to develop the will and the ability of people to change them.²⁸

This recommendation suggests four aims for adult educational activities.²⁹ It is inferred that the conference saw these also as key aims for education in general:

(1) Education for the development of spiritual values, peace, international understanding and co-operation and elimination of all forms of domination in international relations;

(2) Education for economic, social and cultural equality both at national and international levels, with special attention to creating solidarity between developed and developing countries;

(3) Education for the protection and improvement of the environment and for making it more conducive to cultural development;

(4) Education designed to encourage people to participate in influencing the directions taken by their societies and to develop the attitudes and skills which will make such participation both meaningful and effective.

28. Final Report, p. 40.

29. Ibid, p. 40-41.

The general statements of aims lead to more specific objectives related to them; recommendation three refers to the liberation of women; recommendation six refers to the improvement in the status and living conditions of the labouring classes; recommendation eight to the unity and development of nations; recommendation nine to education as "an instrument of emancipation in a society which the citizen is called upon to construct and transform from within"; and to "all-round development of the individual in the framework of changing social and economic structures"; recommendation eleven refers to "popularizing culture" and recommendation twelve to parent education.

These objectives are seen primarily in the context of national development. The report states:

The conference drew attention to adult education as one of the instruments of nation building. Especially, but not only, in nations recently emerged from colonial rule adult education could help to induce a sense of national direction and purpose, weld the people together and assist them to participate more actively in public affairs.

National development begins at the grassroots with subsistence farmers and manual workers. They must be given the tools - the knowledge and skills - with which to improve their living conditions and exert an influence on their neighbourhoods.³⁰

A consistency can be seen, then, between the concept of man and the aims of education. Man is capable of critical awareness and creative action as an agent of change and progress within his own social and physical environment. The primary aim of education is to equip the individual with the skills and attitudes which will allow him to exercise these capabilities within the context of National development.

(c) The method and content of Education.- What, then, in the view of the conference are the method and content of education?

Certain key elements emerge. The cornerstone here is the concept of continuous lifelong learning; this concept not only defines what education should be, but how it should be approached. As corollaries to this concept certain other principles emerge: functionality, democratization, informal approach, community integration, group interaction, self-directedness, etc.

30. Final Report, p. 15, paragraphs 44-45.

It has already been seen that the conference envisaged the school as mere preparation for life-long learning, not as an end in itself.

The point is made in the report that:

Education not only embraced all age groups, it should leave the four walls of the traditional schoolroom and enter into society so that every place where people gathered, worked, ate or played would be a potential learning environment.³¹

From this idea comes one of the main conclusions of the report:

Education must be transformed from an essentially formal process into a functional one... moving out into society merging with work, leisure and civic pursuits.³²

The conference defined this "functional role" of education in words expressed first at the Latin American Seminar on Adult Education, Havana, March, 1972:

Functional adult education is that which, founded on the relationship between man and work (taking the word work in its broadest sense) and linking the development of the working individual with the general development of the community, reconciles the interest of the individual with those of society. Functional

31. Final Report, p. 16, paragraph 56.

32. Ibid, p. 18, paragraph 7.

education therefore is that in which the individual fulfills himself within the framework of a society whose structures and whose superstructural relations facilitate the full development of human personality.³³

The result of such education is:

...an individual who is a creator of material and spiritual wealth, while at the same time allowing him unrestricted enjoyment of his creative work.³⁴

Later the report discusses the broadening scope of education:

In order to facilitate the creation of a functional system of lifelong education, schools should be concerned with the whole community. The school should be viewed as only one of many learning agents. Teaching pupils how to learn should be its chief task.³⁵

This implies, as do the aims of education as discussed above, that the content of education is the whole of man's environment - his work, his play, his society, his inner self. The report also explicitly mentions literacy (noting that it is "a means to an end, not an end in itself")³⁶, rural-development skills, industrial development skills, occupational skills, and cultural development.

33. Final Report, p. 18, paragraph 8.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid, p. 18, paragraph 15.

36. Ibid, p. 17, paragraph 4.

In the "general report" it is noted that vocational training is an important aspect of education, but it states further:

Vocational training should go further, however, than simply preparing an individual for a productive role. The adult should be able to share in the control of all processes in which he is involved. The individual's other roles in society - cultural, social, political - should therefore be borne in mind when training programmes were being planned. The object of adult education should be to develop the whole man even when for practical reasons only one skill or highly specialized knowledge had to be imparted.³⁷

In the same vein, in discussing cultural development, the report states:

...lifelong education and cultural development cannot be separated...they are two facets of the same problem, i.e. the building up of free men in a changing society.³⁸

Cultural development was defined as:

...the harnessing of physical and mental resources of man in relation to the needs of personality and of society and was conceived as a continuous process throughout life.³⁹

37. Final Report, p. 15, paragraph 42.

38. Ibid, p. 15, paragraph 49.

39. Ibid, p. 15, paragraph 50.

According to the report such development requires a special function (i.e. content) of education:

...adult education has to perform a function of creation as it must contribute to aesthetic, moral, social, and civic formation of man; it must develop taste, judgement and critical sense, encourage positive attitudes by counteracting cultural expressions ...that propagate war, violence, racialism or domination; it must bring to the forefront creative attitudes.⁴⁰

The content of education is, therefore, the whole man in relation to his total environment - social, political, economic, spiritual, aesthetic and cultural.

The method of education must, accordingly be comprehensive, active, and inter-active. The report has much to say about this, stating that it is "vital that adults should shape their own education in order to reach their own goals and meet their own needs",⁴¹ and that "Adult learners should therefore be fully involved at all stages of adult education programmes".⁴²

The report stresses that educational activity should be integrated with daily activities in the natural environment and in an informal atmosphere and manner.

40. Final Report, p. 15-16, paragraph 52.

41. Ibid, p. 13, paragraph 21.

42. Ibid, paragraph 27.

In line with this, part of recommendation one suggests:

...that the content and method of adult education programmes be designed to respond to the needs and interests of individual learners and to further the well being of the community as a whole, giving emphasis to community involvement by means of informal methods, especially the formation of mutual education groups, discussion groups, and adult education within the work situation;⁴³

It states further:

...that the aims of adult education include ensuring the active participation and commitment of the learner at each stage of programming, execution and evaluation;⁴⁴

In fact, this last statement is pertinent to method as much as to aims. In terms of methodology the key concepts to emerge from the conference lie in these statements. In essence this involves the active, self-directed involvement of the learner in the entire process of education using, to a large degree, an informal approach. Much of what the report recommends pertaining to method is rooted here.

43. Final Report, p. 39.

44. Ibid.

The conference recommends related measures which are in keeping with these principles and which refer primarily to specific types of adult education, mainly functional literacy in the "Third World". Examples are the use of "indigents" as educators and animateurs (recommendation 31), the use of polyvalent centres (recommendation 18), and the use of native language for instruction (recommendation 16).

One other point made in the report concerning the teacher-student relationship is central to our discussion:

The conventional teacher-student relationship should become a partnership based on participation and mutual learning in which the application of knowledge and the problem-solving approach is stressed.⁴⁵

It should be noted at this point that, when discussing the method and content of education, the conference dealt almost exclusively with adult education, specifying, as has been seen, only that schools should not be seen as ends but rather as means - preparation of children and youths for self-directed lifelong learning. It would seem that, for the time being at least, the educators at the conference do not see drastic changes in the formal child/adolescent school system,

45. Final Report, p. 18, paragraph 11.

although the idea of schools preparing the child for life-long learning, as it is defined here, would seem to necessitate profound changes in the formal system as it exists in most countries.

At the same time, the conference obviously perceived adult educational activities as a central (perhaps the central) aspect of a lifelong growth and development process; accordingly, its statements regarding the methodology of adult education gives a good indication of its conceptualization of good, functional educational practice.

(d) The Agents of Education.- The final question to be answered deals with agents of education. To a large extent this question has already been dealt with. The cornerstone of the conference's concept of the lifelong education process is that the active involvement of the student in his own education is essential. If any one principle in the report is stressed and restressed it is this, that "adults should shape their own education in order to reach their own goals and meet their own needs".⁴⁶ The report states:

46. Final Report, p. 13, paragraph 21.

In adult education practice it is now widely accepted that the concepts of "students" and "teacher" were inadequate ... in adult education instructors and students were seeing themselves as associates, as educationists more and more came to appreciate that adults were the principal agents of their own education and that they had a wealth of experience and insights to contribute to the learning process.⁴⁷

Again we must realize that the conference's frame of reference is primarily adult education and the idea of the adult as the prime agent of his own education does not necessarily mean that children and youths must also be. However, the concept of continuous lifelong learning as we have discussed it here, and as we have seen it in references quoted, presupposes that, at the least, children must learn to become the agents of their own education. The report states:

In order to facilitate the creation of a functional system of lifelong education, schools should be concerned with the whole community. The school should be viewed as only one of man-learning agents. Teaching pupils how to learn should be its chief task.⁴⁸

At the same time as the conference strongly asserted the principle that the student should be the prime agent of his own education, and recognized a restricted role for

47. Final Report, paragraph 28; emphasis added.

48. Ibid, p. 18, paragraph 15.

formal schools as secondary agents, it also recommends a diverse range of other secondary agents. The report states:

...adult education functions should be widely diffused throughout society through such institutions and organizations as trade unions, government bodies, enterprises, agricultural units and co-operatives. The essential role of voluntary organizations and popular movements in adult education should be continued to be recognized.⁴⁹

Such an approach to the secondary agents of education facilitates the integration of education with the whole environment of the individual. Such an approach is consistent with the concept of education as it has been described to this point.

(e) Summary.- The chapter to this point has been an attempt to digest the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference and derive from it as systematically as possible, a general philosophy of education, within the limitations expressed at the beginning of this chapter.

In summary, then, Man is a thinking, self-aware creature capable of learning and creating, of critically examining his social and physical environment and his inner self and, through creative action, transforming these things to make a better world. He is a social creature, operating in, through and with existing social and national structures toward a better quality of life.

49. Final Report, p. 18, paragraph 14.

The prime aim of education is to equip man with the attributes and abilities to exercise these intrinsic capabilities so that he can take an active part in the progressive transformation of his socio-cultural milieu within the context of national development.

The method of education lies in the concept of continuous lifelong learning, whereby children are provided with the abilities and attitudes which facilitate a lifelong process of self-directed learning, personal growth, and activities which are mutually beneficial to themselves and society. Adult education activities are meant for all adults, those who have acquired, as children, the abilities mentioned, and those who have been deprived of education while young. These activities should be informal, self-directed and integrated with the entire realm of life activities in co-operation with other learners and with teachers. The active participation of the learner in the planning, execution and evaluation of the educational process is essential.

The learner is the prime agent of his own education, working in, with, and through, a diverse range of secondary agents.

3. Critique

Presented in the manner of this chapter one would get the impression that the final report of this conference is a clear, concise and consistent analysis and articulation of an approach to education. Such an impression is misleading. The summary above has been distilled from many pages of summary and resolution; in spite of many strong points there are some critical limitations to the Final Report which seriously detract from the prevailing philosophy in it. These limitations are based on internal consistency and depth of analysis.

The central flaw is intimately related to the limitations of the conference by its very nature - a large group of people representing a wide variety of nations, social systems, ideologies, cultures, levels of industrial and economic development, and histories of national and cultural autonomy, cannot be expected to arrive at a universal philosophical consensus. The fact that they have achieved consensus even to the extent summarized above is remarkable, a very hopeful sign and a commendable achievement. However, the rhetoric of the conference hall does not necessarily reflect the reality of educational practice and the human situation.

In this light it is the conviction of the author that the conference has not dealt realistically with the problem of social systems as they relate to man as conceptualized by the conference. The report seems to assume (with few reservations) that all nations are blessed with a benevolent, democratic and humane environment and that all that is needed is direction.

This is an unrealistic assumption; it is difficult to think of even one country in the world today which enjoys the intrinsic benevolence and "human-ness", in terms of structures, systems, institutions or mores, which the rhetoric of the report seems to assume, and require, if its aims are to be met. It is recognized that diplomatic realities obviate the possibility of addressing this problem directly in terms of indicting directly specific ideologies or political/economic systems which contain blatant contradictions intrinsic to them. However, by glossing over the truth, the danger of rendering useless the philosophy espoused by this conference becomes more critical.

Granted, certain paragraphs of the report flirt with the "imperfections" of present systems,⁵⁰ but only in a vague, indirect, implied manner. There is no analysis of specifics, no analysis of social causes, no direct statement pointing out the necessity for radical changes.

The kind of problems encountered in this regard by the conference are perhaps indicated by the two reports of the Commissions of the conference, contained in the Final Report, especially that of Commission I, where the attempt to balance various viewpoints and vested interests is obvious.⁵¹ A most interesting, and obvious example of this same problem can also be seen in the Unesco Faure Report, (Learning to Be),⁵² which expresses opinions very similar to the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference. The "between-the-lines" friction between the Soviet member of the commission, Arthur V. Petrovsky, and the other members is a fascinating, and disturbing, sidelight to the report, and shows the difficulty of making recommendations

50. The only references of this nature found by the author in either the "General Report" and the "Summary and Main Conclusions were: p. 14, paragraph 31 and 34; p. 13, paragraph 24; and p. 17, paragraph 1.

51. Final Report, p. 21-28; note especially Section B.

52. Edgar Faure et al., Learning to Be, Paris/London , Unesco/Harrap, 1972. v - 263p.

or statements of philosophy which are in opposition to the social systems of any given nation.⁵³

In terms of the Tokyo conference, it must be noted that there is ample reference to the gap between the rich privileged and poor labouring classes in society generally, and between rich nations and poor nations, although as we have pointed out, direct social causes are not dealt with. Similarly, there are strong references to decolonialization as a moral duty,⁵⁴ and to the need for international co-operation.⁵⁵

The emphasis on international co-operation is commendable, as is the commitment to narrowing the gap between rich and poor nations, the "developed" and the "developing" nations, the "haves" and the "have-nots". But a basic question goes unanswered: the developed nations have wealth (dispersed,

53. This conflict leads eventually to an apparent compromise, reflected on p. 231-233 especially, and results in the inclusion of the incredible first paragraph on p. 232 which in fact justifies totalitarian social structures for future humanist ends - a conclusion totally opposed to the prevailing philosophy of the Report as a whole.

54. Final Report, p. 19, paragraphs 19-24, and recommendations 2,4,6,7; it should be noted that the most infamous colonial regimes and apartheid supporters were not present at the conference: Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Rhodesia.

55. See especially recommendations 8,10,15,16,19,20, 23, 24 and 26.

to varying degrees, in a non-homogenous manner throughout society), but do they have human and humane societies? What exactly is it they are offering to the less developed nations?

The report stresses too much, adult education for national development in the Third World, and too little, education for personal and social development, indeed radical change, in all countries.

The assumption seems to be that the developed nations are in good condition, with a few minor kinks to work out. As long as this assumption is given even tacit support the common man in the heavily industrialized, urban, consumptive, competitive "developed" nations, has little chance of benefiting from the humane rhetoric of such a conference, nor has the labourer in the "developing nations". The only benefit flowing immediately from the thoughts expressed in the report lie in the economic realm. The perceptive government will see very quickly the tremendous return on investment in human capital through adult education, an investment which is becoming inevitable in any case due to the rapid change which is more and more characteristic of the scientific/technological society.

Along with this implied assumption of inherent good and benevolence in today's societies goes a commitment to achieving the educational aims expressed, through national structures which exist now, and a corresponding assumption that such structures are compatible with these aims. While it is easy to understand why these assumptions are made, it is difficult to accept them as realistic assessments of the real situation in most countries.

We can see these assumptions in the careful phraseology of the report which sees educational reform being undertaken in relation to "national policies and objectives", "national interests" and "national plans".⁵⁶ These are innocuous phrases, and indeed, understandable. The delegates to the conference were representatives of national interest. These statements do, however, put a rider on human development; the nation, the state, comes first; the individual is seen as citizen, as a resource, as a debit or credit in the development ledger, before (if) he is seen as a human individual.

56. For example, see Final Report, p. 39 recommendation one; p. 42, recommendation six; and p. 57, recommendation 31.

This simple qualification can, and the author believes will, justify the status quo and relegate against intrinsic changes in the social structures of any given society.

We will return to the points raised in this section later in the paper, in Chapter Four, when they will be examined in the light of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed to which we will turn now.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED

1. Freire's Background

Paulo Freire, educationist, educational philosopher, and political exile from Brazil, has emerged in the last few years as a provocative and controversial figure in the mainstream, perhaps forefront, of the movement for radical educational (and social) reform.

Freire¹ was born in Recife, North-Eastern Brazil, in 1921, a member of a well-to-do middle-class family whose fortunes turned drastically during the world-wide depression of the early 1930's. As a young boy he experienced first-hand the trials of poverty and hunger. Having studied Law and Philosophy at the University of Recife, Freire spent some years working as a lawyer for labour unions. Out of this experience evolved his work as an educator which eventually

1. Bibliographical data from: John J. Dewitt, An Exposition and Analysis of Paulo Freire's Radical Psycho-Social Androgogy of Development, Ph.D., Thesis, Boston University School of Education, 1971, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, 1972, p. 57-59; Richard Shaul, "Forward" in Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, New York, Herder and Herder, 1970, p. 10-12; Cesar Jerez and Juan Hernandez-Pico, Paulo Freire, Brazilian Adult Educator: A Literature Review, English version published by authors, 1971, p. 1-3.

made him famous throughout Brazil. In 1959 he received his doctorate from the University of Recife² and began to teach philosophy there. From this time until his arrest and later exile after the military coup in 1963, he further developed and practiced his unique literacy technique which was eventually adopted by the pre-coup Brazilian government for nationwide literacy campaigns.

From Brazil Freire went to Chile where he did further work in adult literacy, working with Unesco and the Chilean Institute of Agrarian Reform (ICIRA), until 1969. He spent a semester as visiting professor at Harvard before becoming a special consultant to the Office of Education of the World Council of Churches, in Geneva, a position which at the time of writing he still held.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire's first major work in English, was published in 1970, translated from a 1968 Portugese manuscript.

2. Jerez and Hernandez-Pico indicate that the doctorate which Freire received from Recife was an honorary degree; however, both Dewitt and Shaul1 refer to a doctoral dissertation written by Freire. This would indicate that the degree was the result of formal academic activities.

2. Freire's Philosophy as explicated
in Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Integrally bound to Paulo Freire's educational methodology is his philosophy of education.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed will be examined for four main concepts: Man, Aims of Education, Content and Method, Agents.

In preparing this section additional writings of Freire have been used on occasion to augment the discussion of certain concepts.^{3, 4, 5} Reference has also been made to

3. Paulo Freire, "The Adult Literacy Process as Cultural Action for Freedom", in Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 40, No. 2, May 1970, p. 205-225.

4. Paulo Freire, "Cultural Action and Conscientization", in Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 1970, p. 452-477.

5. Paulo Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, New York, Seabury, 1973, 164 p.; contains translations of two earlier works (1969): "Education as the Practice of Freedom" and "Extension or Communication".

a doctoral dissertation by John J. Dewitt.⁶ Dewitt's dissertation has been very useful in clarifying the author's understanding of Freire's work and contains Dewitt's translations of some of Freire's earlier writings.⁷

(a) The Concept of Man: (i) Man's Nature. - Freire's concept of man is ontological and epistemological in stress. That is, man is man in so far as he actively knows his objective reality and acts to transform it.

Dewitt sums up Freire's view of man:

Freire sees man as a being of relations in dialectical relationship with the world and in dialogical relationship with his fellow man. Man is also a free, conscious, transcendent, temporal being who experiences intentionality, or a sense of the consequential.⁸

Obviously this is a concise, comprehensive, "power-packed" definition - the result of understanding, not the beginning.

6. John J. Dewitt, op.cit.

7. These include: "Education and Conscientization", Chapter 4 of La Educacion como Pratica de la Liberatad (Education as the Practice of Freedom); and Annual Report (1968) to the Agrarian Reform Training and Research Institute (Chile).

8. Dewitt, op. cit., p. 60.

In the next few pages the key concepts will be evolved systematically so that by synthesizing the parts a holistic view can be achieved; conversely, by understanding the unity of the whole it will be easier to better conceptualize each part.

Such a process is not unlike Freire's view of how man learns .

By "being of relations in dialectical relationship with the world" (Dewitt), Freire means that the world exists independent of man, and man has the power to know and understand it. Man is involved in conscious interaction with the world, transforming it and being in turn transformed by it. Man is not only "in the world" but is also "with the world"; he is not only "Being in himself" but also "Being for himself".

Freire explains this relationship:

World and men do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction... Just as objective social reality exist not by chance, but as a product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If men produce social reality (which in the "inversion of praxis" turns back upon them), then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for men... This can be done only by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world to transform it.⁹

9. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 36.

Man is able to do this because of his unique cognitive relationship to the world, perhaps most concisely expressed by Freire in the first paragraph of "Education as the Practice of Freedom".¹⁰

To be human is to engage in relationships with others and with the world. It is to experience that world as an objective reality, independent of oneself, capable of being known. Animals, submerged within reality, cannot relate to it; they are creatures of mere contacts. But man's separateness from and openness to the world distinguishes him as a being of relationships. Men, unlike animals, are not only in the world but with the world.

Man's existence is a process of becoming in which he is an active and critical participant in a dialectical process whereby he overcomes situations, in the relationship between himself and the world, which limit his being. Conversely, the world which he transforms through praxis - "reflection and action" - in turn transforms man and the dialectic continues.

10. Freire, "Education as the Practice of Freedom", (trans. and edited by Myra B. Ramos) in Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 3.

Freire explains:

In contrast to animals men - aware of their activity and the world in which they are situated, acting in the function of the objectives which they propose, having the seat of their decisions located in themselves and in their relations with the world and with others, infusing the world with their creative presence by means of the transformation they effect upon it - unlike animals, not only live but exist; and their existence is historical.¹¹

He continues:

Men, however, because they are aware of themselves and thus the world - because they are conscious beings - exist in a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and their own freedom.¹²

It is within this context that we perceive the real starting point of Freire's philosophy.

Richard Shaull, in his introduction to Pedagogy of the Oppressed, states:

11. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 88. In a footnote Freire points out that "live" implies survival, while "exist" implies a "deeper involvement in the process of becoming". In a note in "Education as the Practice of Freedom" (p. 3) Freire states that existing has "a quality of critical capacity not present in mere 'living'".

12. Ibid, p. 89.

Freire operates on one basic assumption: that man's ontological vocation... is to be a Subject who acts upon and transcends his world, and in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively.¹³

Freire's over-riding concern is humanization, by which he means man acting as man, existing in and with the world in a continuous process of becoming, rather than as an animal who merely lives as a responsive creature adapting to, not transforming, the environment. This concern pervades and motivates all of Freire's work:

While the problem of humanization has always, from the axiological point of view, been man's central problem, it now takes on the character of an inescapable concern. Concern for humanization leads one at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as an historical reality. And as man perceives the extent of dehumanization, he asks himself if humanization is a viable possibility...But while both humanization and dehumanization are real alternatives, only the first is man's vocation.¹⁴

13. Richard Shaul, "Foreward", in Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 12.

14. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 27-28.

Later, in discussing the contradiction between man's essence¹⁵ and current educational practice, he says of the students:

They may discover through existential experience that their present way of life is irreconcilable with their vocation to become fully human...If men are searchers and their ontological vocation is humanization, sooner or later they may...engage themselves in the struggle for their liberation.¹⁶

And again, in discussing "problem-posing education," he says:

This movement of inquiry must be directed toward humanization - man's historical vocation... It enables men to overcome their false perception of reality. The world - no longer something to be described with deceptive words - becomes the object of that transforming action by men which results in their humanization.¹⁷

Man is capable of this "transforming action", that is, capable of being subject of his being rather than mere object, because of certain aspects of his nature. The key element is man's consciousness - his critical awareness of reality - which makes him human in Freire's scheme. In this vein

15. This is the author's term, not Freire's.

16. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 62.

17. Ibid, p. 73-74.

Dewitt states¹⁸ that Freire's theory of consciousness is "at the very heart of his educational philosophy".

Man has this quality of consciousness because he has the ability to: (1) reflect critically, (2) transcend, (3) temporalize, and (4) intentionalize. The result of these actions is consciousness, and man has consciousness only in so far as he actively engages in these actions. He is truly human only if he is a conscious being; therefore, these actions and interactions are essential in the humanization of man which is, as stated before, his "ontological vocation". It is in actively striving to achieve this vocation, and only in this striving, that man is free.

Let us examine some of these concepts. Freire points out that man treats "not only his actions but his very self as the object of his reflections".¹⁹ Because of this ability to objectify, man is able to transcend his "limit-situations" - those situations which limit his actions - and in fact, be with the world as object.

18. Dewitt, Op.Cit, p. 60.

19. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 87.

Freire makes a statement elsewhere²⁰ which clarifies this idea:

Men can fulfill the necessary condition of being with the world because they are able to gain objective distance from it. Without this objectification, whereby man also objectifies himself, man would be limited to being in the world... Men, on the contrary, who can transcend this adherence and transcend mere being in the world, add to the existence which they have, the existence which they make.

Integral to man's ability to reflect and transcend are temporalization and intentionalization, which allow man to see himself in a historical context (temporalization), and to see his ability to transform his future by acting on the present (intentionality), which is the result of being able to "sense the consequential". Both of these elements are essential in critical thought through which man perceives the reality of his situation.

In discussing critical thought, Freire describes it as:

- thinking which perceives reality as process,
as transformation rather than a static entity -
thinking which does not separate itself from action
but constantly immerses itself in temporality.²¹

20. Freire, "Cultural Action and Conscientization" in Harvard Educational Review, Op. Cit., p. 453.

21. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 81.

It is this perception of "reality as process...rather than a static entity" which is at the heart of temporality.

Later he says:

As critical perception is embodied in action, a climate of hope and confidence develops which leads men to attempt to overcome the limit-situations.²²

It is this "climate of hope and confidence... which leads men to overcome the limit-situations" which is at the heart of intentionality.

Freire, then, sees man as capable of four inter-related actions. He is able to reflect upon himself and his reality by objectifying, and is therefore able to transcend his situation, to "surpass the limitations" of his condition. To do this, however, he must temporalize, that is, create past, present and future in order to see his situation historically, as process. Finally, having conceptualized his concrete objective reality in temporal terms, man can intentionalize; that is, he is able to establish purpose and direction for himself in transforming his situation, in taking an active part in the historical process of existence, as subject.

22. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 89.

Freire states:

Men, as beings "in a situation" find themselves rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and they also mark. They will tend to reflect on their own "situationality" to the extent that they are challenged by it to act upon it. Men are because they are in a situation. And they will be more the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it.²³

It can be seen, therefore, that man, in so far as he utilizes his ability to reflect, transcend, temporalize and intentionalize, becomes increasingly conscious, which to Freire is the criterion for humanization, for actualization as man. Out of this consciousness comes man's ability to transform the world, to actively engage as the subject of his destiny rather than the object of fate. It is within this context that man is free. As quoted previously, Freire states:

Men, however, because they are aware of the world - because they are conscious beings - exist in dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and their own freedom.²⁴

23. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 100.

24. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 89.

Elsewhere Freire says:

If they did not sever their adherence to the world and emerge from it as consciousness constituted in the "ad - miration" of the world as its objects, men would be mere determinate beings and it would be impossible to think in terms of their limitations. Only beings who can reflect upon the fact that they are determined are capable of freeing themselves. Their reflexiveness results... in the exercise of a profoundly transforming action upon the determining reality.²⁵

One other central concept regarding man must be examined: that he is in "dialogical" relationship with his fellow-man.

This concept is an integral part of Freire's theory as it relates directly to man's liberating action through social interaction. To acquire a comprehensive appreciation of the significance of the dialogical nature of man's humanizing actions three other concepts must be understood: "naming the world", "the word", and "praxis".

Freire insists that "to exist humanly, is to name the world, to change it".²⁶ What he means here is tied up with

25. Freire, "Cultural Action and Conscientization", in Harvard Educational Review, Op. Cit., p. 453.

26. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 76.

"the word", which Freire associates with the term "logos" (vis à vis: "doxa"). In another place he explains the distinction:

doxa and logos: in philosophical discourse, doxa refers to mere opinion or to an unsubstantiated view, whereas logos designates knowledge based on evidence or rational considerations.²⁷

However, Freire adds a dimension which goes beyond mere "knowledge" or "truth". Freire means by "the word" a pure unity of reflection and action which results in a transformation of the world. He explains:

Within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed - even in part - the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time praxis. Thus to speak a true word is to transform the world.²⁸

By "praxis" Freire means "reflection and action upon the world to transform it".²⁹ It is important to understand that praxis involves a dynamic interaction between reflection and action, each impossible without the other, so that "reflection - true reflection - leads to action" and

27. Freire, "Extension or Communication", in Education for Critical Consciousness, footnote: p. 99

28. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 75.

29. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 36.

"action will constitute authentic praxis only if its consequences become the object of critical reflection".³⁰

Hence, Freire sets up the following schema:³¹

ACTION	}	WORD = WORK = PRAXIS
REFLECTION		

This schema could be continued:

= TRANSFORMING ACTION
= HUMANIZATION
= ACTUALIZATION OF
ONTOLOGICAL VOCATION

The central place in Freire's philosophy for "the word" becomes evident; this understanding leads us to the vital role of man's dialogical relationship with his fellowman. Freire states:

Human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words with which men can transform the world... Men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection. But while to say the true word - which is work, which is praxis - is to transform the world, saying the word is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every man.

30. Ibid, p. 52-53.

31. Ibid, p. 75.

Consequently no one can say a true word alone - nor can he say it for another... Dialogue is the encounter between men, in order to name the world.³²

He continues:

If it is in speaking their word that men, by naming the world, transform it, dialogue imposes itself as the way by which men achieve significance as men. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity.³³

It is only in engaging in praxis with his fellow man that man approaches humanization. Therefore man's dialectical relationship to his world cannot be divorced from his dialogical relationship to his fellow-man, dialogue being "the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized,"³⁴ Man's ontological vocation is individual yet collective.

Freire goes on to explain that for dialogue to take place, man must have five qualities: love for the world and men, faith in man, humility, hope, and critical thought.³⁵

32. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 76.

33. Ibid, p. 77; emphasis added.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid, p. 77-81.

In summary, then, man is a being who relates dialectically in and with the world, knowledge of which he has through objective consciousness. This consciousness arises out of critical reflection on, and transcendence of, objective reality which man can perceive in a historical context. This results in man actively, consciously, working upon reality to transform it. This process, which Freire calls praxis (reflection and action) is man's ontological vocation. That is, to be truly human, man must engage in this process, and this process in turn humanizes man and the world.

If man does not have critical consciousness, if he is unable to reflect and act on his world, then he is dehumanized and his ontological vocation is negated.

It is important to note the dialectical nature of man's relationship to the world. Through praxis man transforms the world which in turn, through an "inversion of praxis", acts upon man and transforms him, in a continuous cycle. It is in being transformed by the world that man and animals could be said to be determined; it is in transforming the world which transforms him that man can be said to be free.

Finally, man's humanizing action must be dialogical. Man can only reflect and act upon the world in dialogue with other men, because to transform the world for others is to destroy the possibility of they being the active agents of their own humanization as critical subjects; this in fact would lead to dehumanization of these others, not to their humanization. One cannot humanize himself by dehumanizing others as such would be a transgression against human potentiality, in fact, a false naming of the world.

(ii) Man's historical reality. - As we have seen, Freire begins his discussion of man by describing man's ontological vocation as humanization. However, he points out that dehumanization is also an "ontological possibility" and, more critically, an "historical reality".³⁶ Historically, the reality of most men has been oppression and dehumanization at the hand of oppressors who are also dehumanized in the act of oppressing. It is the "great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed to liberate themselves and the oppressor as well".³⁷

Freire sees mankind divided into two distinct classes - those who oppress and those who are oppressed.

36. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 27.

37. Ibid, p. 28.

Freire states:

Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence, even when sweetened by false generosity, because it interferes with man's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human.³⁸

It has been seen how Freire conceives of man's essential nature and potential status in the world. Within this framework, any action or state of affairs which obviates the possibility of actualization of human potential is in fact an oppressive action or oppressive state of affairs. The individual(s) affected is an oppressed individual; the individual(s) who perpetrates or perpetuates, such actions or states of affairs is an oppressor. At the same time the oppressor is himself the victim of oppression because he too is denied, or denies himself, the possibility of true human actualization.

Oppression is dehumanization; dehumanization is oppression. Both oppressor and oppressed are dehumanized.

38. Ibid, p. 40

At the heart of this problem is consciousness. We have seen that at the very core of man's human-ness is his awareness of his existential situation, his consciousness of his place in and with the world and his ability, through critical reflection and action (praxis) to transform his world.

The oppressive situation is one in which such consciousness is deadened. When man's historical reality is such that he sees himself not as the subject of his own existence but rather as the object of the existence of others, when he perceives himself as an object in a static world which acts on him but on which he is incapable of acting, then he is dehumanized, oppressed; this is because an essential element of his human-ness has been deadened and he is unable to act or think in a fully human way.

According to Freire, such a dehumanized, oppressed state is the historical reality of most men. In discussing such oppression Freire states:

One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is prescription. Every prescription represents the imposition of one man's choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the man prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness. Thus, the behaviour of the oppressed is a prescribed behaviour, following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor.³⁹

39. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 31.

Freire continues:

To surmount the situation of oppression, men must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity.⁴⁰

The ability to take such action, however, is hampered by what Freire calls the "tragic dilemma of the oppressed".

He explains:

The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized.⁴¹

Freire continues, explaining the conflicts this situation gives rise to:

The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting him; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account.⁴²

40. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 31-2.

41. Ibid, p. 32.

42. Ibid, p. 32-33.

(b) The aims of education.- It is in the context of the above that education, in Freire's view, derives its motive force. Education is the prime tool in evolving the consciousness of the oppressed so that, through praxis, they can liberate themselves and humanize themselves and the world, thus achieving their ontological vocation. The aim of education for Freire is the humanization of man so that he is able to humanize the world and engage himself in an on-going process of becoming, with his fellow-man, more progressively human.

Freire states:

This book will present some aspects of what the writer has termed the pedagogy of the oppressed, a pedagogy which must be forged with, not for, the oppressed...in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation.⁴³

The key concept in Freire's aim is "conscientization". As will be seen, this is both a process which Freire hopes to teach and the process by which teaching and learning proceed - it is both end and means, the aim of education and the method of education.

43. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 33.

Conscientization refers to the process by which awareness is heightened to the degree that man can utilize his ability to reflect critically on his reality and act on his reflection. That is, it is the process that awakens the consciousness of the oppressed so that they can engage in praxis and humanize themselves and the world.

The central role of conscientization in man's humanization is seen when Freire says:

Reflection upon situationality is reflection about the very condition of existence: critical thinking by means of which men discover each other to be "in a situation". Only as this situation ceases to present itself as a dense, enveloping reality or a tormenting blind alley, and men can come to perceive it as an objective - problematic situation - only then can commitment exist. Men emerge from their submersion and acquire the ability to intervene in reality as it is unveiled. Intervention in reality - historical awareness itself - thus represents a step forward from emergence, and results from the conscientizaçao of the situation. Conscientizaçao is the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence.⁴⁴

Conscientization, and therefore emergence from a dehumanized state to a humanized state, from an oppressed state to a liberated state, is the aim of education.

44. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 100-101.

(c) Method and content of education. - What is the nature of the educative process? What is the method of educational activities? Freire draws the distinction between the "banking" concept of education and the "problem-posing" concept of education. It is within these concepts that we discover the methodological approach that Freire advocates.

In the "banking" concept of education the teacher, who possesses knowledge, transfers this knowledge to the ignorant student who receives it. The teacher is an active subject who acts with authority upon the student who is a passive object, subordinate to and acted upon by the teacher. The teacher chooses and the student accepts and adapts; the teacher controls and the student is controlled. Freire sometimes refers to this as "nutritive" education, as it tends to regard the student as "starving" or "sick" - the role of the teacher is to pour, into the student, facts, like food.

Freire regards this type of education as uncritical, uninquisitive and uncreative. It sees man as a spectator in the world, not with it. The stress is on adaptation not transformation. The world is a static reality and man is "abstract, isolated, independant, and unattached to the world".⁴⁵

45. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 69.

Significantly, "banking" education sees man as a being with a passive, receptive consciousness, a view which Freire calls "mechanistic, static, naturalistic and spacialized".⁴⁶ For Freire, consciousness is not a passive "thing", a place, a "receptacle" as Freire terms it; rather, he sees it as a power or faculty of critical perception, by active exercise of which man relates in and with his world. Obviously such a distinction is vital in formulating and implementing an educative process.

Freire further argues:

Education as the practice of freedom - as opposed to education as the practice of domination - denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from men. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without men, but men in their relation with the world. In these relations consciousness and the world are simultaneous; consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it.⁴⁷

This leads to "problem-posing" education which Freire insists is the only approach which will liberate man from the oppressive state which banking education typifies and perpetuates

46. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 64.

47. Ibid, p. 69.

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Freire says:

Whereas banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the submersion of consciousness; the latter strives for emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality.⁴⁸

The essence of problem-posing education is its dialogical nature where the student and the teacher share, through communication, the joint responsibility of active cognition of reality through critical co-investigation. Since the student and the teacher are considered conscious beings in and with the world, being and becoming through praxis (reflection and action) and its inversion, and since the world, in turn is seen "not as a static quality, but a reality in process, in transformation",⁴⁹ problem-posing education is dynamic, critical, inquisitive and creative, with the student the subject of his own cognition and development. In this way education achieves its end of helping man achieve his actualization as man, and the humanization of man and the world, which is his vocation as man.

48. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 68.

49. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 75.

Freire's stress on the dialogical nature of education also leads to his idea of the content of education.

He states:

Only dialogue which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication and without communication there can be no true education... Thus, the dialogical character of education as the practice of freedom does not begin when the teacher-student meets with students-teachers in a pedagogical situation, but rather when the former first asks himself what he will dialogue with the latter about. And preoccupation with the context of dialogue is really preoccupation with the program content of education.⁵⁰

Freire continues:

Authentic education is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B", but rather by "A" with "B", mediated by the world - a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it. Those views, impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes or hopelessness, imply significant themes on the basis of which the program content of education can be built.⁵¹

50. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 81-82.

51. Ibid, p. 82.

It is the "concrete, existential, present situation of real man" ⁵²and the perception of this reality by these men, which forms the basis of the content of education. Freire warns that it is untenable to base education on prescribed "knowledge" or models of the "good man", on content organized solely by the "teacher" and reflecting solely his "world view".⁵³

He concludes:

It is to the reality which mediates men and to the perception of that reality held by educators and people, that we must go to find the program content of education. The investigation of what I have termed the people's "thematic universe" - the complex of their "generative themes" - inaugurates the dialogue of education as the practice of freedom.⁵⁴

Central to this discussion are these concepts: thematic universe", "generative themes", and "thematic investigation". Freire, as we have seen, sees man interacting with the world in a progressive dialectic of transformation through praxis and its inversion.

52. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 82.

53. Ibid, p. 83.

54. Ibid, p. 86.

Within this conceptualization man is constantly in situations which limit him. Freire calls these "limit-situations".⁵⁵ When man responds to these "limit-situations" to overcome them he engages in "limit-acts". Man and his society contain certain "themes"⁵⁶ which reflect these "limit-situations".

Freire explains:

An epoch is characterized by a complex of ideas, concepts, hopes, doubts, values, and challenges in dialectical interaction with their opposites, striving toward plenitude. The concrete representation of many of these ideas, values, concepts and hopes, as well as the obstacles which impede man's full humanization constitute the themes of that epoch...historical themes are never isolated, independant, disconnected, or static; they are always interacting dialectically with their opposites... The complex of interacting themes of an epoch constitutes its "thematic universe".⁵⁷

Later he summarizes:

In the last analysis, the themes both contain and are contained in limit-situations; the tasks they imply require limit-acts. When the themes are concealed by the limit-situations and thus are not clearly perceived, the corresponding tasks... can be neither authentically nor critically fulfilled.

55. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 89.

56. Freire calls these "generative - themes" because "they contain the possibility of unfolding into again as many themes, which in their turn call for new tasks to be fulfilled"; see footnote p. 92, in Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

57. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 91-92.

In this situation, men are unable to transcend the limit-situations to discover that beyond these situations - and in contradiction to them - lies an untested feasibility.⁵⁸

The key to transforming action is that man be able to see beyond the "limit-situation" to an "untested-feasibility", that is, a possibly better situation which can be achieved through "limit-acts".

In summary, man is subject to various limit-situations arising out of his socio-cultural and physical environment. The limit-situations are reflected in various "themes" which form an interactive complex Freire calls the thematic universe. Implicit in the themes are various untested feasibilities which would require limit acts to achieve and test.

To become critically aware of the limit situations and the possibility of transforming actions requires, according to Freire, a "thematic investigation". Such investigation forms the context of his methodology. Freire states:

58. Ibid, p. 92.

Thematic investigation thus becomes a common striving towards awareness of reality and towards self-awareness, which makes this investigation a starting point for the educational process or for cultural action of a liberating character.⁵⁹

Freire's methodology, then, assumes intensive research into the socio-cultural reality of the student, research which is done in collaboration with the student to uncover the thematic universe. Its content is the concrete, real environment and situation of the "student" and revolves around the perception of the "student" of his situation, as subject, in dialogue with the other "students" and the "teacher" as active co-operants in a cognitive process directed at the reality of the students. This dialogue takes place in small groups ("culture-circles") in the actual environment of the student.⁶⁰

59. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 98

60. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 113.

(d) The agents of education.- It is obvious from the discussion to this point that Freire conceives of man as the primary agent of his own education. The central thrust of his whole philosophy is that man is agent - his ontological vocation is to be critical, conscious, reflecting agent. It is by actively engaging himself as subject in his own education process that man becomes more and more an agent, and therefore, more and more human.

Man is the prime agent of his own education and must be if education is to be authentic and human. This is not a methodological technique; it is an ontological necessity.

The main secondary agent is the small "cultural circle" within the community of the student. From the previous discussion on problem-posing education it is self-evident the type of person needed to co-ordinate the cultural circle - the secondary agent is not a "teacher" but rather a co-operant, a co-ordinator, a co-investigator.

(e) Additional Aspects of Freire's Philosophy.- There are certain aspects of Freire's Philosophy which demand comment even though they are beyond the scope and intent of this study to delve into each area in depth.

Accordingly brief comment is made here regarding Freire as Marxist, as revolutionary, and as Christian. These may be helpful to the reader in putting Freire's writing into perspective; in addition, such commentary may well be helpful in indicating further areas of research regarding Freire.

(i) Freire as Marxist.- Freire states in the Preface to Pedagogy of the Oppressed that

...this admittedly tentative work is for radicals. I am certain that Christians and Marxists, though they may disagree with me in part, or in whole, will continue reading to the end.⁶¹

This statement indicates that although Freire might avoid labelling himself as Marxist, he definitely sees an affinity between his own thought and that of those who consider themselves Marxist.

In Pedagogy of the Oppressed he quotes freely from such "Marxist" or Marxist-oriented writers as: Marx, Engles, Castro, Mao, Gueverra, Marcuse, Lenin and C. Wright Mills, among others.

61. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 21.

This paper deals mainly with Freire's strictly educational thought, rather than with his social analysis. However, it is evident even in the sections of the paper dealing with the oppressor-oppressed contradiction, and Freire's dialectical view of human/social evolution, that he has been influenced by Marxian thought.

The most prominent area where the parallels with Marxian thought might seem to break down lie in Freire's concept of man, which seems to diverge from the commonly-held view of Marxian materialism and collectivism.

In this regard the reader might refer to Erich Fromm's Marx's Concept of Man⁶² which presents Marx's view of man in a light not very unlike that of Freire. It is significant that Fromm has been a considerable influence on Freire, as indicated in the "Foreward" to Pedagogy of the Oppressed,⁶³ and in the many references to Fromm's work in that book.

62. Erich Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man, New York, Fredrick Ungar, 1961, 1966. xii - 263 p.

63. Richard Shaul, "Forward" to Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 11.

This is not to say that Freire should be labelled "Marxist" - such a label would be irrelevant, and inadequate. The point here is only to point out Marxian influence. It is left to other researchers to delve into an intensive study of Paulo Freire as Marxist.

(ii) Freire as Revolutionary.- Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed is addressed to revolutionaries, advocates revolution, and outlines a revolutionary pedagogy which is meant to inevitably facilitate revolutionary action.

It would be a serious error to read Freire as reformer, to underestimate or ignore his revolutionary intent. His ideas must be met honestly and fully.

It is not directly within the scope of this study to examine this aspect of Freire's thought. The main concern of this study is Freire's educational theory, which is pre-revolutionary, a preparation for revolution which will inevitably follow the conscientization of the oppressed.

It is not clearly explicated in Pedagogy of the Oppressed how Freire conceives of revolution. The closest to a definition he comes is when he says that revolution "...transforms a

concrete situation of oppression by establishing the process of liberation..."⁶⁴

From the discussion to this point it is obvious that this is the intent of his pedagogy. In discussing this intent Freire states:

This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. And in this struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade.⁶⁵

Later he restates the need to "transform" the oppressive situation:

Since it is in a concrete situation that the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is established, the resolution of this contradiction must be objectively verifiable. Hence, the radical requirement' - both for the man who discovers himself to be an oppressor and for the oppressed - that the concrete situation which begets oppression must be transformed.⁶⁶

64. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 31.

65. Ibid, p. 33.

66. Ibid, p. 35.

Further on Freire explains how his pedagogy has its roots in such transforming action:

...no reality transforms itself, and the duty which Lukacs ascribes to the revolutionary party of "explaining to the masses their own action" coincides with our affirmation of the need for the critical intervention of the people in reality through the praxis. The pedagogy of the oppressed, which is the pedagogy of men engaged in the fight for their own liberation, has its roots here.⁶⁷

It must be recognized also that Freire accepts the almost inevitable violence involved in the struggle for liberation. He discusses at length the fact that "Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons."⁶⁸ He then discusses the violence of the oppressed as they "react to the violence of the oppressors", stating that the rebellion of the oppressed is "an act which is always, or nearly always, as violent as the initial violence of the oppressors".⁶⁹

67. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 39.

68. Ibid, p. 41.

69. Ibid, p. 41-42.

Later on, in a footnote, Freire again indicates the coercive nature of this struggle:

Once a popular revolution has come to power, the fact that the new power has the ethical duty to repress any attempt to restore the old oppressive power by no means signifies that the revolution is contradicting its dialogical character. Dialogue between the former oppressors and the oppressed as antagonistic classes was not possible before the revolution; it continues to be impossible afterward.⁷⁰

At the same time Freire sees revolution, and its violence, as an act of necessity, and an act of love. He states:

Yet it is - paradoxical though it may seem - precisely in the response of the oppressed to the violence of their oppressors that a gesture of love may be found. Consciously or unconsciously, the act of rebellion by the oppressed ... can initiate love. Whereas the violence of the oppressors prevents the oppressed from being fully human, the response of the latter to this violence is grounded in the desire to pursue the right to be human ... As the oppressed, fighting to be human, take away the oppressors power to dominate and suppress, they restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression.⁷¹

70. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 134.

71. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 41-2.

Later, in a footnote, Freire discusses the loving character of revolution:

I am more and more convinced that true revolutionaries must perceive the revolution, because of its creative and liberating nature, as an act of love. For me, the revolution ... is not irreconcilable with love. On the contrary: the revolution is made by men to achieve their humanization ... The distortion imposed on the word "love" by the capitalist world cannot prevent the revolution being essentially loving in character, nor can it prevent the revolutionaries from affirming their love of life.⁷²

It is essential to recognize this revolutionary element in Freire's writings if we are to appreciate his world view and his educational theory. This would seem to be a fruitful area for study for future researchers, especially in the context of utilizing Freire's educational theory and method in countries where the need for, and prospect of, revolution is less evident than in the South American milieu which is Freire's main concern.

72. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 77-8.

(iii) Freire as Christian.— Finally a few words must be said about Freire's concept of God and religion. In the works which the author has read (see bibliography) Freire does not discuss these concepts at all. However, Dewitt points out:

For Freire, religion, which is an expression of the relationship which binds man to God, is at the very heart and core of what it means to be man, to be human.⁷³

In supporting this statement Dewitt quotes a passage from *Edução como Prática da Liberdade* (Education as the Practice of Freedom), written in 1967 in Portuguese. Dewitt quotes from his own translation of the Spanish version published in 1969.

For us, man's transcendence is equally at the root of his finiteness and in the consciousness man has of his own finiteness. For man is an incomplete being and the completion of his incompleteness is encountered in his relationship with his creator...Precisely because he is a finite and indigent being, in his transcendence through love, man has his return to his source who liberates him.⁷⁴

73. Dewitt, p. 61.

74. Freire, "Edução como Prática da Liberdade", quoted in Dewitt, op.cit., p. 61.

In the English version of "Education as the Practice of Freedom", translated and edited by Myra Bergman Ramos (who also translated Pedagogy of the Oppressed), and contained in the recently published Education for Critical Consciousness,⁷⁵ this passage is not found in any recognizable form. However, Dewitt had personal contact with Freire and we can assume the authenticity of his translation at that time.

For the purpose at hand it is sufficient to note that Freire is Roman Catholic in background and seems, from Dewitt's evidence and the reference in footnote No. 75, to accept the existence of God. Exactly how Freire conceptualizes God is not clear, although it would seem from Dewitt's discussion that the concept is essentially Thomistic.

Dewitt points out that Freire presents a clear contradiction between his concept of culture and history, which are Marxian, and which Marx based on a Hegelian viewpoint, and Freire's own concept which Dewitt sees as clearly Thomistic.⁷⁶

75. Freire, "Education as the Practice of Freedom" in Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 1-84; the only reference to God, or creator in this work is a tacit reference on p. 18.

76. Dewitt, p. 184.

Dewitt, however, does not consider this much of a problem:

But this writer also concludes that because that contradiction could be worked out, and because an acceptable underlying theory, one with internal cohesion, could be elaborated as a solid basis for Freire's methodology, that the natural law - dialectical view contradiction is of minor importance.⁷⁷

Dewitt goes into a discussion of this contradiction as a mark of modern leftist Catholic writers. Such discussion is well beyond the scope, intent and expertise of this study, but may well be a fruitful area for other researchers.

It has been discussed here merely to provide a fuller frame of reference for readers of this paper.

3. Critique

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, Freire has been a provocative and controversial addition to the theatre of educational theory and practice. He has become the object of much uncritical adulation as well as bitter criticism.

77. Dewitt, p. 185.

The criticism ranges from the ludicrous, shrill and personal attack, for example that of William S. Griffith,⁷⁸ to the sensitive and astute critique, for example those of Manfred Stanley⁷⁹ and Janice Farmer Weaver.⁸⁰

Certain points recur. There are criticisms which relate to perceived contradictions between Freire's philosophy and his career, or to his alleged unoriginality - Dewey with fanatical rhetoric - this paper will not concern itself with this level of criticism.⁸¹

78. Wm. S. Griffith, "Paulo Freire: Utopian Perspectives on Literacy Education for Revolution", in Paulo Freire: A Revolutionary Dilemma for the Adult Educator, ed. Stanley M. Grabowski, Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education and ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education, 1972, p. 67-92.

79. Manfred Stanley, "Literacy: The Crisis of Conventional Wisdom", in Grabowski (ed) Op.Cit., p. 36-54.

80. Janice Farmer Weaver, "Paulo Freire and Education: One Sociological View", mimeographed, presented at A.E.S.A. meeting, Feb. 23, 1972, at University of Illinois. This and other papers presented at the meeting were made available by Professor Maxine Greene of Teachers College, Columbia, who informs the author that she is preparing to have these papers published.

81. Freire discusses his reaction to this and other similar criticisms in Conscientization and Liberation: a conversation with Paulo Freire, Geneva, Institute of Cultural Action (IDAC), Document I. In: John Egerton, "Searching for Freire", in Saturday Review of Education, Vol. 1, No. 3, April, 1973, p. 32-35, Freire is quoted regarding his present status with the World Council of Churches.

There are however, some aspect of this philosophy with which we must deal.

(i) Critique of Freire's Concept of Man. - Much of Freire's concept of man is rational and almost self-evident: the idea that it is consciousness, self-awareness, that sets man apart as unique in the world; the concept of man's dialectical relationship with his environment, transforming it and being in turn transformed by it; the linking of man's ability to reflect, transcend, temporalize and intentionalize to the achievement of critical consciousness and realistic action; the necessity of a truly critical consciousness if man is to go beyond a determined state, a state of "almost non-being". It is not difficult to accept all of this. However, accepting that man exists in this relationship in and with the world, doubt arises in regard to man's ability to achieve that degree of consciousness which would allow him to balance out the determining role of environment. The possibility can be accepted, the possible potential, the hope that such a degree of consciousness can be attained - but such acceptance is faith and hope, not knowledge.

This element becomes more of a problem when examined in the context of Freire's insistence on the dialogical nature of man's relationship with his fellow man. Within Freire's schema it is indispensable and logical that man's humanization must be achieved through dialogue as Freire describes it. But of all the capabilities Freire claims for men, it is this essential and core capability and disposition which seems to have least empirical evidence to support it. How is man to achieve a state of consciousness which will pre-dispose him to loving dialogue? And given such a state and predisposition, does not this assume a common, collective consciousness of all men? On what evidence can we justify faith that man can exist in a loving dialogical relationship with his fellow man when much of human history seems to contradict such faith? And if this is not possible, all of Freire's humanism is just so much dreaming.

Freire must deal directly with these problems which arise out of his basic premises.

(ii) Critique of Social Analysis.— In terms of Freire's social analysis, his tendency to dichotomize, especially in terms of the oppressor and the oppressed, causes difficulties which arise again and again in critiques of Freire. Many critics refuse to accept such bi-polarity.

The problem here seems to stem from two factors:

(a) a distaste for what can be assessed as mere ideological rhetoric, and (b) a fundamental misinterpretation of Freire's work.

The first factor is difficult to resolve. Is the problem in the choice of words, or in the meaning? When we find James J. Shields⁸² describing the book as "stiff and pedantic and cold and austere; there is no joy and there is no passion", this writer has to wonder whether he and Shields read the same book. Later on Shields says that Pedagogy of the Oppressed is "full of that academic pretentiousness which leaves readers with the feeling that the author is more interested in parading 'scholarly' vocabulary than he is in making a clear and intelligent point".⁸³ Granting that Freire's

82. James J. Shields, "Freire on Pedagogy: the Educator as Politician", mimeographed, presented to AESA meeting, Feb. 23, 1972, at University of Illinois, p. 3.

83. James J. Shields, p. 4.

style (at least in translation) is, at times, heavy and unwieldy, criticism such as Shields is narrow, shallow and irresponsible.

When, however, we get into the meaning of Freire's words, the problem is not easily dismissed. The objection is that it is invalid to reduce society into two diametrically opposed classes - the oppressor and the oppressed.

This is not what Freire does. Freire analyses a situation in which a large proportion of the society is in an oppressed state; that is, they are unable to realize their potential to interact with the world in a human way - with critical awareness. Freire is of the conviction that the cause of this oppressed state is social structures which dehumanize, which are oppressive, which benefit a relatively small proportion of society and are maintained and justified by this small elite class. This class he labels "oppressors". Through their actions they maintain and strengthen a social order which oppresses others. They are oppressors.

At no time does Freire state that the oppressor must necessarily be conscious of the fact that he oppresses, or that he is necessarily culpable for this oppression. He merely states the fact that there are those who oppress and those who are oppressed.

At the same time, he stresses time and time again, especially in Chapter One, that the oppressor is himself oppressed - he is a victim of false consciousness and his own denial of his ontological vocation to become more fully human in dialogical reflection and action with his fellow man.

What this means, then, in Freire's viewpoint, is that in an oppressive society, virtually all of its members are oppressed - oppression is a generalized state within that society. The dilemma is that some of the oppressed, the elite class, are the authors (albeit, perhaps, unconsciously) of the oppression and are, therefore, the oppressors as well.

In these ranks of oppressors Freire, it appears, would include not only the blatantly totalitarian monster but also the well-intentioned idealist - the good intentioned humanist educator or social worker - people with good intentions and a humanist viewpoint who lack the critical consciousness to perceive that they, as perpetuators of an oppressive order in whatever form, are in fact, oppressors.

Such an analysis is not easy to accept if one does not see, or want to see, oneself as either oppressed or oppressing.

Freire postulates still another type of individual: the man who liberates himself from his oppression, ceases to oppress, and works in loving, humble dialogue with the oppressed in a mutual endeavour of humanizing themselves and the world.

One can see that Freire does not set up a simple, polarized dichotomy and that the tendency to simplify Freire's "naming of the world" may be a type of defensive manoeuvre.

All of this is not to say that Freire's analysis is correct; rather it is to clarify exactly what Freire's analysis is. To analyse whether Freire is correct is much more difficult, probably impossible in absolute terms. But if such a task is important we must at least be accurate in our interpretation of his analysis.

Beyond this, in terms of consistency, if we accept Freire's view of man, as do virtually all of the critics to which this writer has been exposed, and if we accept his definition of oppression, then it is difficult to fault Freire's social analysis as inconsistent or invalid.

Perhaps the major problem here is that Freire can be interpreted as suggesting that oppression in society is the result of conscious effort at oppression, as though the elite classes were totally aware of what they are doing.

This would be a facile analysis of a very complex situation,⁸⁴ a situation which does not lend itself easily to moralistic or righteous interpretation without the danger of extreme, and unproductive, subjectivism.

The author does not believe that Freire fell into this trap. However, his analysis would be more comprehensive if he would deal more clearly with the nature of the consciousness of the oppressing class and the means by which they too can be conscientized.

This aspect of Freire's analysis has been dealt with at some length because it seems to have caused such strong reactions. The author, however, finds other aspects of Freire's pedagogy much more troublesome. These aspects are linked to the comments regarding Freire's concept of Man at the beginning of this Section.

84. This complexity can be seen if we examine comparatively such diverse situations as Brazil, South Africa, Angola, Cuba, People's Republic of China, U.S.S.R., Sweden, and Canada.

(iii) Core Problems: the practicability of Freire's Pedagogy.- At the very heart of the matter is the question: "Given the accuracy of Freire's analysis of man in terms of his ontological vocation and his historical reality, is it really possible to achieve the kind of education which he proposes?

Freire's philosophy is based on faith and hope in man which is difficult to validate. The author of this paper shares this faith and hope, but must admit that it is just that - faith and hope. Freire does not present his concept of man in this way; he presents it as fact, a non-negotiable fact which contradicts the possibility of dialogue with those who do not share his view.

More critically, Freire argues that it is possible to achieve an educational process which is not in any way oppressive or prescriptive, that totally breaks down the teacher/subject - student/object dichotomy. Given his social/world view, given his belief that he has the truth and that this is the truth that the oppressed must become aware of - given these things we come face to face with what appears to be a key contradiction. How is it possible to engage in authentic problem-solving dialogue when one of the parties "knows" he has the truth and "knows" that the others do not?

It is in this context that within Pedagogy of the Oppressed one area emerges where the author feels that Freire is open to criticism for what appears to be a lapse in critical analysis. This area is in the realm of the codification of themes as explicated in Chapter Three.

At one point Freire states:

Unfortunately, however, in their desire to obtain the support of the people for revolutionary action, revolutionary leaders often fall for the banking line of planning program context from the top down. They approach the peasant or urban masses with projects which may correspond to their own view of the world but not to that of the people.⁸⁵

It is very difficult to see how Freire can manage to avoid this trap himself considering that his entire pedagogy is based upon a view of the world which he accepts as true and which is, at one time, the end and the means and the content of his educational process.

85. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 83.

Later on he states:

While it is normal for investigators to come to the area with values which influence their perceptions, this does not mean that they may transform the thematic investigation into a means of imposing these values. The only dimension of these values which it is hoped the men whose thematics are being investigated will come to share... is a critical perception of the world, which implies a correct method of approaching reality in order to unveil it.⁸⁶

There are two flaws here. First, it is questionable whether it is humanly possible for the investigators to avoid imposing their own values in the investigative and codifying process. Janice Weaver, in an article mentioned previously gives an acute analysis of this dilemma, concluding:

That the content may be more sensitive to values, human options and alternative goals can be possible. But that it will be "selective" and "directive" may not be avoided, and thus in Freire's terms, education is doomed to be oppressive.⁸⁷

Secondly, the assumption of a "correct method of approaching reality", possessed by the investigator and to be learned by those investigated, inevitably makes education programmatic, with prescribed content and assuming to some extent a dichotomy of teacher and learner.

86. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 102-103.

87. Janice Farmer Weater, "Paulo Freire and Education", p. 5.

The extent of this contradiction becomes more critical as Freire further explicates his method. At one point he discusses the necessity of introducing "hinged themes":

During this effort to break down the meaningful thematics the team will recognize the need to include some fundamental themes which were not directly suggested by the people during the preceding investigation. The introduction of these themes has proved to be necessary, and also corresponds to the dialogical character of education. If educational programming is dialogical, the teacher-student also have the right to participate by including themes not previously suggested. I call the latter type of theme "hinged themes", due to their function.⁸⁸

While it is easy to be sympathetic to the need to introduce these "hinged themes", it seems very difficult to avoid the criticism that such an act is blatantly prescriptive, and that the "teacher-student" introducing such themes is almost inevitably subject to projecting his own values. Justifying this on the basis of the dialogical nature of the process does not adequately meet the dilemma in a direct manner.

At another point Freire states:

Another didactic resource - as long as it is carried out within a problem-posing rather than a banking approach to education -

88. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 113-114.

is the reading and discussion of magazine articles, newspapers, and book chapters ... the author is introduced before the group begins, and the contexts are discussed afterwards.⁸⁹

While we might find such a practice very acceptable, even highly desirable, the choice of materials is inevitably prescriptive.

A final passage, one which is most disturbing, must be referred to:

If the educators lack sufficient funds to carry out the preliminary investigation as described... they can - with minimum knowledge of the situation - select some basic themes to serve as "codifications to be investigated". Accordingly, they can begin with introductory themes and simultaneously initiate further thematic investigation.⁹⁰

This paragraph, near the end of the discussion on methodology, seems to conflict with almost all that precedes it - a compromise which lays the process open to all the dangers of propagandizing which Freire indicates must be avoided.

89. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 116.

90. Ibid, p. 117.

It is essential to understand here that the crux of the matter at hand is not whether Freire's analysis is correct, or whether what he offers the "oppressed" is right and good, or even whether he has developed a very good methodology (most critics agree that he has).

The question is: "Does Freire actually achieve the kind of non-prescriptive educational process which he professes?" The question is important because Freire says it is. He severely criticizes education which does not achieve what he professes, insisting that the process is of essence - the medium is the message, so to speak.

Freire must deal with this question. The conclusion of this writer is that Freire's pedagogy is not as totally free of the prescriptive elements he so dislikes as he wishes to think. It is highly doubtful that such a "pure" process of education is possible. Freire's analysis and proposed pedagogy would be greatly enhanced by dealing candidly and directly with this possibility, and resolving the contradiction.

At the same time it must be noted that this criticism does not undermine the essential value of Freire's analysis and methodology. It would merely appear that if he faced more directly the immense difficulties involved his entire analysis

would be more credible and be of great value to the educator who shares his general philosophy and wishes to utilize his pedagogy in the real world.

What Freire wishes to do seems impossible in absolute terms. The attempt is still adequately justified and is provided by Freire with sound philosophical grounds.

Freire's pedagogy comes closer to a humane, and humanly practical, process of education than any other to which this reader, an adult educator, has been exposed to date. As we have seen there are problems which Freire's philosophy raises. It is the conviction of the author, however, that the continued growth and, indeed, existence of mankind in any "human" sense, depends on the working out of these problems. Freire's philosophy is a challenge to do this, is a challenge to dialogue, is a challenge to see in man, and in his future, a benevolence and consciousness which to date has been suppressed. If it is not a philosophy based on "knowing", nor is it a philosophy based on "wishing". Rather it is a philosophy that demands hope, love, and above all, reflection and action based on hope and love.

Anything more at this historical point is impossible; anything less would be fruitless.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

This chapter will present a comparison and contrast of the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference and Pedagogy of the Oppressed using a similar approach as when they were treated separately, that is, according to the concepts of man, aims of education, method and content of education, and the agents of education.

The purpose here is not to attempt an intensive, detail for detail analysis, but rather to point out basic similarities and the essential differences, hopefully to get at the very core of the distinction between the two.

Before proceeding, however, a preliminary comment is necessary, comparing the nature of the two works in question. The Final Report, as has been seen, is a document prepared to reflect with accuracy the deliberations and conclusions of a large group of individuals at an international forum. Its purpose was not to present a comprehensive, systematic philosophy, but rather to represent the consensus of a large group assembled for two weeks of co-investigation and dialogue, and to lay out concisely the recommendations of the group as the result of this dialogue.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a comprehensive and systematic philosophical statement about education. It is the product of one man, the result of many years of reflection and action in the realm of adult literacy, and the result of his dialogue with the thoughts and actions of a wide realm of philosophers, social scientists, revolutionaries and educators, through their writings or through personal contact.

On the surface these two documents seem quite different in nature, scope and intent. At the same time they share great similarities. Both are concerned and motivated to a large extent by the problem of adult functional illiteracy and by the oppressive situation of a large proportion of mankind. Both deal extensively with the means by which this problem can be alleviated. Both base their analysis on basic philosophical assumptions about the nature of man and the educative process. To a great extent, both of these works share similar philosophical preconceptions.

The rationale for comparing these documents, for dealing with them together in one paper, lies in these similarities - both offer an approach to solving many of the problems met by and inherent in adult education. In addition, the author believes that these documents, in their separate ways, are key works in the field, ones which will have a great deal of influence on actual educational practice. It is,

therefore, essential that they be analysed, compared and contrasted, with an attempt at synthesis in the hope that perhaps the analysis of one might reveal flaws in the analysis of the other and that certain problems for further study will emerge.

(a) The Concept of Man. - There are some difficulties in making a comparison here. Freire's entire approach is intimately tied to his concept of man, a concept which he discusses comprehensively and precisely. The Final Report does not do this (for reasons which have been discussed). However, at the heart of any educational analysis lies at least an implicit concept of man - this has been seen to be very true of the Final Report.

Freire's concept of man, and that of the conference, share many similarities. Both see man as an aware, social, historical and cultural being; both see him capable of freely perceiving his world with a critical eye and engaging himself as an active agent for change within that world. Both see the opportunity to exercise these capabilities as an intrinsic right. Both see this intrinsic right being exercised in a social context, in co-operation with one's fellow man. All these concepts emerge in both works. On these essentials there is agreement.

The divergence is not so much a difference of opinion as that Freire takes the analysis much further. Both the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed deal with the fact that the historical reality of a vast proportion of men is quite different than the ideal expressed above. It is at this point that Freire's analysis diverges from that of the Tokyo Conference. Freire asks "why?" and provides his answer; the Tokyo Conference barely flirted with "why?" and seems to have avoided answers.

Freire sees the problem in terms of what it means to be human, sees any state less than this as unhuman, therefore de-humanized. People in a dehumanized state are oppressed; the causes of this oppression are socio-economic and cultural structures which are oppressive. That class of people who benefit from, and maintain, these oppressive structures are oppressors; because they also are in a state which is less than what Freire sees as a human state, they are also oppressed.

Because Freire (rightly or wrongly) has analysed the reasons for a condition which is less than human (according to his definition), he is in a better position to conclude exactly how to solve the problem.

The Final Report, recognized the problem of what it calls "the forgotten people"¹ However, it does not analyse the problem in terms of what is essentially human, or in terms of de-humanization and oppression. The conference, for whatever reason, was unwilling to tackle directly the problem of de-humanizing socio-economic structures, and certainly did not acknowledge the inherent problems of class systems and their, to date, inevitable dehumanizing effects. At various points the report refers to "privileged" and "underprivileged" groups², and uses such terms as "the labouring classes" and "the toiling masses",³ but at no time does it delve into the basic causes for such divisions, nor the implications, in terms of an analysis such as Freire's.

A key distinction between Freire's view of "the worker" and that of the Final Report is indicated in the following statement from the report's sixth recommendation:

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1. Final Report, p. 19, paragraph 23.
 2. For example, Final Report, p. 41, recommendation 4.
 3. For example, Final Report, p. 42, recommendation 6.

.....since the primary need felt by workers is the need to be able to pursue an occupation in keeping with their inclinations and talents, renumerated in accordance with the value of their work and offering possibilities for advancement, this fact should be the starting point from which to go on to other aspects of adult education responding to the overall aspirations of the individual as citizen...⁴

The author's objection to this assertion has already been noted.⁵ For the purpose of comparison it should be pointed out that, judging ~~from~~ the analysis in Pedagogy of the Oppressed,⁶ it is doubtful that Freire could accept the assertion, nor the conclusions derived from it. The author infers that the following would reflect Freire's criticism of this statement:

(i) Such an assertion is a projection of middle and upper-class values and perceptions, which are conditioned by and supportive of oppressive structures, and which must see the workers in a certain light.

4. Final Report, p. 42, recommendation 6.

5. See page 10, Chapter I.

6. See Chapter One, Pedagogy: Freire discusses (a) workers as owners of their own labour, (b) internalization of values of oppressors, and (c) projection by oppressors of their own values.

(ii) While such might be the primary felt need of some workers, this is the result of conditioned consciousness and not of critical awareness of their existential situation.

(iii) This is not the place to start before proceeding to the "overall aspirations of the individual" but rather, the overall aspirations of the individual is the place to start in dealing with a critically aware attitude to all aspects of life and environment, including work. Conscientization is the point of embarkation. One should not build on false consciousness, but establish true, critical consciousness.

It is not the intention to support one or the other viewpoint at this time, but rather to indicate a significant difference between ways of viewing the worker. The divergence here is important and indicative of the distinction between Freire's analysis and that of the Tokyo Conference.

To summarize then, the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed contain very similar concepts as to the nature of man, of what it means to be human. They diverge when it comes to analysis of why (or even whether) human potential is suppressed. The Final Report acknowledges inequality and the squalid living situation of underprivileged and labouring classes, points out

the injustice of this situation, and occasionally hints that there may be fundamental causes for the situation within the socio-economic structures of contemporary societies. Freire stresses these conditions, analyses them and their causes, and makes this analysis the basis of his pedagogy.

At the risk of over-simplifying, the Final Report examines symptoms and offers possible remedies which will alleviate these symptoms. Freire looks at causes, and offers a remedy directed at causes.

(b) The Aims of Education.- The similarities between the aims of education expressed in the Final Report and those expressed in Pedagogy of the Oppressed are striking. This should be expected, considering the similarities in terms of the concept of man. The report states that adult education should be:

oriented towards creating in adults a critical awareness of the historical and cultural world in which they live so that they may be able, by creative action, to change the world.⁷

7. Final Report, p. 39.

One could almost feel that Paulo Freire wrote this statement.⁸ As a general statement, it is likely that Freire would voice no objection with this, or with the aims articulated in recommendation two.

Freire, however, approaches the question differently - he sees the aim of education as the humanization of man; he sees education as a process which facilitates the actualization, by man, of his ontological vocation to become more and more fully human. This entails critical awareness of and interaction in, and with, the world, to transform it through creative reflection and action.

Again, the distinction between the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed is that Freire takes his analysis further.

The report states:

Apathy, poverty, disease and hunger are major human evils facing the world today. They can be eradicated only by making people aware of what causes them and how to conquer them.⁹

8. Freire has informed the author that he had "nothing to do, personally, with the conference".

9. Final Report, p. 19.

The report makes no serious attempt to analyse what the causes of these evils are, or how these evils can indeed be conquered. Freire's pedagogy is based on an analysis of causes - basically the contradiction between oppressed and oppressor in society and the dehumanizing structures which manifest this contradiction. Therefore, while sharing the general aims, approached from a different and more basic angle, as those stated in the Final Report, Freire goes one step further and states as an aim the liberation of the oppressed through the overthrowing of the oppressive order. The aim of education becomes the facilitation of revolution. At this point Freire and the authors of the report of the Tokyo conference are on radically divergent courses.

In the first chapter to this paper it was shown that central to the entire analysis of the Tokyo conference is the idea that the aims of education, including the involvement of the common man in transforming action upon society to better his condition, must take place within and through existing national structures, interests, priorities and policies. Freire would see this, in most cases, as an utter contradiction and an impossible task, because it is essentially these structures, interests, priorities and policies, reflecting as they do, the consciousness and vested interest of the oppressing class, that oppress the common man.

(c) Content and Method of Education.- In discussing content and method the analysis of the Final Report and of Pedagogy of the Oppressed are very similar, although Freire's discussion is much more intensive.

The Final Report, sees the content of education as man in interaction with his total environment - his work, his leisure, his society, his inner-self, and tends to be extensive in enumerating various aspects of this content, for example, functional literacy, skill-development, cultural development, civics, and parent education.

Freire also sees the content of education as the totality of man's environment, his "existential situation". Freire's method, as practised, was based in literacy training and he used the literacy training to work on conscientization, and conscientization as a vehicle for literacy training. He is concerned with literacy in a functional sense as described previously in this paper - this includes socio-cultural content.

In Pedagogy of the Oppressed it is not clear whether Freire conceives of the conscientization technique as essentially bound to literacy campaigns (this reader's analysis is that it would not have to be). However, it is obvious that the type of individual whom Freire conceives of as being oppressed, those he is most concerned with, is likely going to be, to a greater or lesser degree, illiterate, and that Freire's focus of concern lies in this area.

Freire does not address himself at length in Pedagogy of the Oppressed to the problem of occupational or skill training, but it is clear that he accepts these as necessary and good. He recognizes the value of science and technology as long as these are controlled by men and are not used as tools to enslave and dehumanize men; skill training must involve itself in the essential interaction between the individual, the skill, work, product and society.¹⁰ The Final Report makes a similar point.¹¹

In terms, then, of the content of education, Pedagogy and the Final Report express essentially similar views.

In regard to methodology the Final Report stresses that the method of adult education be informal and co-operative, involving the student in all stages so that he in fact shapes and directs his own education according to his own perception of his needs and goals. Such education should take place in the actual environment of the student, integrated with normal activities and utilizing small co-operative group situations as much as possible. The teacher-student relationship is based on mutual investigation and learning using a "problem-solving" approach.

10. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 157.

11. Final Report, p. 15, paragraph 42.

The approach suggested in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, while described more intensively, and given a firm philosophical rationale, is essentially the same. The stress on dialogue - trusting, loving, humble and hopeful - is an essential element in Freire's analysis. While this concept is not articulated in the Final Report, if its discussion of methodology were taken to its logical conclusion, dialogue in Freire's sense would have to be taken as implicit.

In essence then, the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed share similar approaches to the methodology of education, although, in keeping with the difference in the nature of the two works, Freire's discussion is much more an in-depth analysis.

(d) Agents of Education. - On the surface, the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed have a similar approach to the agents of education. Both see the individual as the primary agent of his own education; the secondary agents are to be, as much as possible, informal groups coordinated by an educator who interacts as a co-investigator and co-operant.

The Final Report sees formal schools as functioning for the sole purpose of "teaching pupils how to learn". Freire makes no reference to schools other than to define the "banking" concept of education which characterizes them. The author sees Freire as highly sceptical of the ability of schools to teach students how to learn, reflecting as they do the traditional value system of the status quo. To be fair, it would seem that the delegates to the Tokyo conference would share this scepticism, although the Final Report does not address itself to the problem in anything but an inferential manner.

Quite apart from this essential and important similarity, with respect to the agents of education, an important distinction must be examined.

Freire conceives of only one valid co-agent of education - one valid teacher - the revolutionary. The revolutionary is he who recognizes the oppressive state of society and the contradiction between the oppressor and the oppressed. He is a man who is humanized to the extent that he is critically aware of this inhuman state of affairs and is prepared to engage himself in a loving, trustful, and humble dialogical praxis with the oppressed to the end of their humanization

and the humanization of society. He is dedicated to the overthrow of the oppressive order and the emergence of the oppressed as masters of their own destiny.

Only this man is a valid agent of education - all others are oppressors, consciously or unconsciously, and maintain the oppressive order; they effect the antithesis of human education.

The Final Report, to the contrary, enumerates a wide range of co-agents, a variety of societal institutions and organizations, both governmental and voluntary (public). For Freire this would be antithetical to human education because all these agencies are essentially bound to the oppressive order and could not do else but maintain it.

This is a critical distinction between Freire's analysis and that of the Tokyo Conference.

This does not necessarily indicate a contradiction within the Tokyo report, as the report does not base its analysis on Freire's assumptions. It merely highlights a basic difference between the two analyses in spite of some basic similarities.

In summary of this chapter, then, the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed have much in common but are also marked by highly significant differences.

At the heart of these differences is the fact that Freire goes deeper into the "human evils" which motivate both documents, defines these evils in terms of what is to be human, and analyses the causes for these evils in terms of what it is to be human and what it is to be dehumanized. He then bases his pedagogy on his explicit definition of human potential and the causes for dehumanization.

The Final Report merely describes human evils and recommends an educational approach based on implicit assumptions about man's capabilities to improve his situation.

This basic distinction is the basis for the final chapter.

CHAPTER IV

SYNTHESIS

To this point a critical analysis and comparison have been presented of two documents considered to be of major significance to future developments in education throughout the world.

The purpose of this final chapter is to provide some critical insights into the ultimate practicability of the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference; to this end the chapter examines certain important questions which arise out of the comparison between the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

The intent is not to answer these questions, but rather to pose them, and to show that these questions, which were not dealt with by the Tokyo Conference must be investigated in future conferences of similar nature if any tangible results are to be obtained in real educational practice.

The chapter also outlines some insights, suggested by Freire's analysis, which can assist the attempt to answer the questions the Tokyo Conference did not answer.

The questions examined in this chapter do not arise so much out of the content of Freire's analysis as compared with that of the Final Report, although this is important; they arise, rather, out of a comparison of the depth and scope of analysis in the two documents analysed.

At the same time, however, these questions are connected to certain assertions made by Freire about society, social institutions, and oppression, the validity of which should have been examined by the Tokyo Conference.

It is to be remembered that the comments in this chapter are made not in support of the substance of Freire's analysis, but rather in support of the assertion that such an analysis must be made, and that this type of analysis was not made by the Tokyo Conference, thereby greatly diminishing its ultimate practicability.

In presenting the chapter the main distinction between Freire's analysis and that of the Tokyo conference will be summarized briefly; certain basic assumptions intrinsic to Freire's analysis will be restated; the questions which are central to the Final Report, and which arise out of a comparison with Pedagogy of the Oppressed, will be articulated and discussed; finally, certain insights, regarding possible approaches to answering these questions and which arise from Freire's analysis, will be presented.

1. The Basic Difference

It would seem that implicit in education as an organized endeavour within society is a concept of society and of the basic relationship between the individual and society as a whole.

Freire has analysed this concept; the Final Report of the Tokyo Conference did not.

It has been shown that both Freire and the authors of the Final Report are dramatically aware of certain basic human evils in the world today - poverty, squalor, inequality, ignorance - and much of the focus of their discussions about education is directed at doing away with these evils.

Both documents see the improvement of undesirable human conditions coming through those affected gaining a critical awareness of, and intervening in, the reality which causes these evils. Both analyses suggest that man is capable of such endeavour and suggest that the aim of education is to prepare and motivate the individual to undertake such endeavour.

What the Final Report lacks, and what Pedagogy of the Oppressed makes central to its thesis, is an analysis of the reality which causes oppressive situations and the interaction between man and prevailing social structures.

The issue here is not whether Paulo Freire's analysis is correct, but that he makes the analysis, and therefore he bases his pedagogy on a more complete philosophy. The Final Report avoids such analysis, therefore basing its recommendations on an incomplete analysis, and leaving itself open to certain basic contradictions.

This is not merely academic. To see why this is very important it is necessary to restate certain assumptions which Freire makes central to his analysis.

2. Freire's Assumptions

For Freire, the condition of man is determined by two main factors: the action of nature (man's environment), and the actions of man himself acting upon that environment to form communities, societies, cultures - a vast complex of interacting socio-economic and socio-cultural structures and institutions.

The determining element of Man's environment is not easy to control and it appears to have been at least partially for the purpose of such control that societies initially emerged and evolved.

Society itself is, however, in Freire's analysis, another factor which dramatically determines the conditions and fates of men. While it is possible that society can be a force for the betterment of the individual and the species, often, Freire insists, social structures have not worked in a beneficial way, and they have left men in a condition not appreciatively better than in raw nature, and certainly have not worked for the actualization of the potential of each citizen as a human individual. Moreover, often societies work for the betterment of some at the expense of, or at least the exclusion of, a vast proportion of others.

Social institutions and structures, although based on the assumption that they enable man to work together to the human betterment of all, do not always, in fact rarely, in Freire's analysis, perform this function. Most often they have been used by small, elite groups to effect the total domination and virtual slavery and dehumanization of a large majority of those members of society that it is meant to serve.

These assumptions are central to Freire's analysis, but not unique to it; Freire is not the originator of these concepts. There is a vast body of literature supportive of these assumptions. The point here is not to defend these assumptions but to present them as crucial possibilities

which must be dealt with if the kinds of problems central to the Tokyo conference are to be resolved.

It is these assumptions which seem to form the basis of the divergent courses of the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed and which force Freire to deny the possibility of reform (the tact taken by the Tokyo conference) and promote instead revolutionary education and, consequently, revolution, as the only viable means of liberation for and by the oppressed.

3. Questions Relevant to the Final Report

The Final Report makes central to its recommendations the fact that there are countless human beings living in sub-human conditions throughout the world, and sees this fact as one of the most important problems facing the world today.

If there are members of any society existing in a squalid, poverty-stricken, ignorance-ridden condition, it is possible that Freire is correct, and that there are some root-causes within the very social structures of that society. If the possibility exists, then the possibility must be examined if these conditions are to be alleviated.

Accordingly, it is imperative that those concerned with these problems be willing to go beyond the environment, to go beyond the squalor, to go beyond the poverty and the ignorance, to go beyond all these to look for these other causes; they must be willing to go to the social structures and institutions themselves to look for causes, to see if perhaps some of the causes for deprived human conditions are rooted here.

The delegates of the Tokyo conference did not seem willing to do this.

Education as it is being discussed here is a social institution. It inevitably reflects in part and to varying degrees, in Freire's view, the biases and opinions of the elite establishment groups in politics and in the professions and institutions - those who are in a position to formulate policy, articulate philosophies and affect public opinion.

This point raises the central question pertaining to the Final Report and arising out of Freire's analysis.

If some of the causes of the human condition which has been discussed do, in fact, lie rooted in the society itself, how can education viewed in this context as a social institution, help to prepare the "underprivileged" to "conquer" the causes of their deprived conditions when at one and the same time these conditions, and the educational

system, may well be generated from, reflective of, and supportive of the prevailing ethic of that society and its entire interactive complex of social structures and institutions?

This is a question, indeed a dilemma, which the Tokyo conference ignored, which Freire deals with extensively, and which the comparative analysis has underscored.

The question is raised not in support of Freire's analysis. Rather, the question is raised because it must be answered; an analysis such as Freire's must be made whatever its conclusions, if educational activities are, in fact, to effect the ends which both works in question suggest they should.

It is in avoiding such an analysis that the Tokyo conference seriously reduced the prospects of its recommendations having the kind of beneficial results that it propounded.

In our examination of the conclusions of the Tokyo conference, it was shown that there was considerable stress on effecting educational change, and corollary social change, within the context of national interest and policy. It was pointed out that although it was understandable, under the circumstances of the conference, why such stress was made, it seemed unrealistic that such changes could actually be achieved in the terms of the conference suggested in most,

if not all, nations in today's world.

To expand on this point, it would be necessary for the people of each nation (society) on this earth to realistically, totally, and honestly, re-evaluate the institutions of their society to critically assess whether in fact the roots of many social evils lie embedded deep in the heart of many of these social institutions and the values which they reflect. If these social institutions are found to contain inherent in them, factors which are at the root of social evils and which promote or maintain inhuman conditions, then these institutions must be changed, an extremely complex process which, because of the inter-relatedness of social structures, implies reformation of the entire society and its entire ethical/moral base.

To effect such changes in any quick and direct manner would be extremely difficult, perhaps impossible. Such changes would involve not only alteration of social institutions but also of the consciousness which led to these institutions and which has been formed by them, that is, of the collective societal consciousness.

To effect such changes, if at all possible, would demand a concerted educational campaign aimed at altering the individual citizen's attitudes, perceptions and conceptions of various aspects of their society and their interactive role in it.

The discussion has come full circle, and the dilemma, the basic question raised earlier, arises again. How do we educate people to the necessity of basic changes in social structures through institutions which are based in, reflect, and uphold those same social structures?

There is a corollary dilemma.

The premise of a few paragraphs ago assumes that to alleviate evil conditions in society it is necessary to obliterate the cause; that if the cause lies in social structures, these structures must be changed; and that, accordingly, the citizens in a society which contains social evils must re-examine their society to discover whether, in fact, such social causes exist.

This raises another question. Is it possible that such an examination be undertaken if the citizens (a) do not conceive of their society in the terms we are discussing, (b) do not conceive of the possibility that there may be basic contradictions and evils within the structures and institutions of their society, and (c) do not conceive of

themselves as capable of examining their society to discern these evils and acting on the society to alleviate them?

The most obvious solution is education which examines these conceptions, and makes the citizen aware of the matters which are being discussed here. Such education, however, may well be impossible if it is to be effected through social institutions which in themselves do not give cognizance to these factors and dilemmas.

Beyond this, given the fact that the consciousness necessary for basic social change was widespread, how does such consciousness manifest itself in direct action, on society, for basic change, if, in fact, as Freire suggests, the society in question does not contain within it the structures through which basic change can be effected; if in fact, the structures in the society are essentially factors which relegate against basic change; if these structures, in fact, reflect, maintain, protect, and reinforce the very consciousness which spawned them?

These are questions raised by the approach taken, and the suggestions offered, by the Tokyo conference when compared with the analysis of Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

The conference saw certain serious evils in society - in the global society of mankind, in specific societies (i.e. nations), and between societies. It attempted to recommend ways that education might help to alleviate these evils. Its suggestions are insightful. Even as it stands the Final Report reflects significant progress in terms of suggesting ways of making education more of a human endeavour.

However, if the causes of the social evils with which this conference was concerned go beyond a matter of simple ignorance, then the conference has not adequately or directly addressed itself to the problem, nor has it presented a solution. The conference did not come to grips with a very basic question - is what they suggest as an approach to, and rationale for, the education of adults (and by implication, for human beings of all ages), is what they suggest possible within the majority of contemporary nations, given the kinds of problems this chapter has discussed?

IV. Insights Suggested by Freire's Approach

The thrust of this chapter to this point has been to call into question the possibility of the recommendations of the Final Report being carried out in many of today's nations, to call it into question to the extent that it becomes evident that a more productive endeavour, for congresses of the nature of the Tokyo Conference, would be to honestly and realistically tackle the problems this chapter raises, lest they, in fact, end up making recommendations which merely provide a humane gloss for an inhuman world.

As was stated at the beginning of this chapter, it is not the intent of this paper to answer questions, but, rather, to suggest questions which must be asked, questions which arise out of an examination of the Final Report in light of a comparative analysis with Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

In this context, however, it is valuable to examine Pedagogy of the Oppressed to assess whether it provides at least the basis for some answers to the questions which this comparative analysis has given rise to.

The position of this paper is that it does offer at least some insights to possible approaches:

(a) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of a complete analysis - an analysis that gets to the roots of the causes of the deprived existence of such a great proportion of the human race. It suggests the importance of going beyond the external manifestations of this condition and attempting, as well, to define the essence of the condition. Such an analysis is indispensable to a consistent educational philosophy geared to alleviating such conditions as Freire and the final report describe.

(b) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of looking at Man first, then his relationship to society, rather than taking society as a given, non-negotiable absolute and trying to place Man within this social/national context.

(c) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of examining the possibility that all members of a society are dehumanized by inhuman conditions, not just those who are deprived materially. It suggests the importance of looking at social ills as an indication of disease throughout all society, endemic to its structures, rather than as peculiar to only one segment.

(d) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of examining the possibility that any society (nation) which is unwilling to commit itself to the kind of trusting, dialogical educational and social process Freire recommends, is in fact guilty of perpetrating exactly the kind of domesticating socio-cultural milieu which Freire insists characterizes oppressive societies.

(e) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of examining the possibility that, at their most benevolent, the aim of the "power elite" is at best to bring about a situation whereby most citizens possess a relatively equal standard of living in terms of material wealth, and also share the same consciousness level and value structure, that is, that of the elite group. Freire's analysis also suggests the possibility that even given such a situation, it still constitutes domestication - the prevailing consciousness may well be false, in which case people are merely happier in their domestication and dehumanization.

(f) Freire's analysis suggests the importance of re-examining processes in the light of the theorem that non-human or anti-human processes cannot achieve humanistic ends.

In conclusion, then, it can be stated that the essence of the challenge which Freire's theories present to those who put their faith in the kind of approach that is reflected in the Final Report of the Tokyo conference, is the challenge to find an alternative to revolution as an authentic means of humanizing man's education and his society; and to do so they must address themselves to the problems raised in this chapter.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted, through a comparative analysis of the Final Report of the Third International Conference on Adult Education and Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, to assess the value of the Final Report as a realistic and practicable guide to further developments in adult education throughout the world.

The analysis undertaken has shown that in spite of many progressive insights in regard to facilitating and effecting functional adult education, the report, by omission, may well have rendered itself impotent in terms of ever serving as a realistic blueprint for actual reform of either education or society.

The analysis of the report is incomplete and evades certain crucial issues which must be faced if the aims of education, as defined by the report, are to be achieved.

Specifically, the report did not examine the critical question as to whether the measures which it suggests will actually effect the ends, which it wished to achieve, within today's prevailing social structures. Given the analysis of Paulo Freire, this is a question of profound import.

In view of the limitations of the conference as discussed in this paper, it may be felt by some that the criticism central to this analysis is both unrealistic and unfair.

The view of the author is that the core ideas of the report have such potential, such profound human "rightness", that it is not enough for the concerned educationist to merely salute the banner, applaud the rhetoric, and go loyally on with the work.

It is significant that the bureaucrats and educational officials of nations and international organizations are beginning to grasp, and cope with, concepts of such power, concept which for years have been the domain of a few visionary humanist philosophers and educational theorists.

Educationists, however, concerned with the issues central to this paper, while applauding progress, must at the same time offer hard, constructive criticism, spurring further progress.

And there has been progress. A simple comparative reading of the final reports of the first three international conferences on adult education (Elsinore, 1949; Montreal, 1960; Tokyo, 1972) offer proof of this and hope for the future.

The progress made, however, is due to the evolution of new critical perceptions which have cut through flawed, inconsistent assumptions and conclusions to reach closer and closer to the heart of the problems.

Such a process must continue.

It has been the hope of the author in preparing this thesis to promote, in whatever small way, the furthering of this process.

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ABSTRACT OF

An Examination of the Conclusions of the Third International Conference on Adult Education (Tokyo, 1972) in the light of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed

The study examined the conclusions of the Final Report of the Third International Conference on Adult Education (Tokyo, 1972), in light of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, first, to assess the coherence and practicability of the Final Report, and second, to ascertain whether Freire's analysis offers any insights which might supplement the Final Report.

A critical analysis was presented of both the Final Report and Pedagogy of the Oppressed; a comparison/contrast was made of the main concepts in these documents; an assessment was made of the value of the Final Report as a practicable guide to future planning and practice; certain insights suggested by Freire's analysis were outlined.

The study concluded that the Final Report is inadequate as a realistic guide to future adult education activities, in spite of many progressive recommendations, because of severe limitations in depth and scope of analysis regarding both the problems to which the conference directed itself, and the suggested solutions to these problems. Six specific insights emerging from Freire's analysis were outlined, with the suggestion that these would be helpful in alleviating the limitations of the Final Report.