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DISCUSSION

CURSORY COMMENTS ON THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE DE LANGE PROPOSALS IN THE SPECIAL ISSUE OF *PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION* (MAY 1982)

G A J Griessel

Many of the criteria applied are untenable because of their superficial political transparency (Popper) and total lack of genuineness (cf Heidegger's 'Eigentlichkeit'). It is a pity that so-called scientists attempt to practice the science of education by caricaturizing the HSRC report. In the extremely complicated polyvalent South African situation it is imperative to try and grasp the essentials of education: in evaluating the De Lange recommendations these recommendations must be brought into relief against the ontological structure of education as universal phenomenon. The arguments pro and contra do not rest on preconceived socio-political doctrines supplemented by prejudiced comments from The Star or The Rand Daily Mail or The Sowetan! And, finally, when certain arguments start to totter like the walls of Jericho they are propped up by naive slogans against CN-education - the big bad wolf howling around the strongholds of 'liberal' education.

It is the editorial policy of this journal to 'welcome vigorous dissenting opinions' but the serious pedagogician can only engage in a fruitful scientific discussion if all the participants maintain an openness which makes a meaningful dialogue possible. The most alarming aspect of the deluge of negative comments by the four contributors is the fact that their pronouncements are so obviously influenced by pragmatistic-positivistic principles.

I must point out that, in general, the most vociferous critics are politicians, economists and business executives while educationalists are keeping a low profile.

The well known didactician Brezinka recently pointed out that the present pre-occupation with job training as priority in education, is one of the major causes of a warped Western European community structure.

One cannot argue against the fact that changes are imperative but not in the sense of an 'umwertung alle Werte' as propagated by the anti-establishment establishment: evolutionary change however must take cognisance of the fact that we are living in a metabletic situatedness where ontic invariants give a certain degree of stability to a flexible Da-sein. Please remember: revolutionary changes based on socio-political and economic considerations alone may destroy those unchangeable basic forms of being human that guarantee the very survival of modern man in a depersonalized technocratic dispensation.

May I add to the remarks of Van den Berg on equality ("A programme to attain education of equal quality for all inhabitants")? What about the relation between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome? All human beings, regardless of race, colour, creed, sex or age are completely equivalent due to the same ontological status. But this equivalence can only be protected if we acknowledge man's inequality in equivalence. Unfortunately Van den Berg cum suis have reduced this important anthropological category to a rigid black: white relatedness with inequivalence as the one and only characteristic. Inequality must be seen, inter alia, against the following facticities of being: the time and place of a child's birth; his physical, intellectual and emotional heredity structure; his language and national concept; the environment in which he grows up and the traditions, morals and standards of the particular community to which he belongs - briefly: his historicity. Even the far left secretary of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) had to concede that a new approach is necessary "to minister to the specific needs of each pupil having regard for his ethnic or cultural attachment".

It is only along these lines that a fruitful dialogical-dialectical discussion seems to be viable. When evaluating the De Lange proposals the formulation of criteria demands a high standard of unbiased thinking that is ontological rather than ideological and must lay claim to objectivity and universal validity. Looking critically at the HSRC report priority must be given to the following criterion: Is there

scope in these proposals for the child (black, white or coloured) in his effective-dynamic relation to an unknown reality to experience relief from his yearning for existential security?

ARTICLES

A CRITIQUE OF FAY'S CONCEPT OF A CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY

Mike Kissack

Brian Fay has formulated his critical social theory in response to what he sees as the inadequacies of both empirical and interpretive sociology. He criticizes empirical theory for regarding "social facts" as similar to natural facts, susceptible to the same investigative methods. Such a naturalist methodology, Fay argues, ignores the crucial intercession of consciousness in human action.

Interpretive sociology, Fay asserts, has emerged from just such a critical perspective on empirical theory. It focuses on the rather nebulous area of behaviour and belief, asserting that a phenomenological study of society is the only way to understand social and political developments, despite its inevitable ambiguity and imprecision.

Fay's central concern is the relationship between social theory and political practice. He views interpretive sociology as implicitly conservative, because its emphasis on the reduction of social conflict through the improvement of understanding and rational communication reinforces the status quo.

Fay believes that interpretive sociology lacks a critical component, necessary if it is to contribute to significant social change. He also seems to doubt the effective impact of rational discourse on political developments. "Any political theory ... which thinks that the simple presentation

of ideas will foster a change in social actors' self-conceptions, is naive". (1)

As an alternative to both empirical and interpretive sociology, Fay offers his critical social theory, which focuses on the felt needs and sufferings of subordinate groups, rather than on detached rational appeals. He claims that it is superior to empirical and interpretive sociology because its relevance and contribution to the alleviation of suffering through radical social change can be demonstrated.

This article reviews his claims, concentrating particularly on some of the problems raised by his simultaneous adherence to democratic ideals and a pragmatic theory of truth.

In the final chapter of his book, Fay outlines the characteristics of a Critical Social Theory, which he believes is superior to Positivist and Interpretive theories of society. He emphasizes that Critical Social Theory is not prescriptive. Its analytical insights should be presented to a "dissatisfied group" in society to facilitate its understanding about the structural reasons for its sufferings and the absence of its need-fulfilment. The Theory should expose the ideological perspectives which reconcile the group to the status quo and render it politically quiescent. Finally it should help the dissatisfied group to articulate an alternative to the existing system, and suggest a strategy for its attainment.

Critical Social Theory should initiate a transformation process, which will be regulated by the wishes of its beneficiaries ie the dissatisfied group. The democratic character of the Critical Social Theory will therefore be assured. The truth of the theory will be demonstrated by its acceptability to the dissatisfied group, and by the successful transformation of society, to which it has contributed.

For the purposes of discussion, this article examines three aspects of Fay's Critical Social Theory. Firstly, the theory's focus on a "dissatisfied group's" needs will be considered. The absence of a specification and evaluation of the "need-object" is shown to be a serious defect in the theory. Secondly, Fay's concept of truth will be examined, focussing particularly on the criteria for a truthful Critical Social Theory, namely acceptability and effectivity. It will be shown that these two criteria can become mutually exclusive during the course of political action, should dissent occur within the dissatisfied group, and that an attempt to remain faithful to these concepts simultaneously

could result in political inactivity. Finally, some of the implications of the "alleviation of suffering" as a motivation for the acceptance of the Critical Social Theory will be considered.

PS Wilson has argued (2) that any discussion about "needs" logically entails a consideration about the ends around which those needs are formulated. The question must be posed, "A need for what - the satisfaction of a desire, the achievement of an aim?" The desires and aims must themselves be evaluated, before the legitimacy of the need can be ascertained.

Fay neglects this when he merely asserts that a Critical Social Theory must be concerned with the needs of a dissatisfied group. Portraying the issue in broad Marxist terms (and it is clear that Fay is working within the Marxist tradition), it is evident that a ruling capitalist class needs cheap labour to maximize its profits. The subordinate working class needs to eliminate the capitalist system to terminate the exploitative conditions in which it lives. As indicated in Wilson's argument, the ends (a capitalist or socialist system) around which the needs are formulated, must be justified before the needs themselves can be assessed and approved.

By proclaiming the commendable nature of his Critical Social Theory, and assertions that it must address itself to the needs of a subordinate and dissatisfied group, Fay is automatically assuming the superiority of the subordinate group's aims; to declare the legitimacy of its needs is to approve the system which will satisfy them. This is an assumption which impairs Fay's argument; the cogency of the argument would be enhanced if the superiority of the system, to which the needs are related, was demonstrated.

Unless the evaluation of aims is conducted, one may infer that a Critical Social Theory becomes commendable if it concerns itself with a dissatisfied group; a group's emotional disposition then becomes a criterion for the theory's acceptability. (Its propositions are partly acceptable if they address themselves to the needs of a dissatisfied group; the needs are legitimate if they are those of a dissatisfied group). This could lead to conclusions completely at variance with the Marxist tradition out of which the theory has emerged.

Assume that a capitalist ruling class has been overthrown. A socialist system supersedes the capitalist one, but former capitalists are not killed. They are now a dispossessed class

within the new society, and presumably they will be dissatisfied or discontented. A Social Theory focussing on their condition (the theory will be critical because it is addressed to a dissatisfied group) would only be acceptable (it would fulfil the dissatisfied group's needs) if it had counter-revolutionary potential; counter-revolution (the restoration of the capitalist system) might be the only way to eliminate dissatisfaction and fulfil the group's needs.

If this inference is unacceptable (as it surely must be within a Marxist analysis), what alternatives can be envisaged? The obvious one is to conduct the process of evaluating ends, and thereby attempt to legitimate (socialist) needs. The second is to proscribe any system which appears to be pro-capitalist. This however entails problems. It belies the Critical Social Theory's claim to be non-prescriptive; although it does not thereby prescribe the precise nature of the alternative, it does prescribe that it shall not contain any capitalist components. And this entails difficulties for the democratic claims of the theory. One may assume that the demystifying task of the theory will persuade the dissatisfied group to prefer a non-capitalist system, but there is no guarantee that the dissatisfied group will not want to retain elements of capitalism (eg a mixed economy). If one is faithful to the democratic principles of the theory, one will be obliged to accept this, despite the theory's implicit intention that democracy and socialism will be features of the new system.

The truth of any social theory is obviously a basic criterion for its acceptability. Critical Social Theory is verified by a pragmatic definition of truth, according to Fay; it is true if it is accepted by the dissatisfied group and if it contributes towards the successful transformation of society (ie it is beneficial for the dissatisfied group). Although this pragmatic definition of truth is evidently basic, there are also elements of a correspondence definition.

Critical Social Theory can help a dissatisfied group to perceive the structural causes of its oppression, poverty and frustration. It can expose the ideological perspectives which conceal the nature of class domination. These complex analyses could be subjected to examination not only by affected groups, but by any disinterested observer as well. The statements about perception and domination could be described as 'correct' because they correspond with the realities of the social situation. This accords with a conventional conception of truth.

However, since Fay's interest is in the practical implications of social theory, it is the translation of this analysis into action which really preoccupies him, and consequently he emphasizes the pragmatic definition of truth. The truth of the critical theory will be demonstrated by its contribution to the successful alteration of the existing social structure. The truth of the theory is therefore established retrospectively according to the effects of its application.

Having distinguished the two criteria for the truth of the Critical Social Theory (acceptability for the dissatisfied group and its effectiveness in application), a close analysis of the relationship between the two is pertinent. Superficially they appear to be compatible, but a close examination of the two discloses how intractable dilemmas could arise for those attempting to adhere simultaneously to effectivity and acceptability as criteria for the truth of the Critical Social Theory.

Fay's reference to a dissatisfied group assumes consensus (or at least majority support) both in its opposition to prevailing circumstances and in its assent for an alternative system. His failure to consider the problem of serious dissent and its resolution amongst the members of a dissatisfied group conceals major problems likely to arise in political action.

A Critical Social Theory will be considered true if it is effective and acceptable to the dissatisfied group whose interests it promotes. Its effectivity cannot be ascertained prior to its implementation, but any group undertaking political action will formulate strategies and debate goals. Disagreements about either may arise. How will such conflicts be resolved within the context of Fay's Critical Social Theory?

Assume that there is a minority within the dissatisfied group, convinced that a particular course of action will be disastrous for the oppositional or revolutionary movement. The 'truth' of their objections to the majority position and of their proposed alternatives cannot be demonstrated, because truth can be established only retrospectively. In Fay's terms, what they propose cannot be true, since it does not have the support of the majority of the dissatisfied group. If the conviction of the dissident group is so strong that they decide to impose their will on the majority (assuming they have the resources to do so) to avoid disaster, they will be betraying their commitment to the democratic process, integral to the critical theory. Should they proceed with

this minority action, and succeed in transforming the social system to the benefit of the dissatisfied group, what are the consequences for Fay's critical theory?

Clearly the incompatibility of majority support and effectivity as criteria for the truth of the theory is demonstrated, through the emergence of obvious contradictions; if the majority supports a course of action, outlined by the critical theory, then that course of action is 'true' (on the grounds of acceptability), but if the implementation is unsuccessful, the theory becomes 'false' (because it is ineffective). If a minority group proposes a course of action, its critical theory is 'false' (since there is no majority support), but if it violates the democratic procedure and imposes its will on the majority, thereby producing a new social order acceptable to the dissatisfied group, then its critical theory is 'true' because it is effective. Majority support (acceptability) and effectivity are considered by Fay as the fundamental criteria for the truth of his critical theory, yet the problem of dissent reveals that these could be mutually exclusive. Any political agent attempting to direct his action according to these tenets could be paralysed by these basic contradictions.

Fay's neglect of the problem of dissent possibly emanates from his failure to consider the question of evaluation of ends (as indicated in the references to Wilson earlier in this article). The above discussion on majority support and effectivity was concerned with problems of dissent over strategy. Such issues are inextricably related to those of goals, and such considerations inevitably entail evaluation; what kind of system will supersede the one which creates the dissatisfied group? Obviously one which will eliminate the group's dissatisfaction, and fulfil its needs. Disagreement could arise about the kind of system which would satisfy the group's needs, as well as dispute about the nature of the group's real needs. A dissatisfied proletarianized group in colonial Africa may assert that it needs land; this may be uncontentious, but how shall they hold it once the colonial power has been removed, through private tenure or collectively? Should they practise commercial or subsistence agriculture? Which will satisfy their real needs within the complexities of an interdependent global economy? Critical Social Theory's focus on needs and its identification of theoretical truth with acceptability and effectivity does not help to resolve these crucial dimensions of political action.

A Critical Social Theory is intended to foster the fulfilment of a dissatisfied group's needs. In addition Fay indicates that it should promote the alleviation of the dissatisfied

group's sufferings. If acceptability is a criterion for the truth of the Critical Social Theory, it is evident that the alleviation of suffering is a criterion for its acceptability. It is certainly not rational demonstrability which determines the acceptability of the theory.

Reference has been made to the theory's failure to provide guidance in disputes about strategies and goals for the dissatisfied group. Envisaging an alternative social and economic system has presented major problems within the Marxist tradition, one of the most central being a concept of social justice (at least outside the postivistic Marxist tradition, which would identify justice and necessity). To criticize an existing social system and demand the improvement of a dissatisfied group's situation is to hold implicitly an alternative conception of society; one which is a moral improvement on the existing one, a society which is just.

Although Fay is working within the Marxist tradition, his emphasis on emotion (the desire for the alleviation of suffering) rather than rationality as the criterion for the acceptability of a critical theory seems to be a deviation from the traditional Marxist outline for a truly just and liberated society. This outline tends to emphasize a transition to a system in which social conflict will be eliminated and general satisfaction (absence of group dissatisfaction) will ensue. Fay's concentration on the alleviation of the dissatisfied group's sufferings endows his critical theory with a sectionalist bias. Its preoccupation with a dissatisfied group ignores the general consideration of a just social system (as opposed to a sectional interest), a consideration which can only be conducted at a rational level (despite the major and fundamental difficulty of reconciling emotional dispositions to rational prescriptions). Fay's approach is reminiscent of the liberal concept of a 'balance of interests', between different social groups or classes. He obviously disapproves of the balance which favours capitalists over workers, and intends the critical theory to contribute towards an alteration of this 'balance' in favour of the dissatisfied group. Nowhere within his theory is the future of the potentially dispossessed (and consequently dissatisfied) group considered. This is a defect firstly because it is a deviation from the Marxist tradition in which he is writing (and is therefore an immanent critique), and secondly because it obliges Fay to justify the 'alteration of balance' ie it reintroduces the problem of evaluation of ends, a serious omission throughout his entire exposition.

Notes

(1) Brian Fay Social Theory and Political Practice p 90

(2) PS Wilson Interest and Discipline in Education

TWO CONCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

Ray Basson

1 Introduction

The term 'curriculum design' is used in a number of different ways. It may refer to the total number of subjects which together constitute a curriculum, or it may refer to the problem of content selection and organization which are key issues in designing a subject curriculum. The former is primarily concerned with macro legalistic curriculum considerations at the level of national or provincial planning, whilst the latter is primarily concerned with the micro individualistic curriculum consideration at the level of the school classroom. The latter usage of the term is the focus of this article, that is, with curriculum design at the level of classroom practice.

The central and recurring questions asked by curriculum designers are (i) what content is to be taught? and (ii) who decides what content is to be taught? The problems of collection and legitimation of curriculum content are well-known to both 'theorists' and 'practitioners' in education. The wide variety of conceptions of curriculum which have emerged since the early sixties, when the curriculum re-emerged as an issue for debates in education, make particular contributions to our understanding the problem of design, as E Eisner and E Vallence show in Conflicting Conceptions in Curriculum. (1)

At a general level, however, two trends are discernable. Some conceptions assume that curricula can be planned rationally in great detail, whilst others assume that curricula provide opportunities within which learning may take place. The first tends to assume knowledge to be unproblematic. It is selected by experts outside the school context, is packaged like a commodity, and disseminated to teachers who manage it in seeking to change pupil behaviour in pre-specified ways. The second assumes knowledge to be problematic. It needs to be consciously constructed by teacher-pupil participation in the ongoing curriculum activities which specify the milieu in which pupils may discover regularities which structure a subject.

In this article, the former is called Rational Curriculum Planning (RCP), and the latter Process Curriculum Planning

(PCP). These two conceptions of curriculum will be discussed in an attempt to describe two prominent and contrasting conceptions of curriculum, which, perhaps, will help us better understand curricula, as well as the variety of conceptions of curriculum in the curriculum literature today.

Whilst RCP and PCP are discussed separately, it is for the sake of describing difference only. The intention in this article is to suggest that each of the conceptions addresses different curriculum needs and hence complement rather than exclude each other in designing a curriculum. An adequate design in this view is thus both one in which the intention is to change pupil behaviour in fairly direct ways to accord with desirable ends, and one in which 'discovery' or 'creativity' is taken seriously, suggestions about the milieu in which learning may take place being the main point of the design.

2 Rational Curriculum Planning

Rational curriculum planning stresses the need for clarity on the ends of a curriculum and on the means whereby they may be achieved, and the efficient utilization of resources in achieving an end. This conception dominates curriculum literature because it is these characteristics of clarity and efficiency which have given rise to the technological advances of our age. The methods of science provide an objectively tested base for theory-building. These theories are widely generalizable and are applied to problems in the world. With its antecedents in science and technology, RCP, not surprisingly, has spawned a powerful technology of its own, with which we are not unfamiliar.

Rational curriculum planners proceed systematically through several clearly defined steps, which are offered as a prescription for curriculum design:

(a) At the outset, designers attempt to gain consensus on the ends of the curriculum both at a fairly general level (aims) and at a very specific level (objectives, intended learning outcomes, ...). Agreement is also secured on the specific definition of the latter, which is usually stated in overt behavioural terms, which lend themselves to measurement. (For example, they consist in and are testable by pupil behaviour.)

(b) Outcomes can then be stated explicitly and unambiguously. They direct the learner's attention

to the behaviour expected of him (to recall ..., to understand ..., to analyse ...), how his behaviour is to be changed and what content is to be learned.

These statements are classified from the most simple to the most complex, and ordered into different levels of difficulty. Thus teaching proceeds systematically from the most simple to more complex learning behaviours, or, if learning at a higher level is the objective of a lesson, it will assume that more simple learning behaviour has already taken place. This classification may proceed on an a priori basis relying on the educational persuasion and the persuasiveness of the designer (for example J Wilson's suggested basis for a taxonomy (2), or one could use a formal classification system, a taxonomy (3) which in effect does the job, for the designer, who then classifies his goal statements accordingly.)

This (a) and (b) is perhaps the most difficult part of the designer's task, some project members (eg Science 5 - 13) having spent several years on these two steps alone.

(c) The most efficient method for teaching this content to pupils is chosen; teaching is aimed at changing pupil behaviour in a fairly direct and unproblematic manner, hence adding new behaviours to pupils' behaviour repertoires.

(d) It then becomes necessary to assess the success of the curriculum, ie to measure the extent to which pre-specified goal statements have been reproduced in pupil behaviour.

Evaluation is seen as an integral part of designing a curriculum. Its results (quantified, valid and reliable) lead to judgements about the curriculum's success in changing pupil behaviour.

(e) This quantified evidence leads to discussion of the original blueprint with the purpose of improving its clarity by restating objectives in language, or by attending to classification or definition problems, which had not been anticipated. Designers thus adjust the blueprint until a satisfactory level of pupil performance is achieved. Once this has been achieved the design is complete.

The design may be developed further to be widely disseminated; or, it may be the ongoing work of teachers attempting to design and improve their curricula without any intention of disseminating the final product. In the context of rational curriculum planning, the designer is usually a professional working outside the school context. He makes decisions about the nature of the curriculum to be implemented in particular school contexts, and hence influences the discretion of both teachers and pupils. In this view, the teacher manages the prescribed curriculum designed by 'experts' outside the school context, whilst pupils master the knowledge contained in the materials provided.

This view of curriculum clearly has its share of design problems. It has great appeal, and perhaps describes the tacit conception of curriculum in most South African schools, which is not to be unexpected if one considers its appeal to an educational system dominated by a powerful bureaucracy. It clearly fulfils an important curriculum need which designers and teachers alike would be ill-advised to ignore. Routinized aspects of a curriculum may need the attention of designers and teachers alike precisely because mechanical routines may frequently be low on their list of curriculum priorities and therefore considered not to be in need of serious attention.

Perhaps the ideas of curriculum theorists such as RW Tyler (4), G Posner and AN Ruditsky (5), proponents of this conception of curriculum, may serve as a reminder of the importance of thinking through and obtaining clarity on the large number of mechanical activities pre-supposed in education. Perhaps reactions against them serve to remind us that a curriculum need not be dominated by purely instrumental notions of education.

Critiques of rational curriculum planning abound (see Stenhouse (6), Sockett (7) and MacDonald Ross (8)). A recent critique from a Bergsonian point of view argues that RCP is founded on two serious errors. 'The first is the error of thinking that the intellect has an hegemonic right to the notion of rationality, and the second is the error of thinking that there is no significant difference between the methods appropriate in moulding inert matter to serve our purposes and the methods appropriate in education.' (9) It is a criticism directed at curriculum designs, or any notion which suggests that curricula can be designed exclusively by rational methods, and it seeks equal logical space in curriculum theory for 'invention' or 'creativity'. This will be pursued in PCP.

A fairly standard criticism suggests that teachers do not proceed in this way, and that it is artificial to insist that they do.

This claim perhaps gives an indication of the type of criticisms of RCP, and how they can be misleading. Such criticisms are far from being as unproblematic as their authors would like us to believe. It is suggested in this article that any good curriculum design consists in part of fairly routinized activities, and RCP addresses this need. To suggest that it is not part of practice and, thus, is to be construed as artificial is misleading to say the least.

Researchers like Brady (10) ask the question seriously and attempt to collect data to guide theory building. He cites research which has examined the importance (ie the number of times each element was used, and how often a variable was the first planning decision made) given by teachers to specific curriculum planning elements (ie to objectives content, method or evaluation), and is critical of them as they have not been examined in relation to a conceptual model. He therefore developed the Curriculum Model Questionnaire (CMQ) to study this relationship in order to establish whether teachers' planning decisions followed sequentially or followed a random pattern of interactions. Unfortunately, his results are not available. However, he has taken this question seriously, and his concern may be pursued in another way.

Curriculum design is concerned with what takes place at the level of classroom practice (This is even true of RCP). In the sense that good teaching already does it, practice is ahead of theory building. Self-monitored practice may produce 'data' which can be related to a conception of curriculum planning. The difference between the data of self-monitored practice and a well validated reliable instrument like the CMQ is that the former is context-bound, whilst the latter is detached from particular contexts and attempts to establish patterns which might be applicable to all contexts.

The teacher as 'researcher' (6) through sensitive self-monitoring, may generate data to identify (i) whether their planning decisions are organized sequentially or interactively, and (ii) whether planning decisions differ with different subjects taught. The conclusions reached are likely to hold true in that context. The criticism, then, suggests a rather narrow conception of man. Teachers cannot be told how to behave. They are more likely to be autonomous people who understand and know how to work with the

constraints of their profession.

It is with this particularity of practice, rather than the generality of tested theory, that curriculum is ultimately concerned (11). In this respect, sensitive self-monitoring of practice may be useful in attempting to understand one's own planning decisions at the level of classroom practice. The general claims of theory, however, need to be tested against particular planning decisions prior to becoming useful at that level. Thus Schwab is likely to argue, that how teachers plan their curricula is necessarily an open question, as the generality of theory is inimical with the particularity of practice. He is likely to warn against the dangers of applying theory uncritically in practice suggesting that one's view of a subject either because of an explicit decision or because it is implicit in practice, is restricted as it offers only one perception of the subject, a sort of 'tunnel vision'. He is likely, in addition, to warn against too narrow a conception of man.

The criticism of RCP (that teachers don't plan curricula in this way) is thus misleading in various ways : (a) it seems to be partial to a notion of curriculum which has no ends at all. Whilst it must be conceded that such curricula might exist, it is unlikely that they are the norm. It is likely that curricula have in addition to such a dimension, ends and means whereby they may be achieved; (b) the criticism is interesting as it raises broad educational issues, and seems to rest on fairly restricted assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the conception of man. Further to (a), teachers have discretion and cannot be told what they do or do not do; it is perfectly feasible that they may monitor and refine curricula; (c) Whilst teachers do have considerable autonomy over 'what they teach' and 'how they teach it', it is misleading to suggest that their discretion is free of any constraints. The particularities of school contexts, in the first instance, limit their discretion, as do wider social and economic structures outside the school. It is necessary at least to recognize such restraints and how they limit teacher autonomy. To sum up, whilst it has been severely criticised, means-end planning remains an essential part of any curriculum design.

The great advantage of RCP is its clarity and efficiency. In RCP pupils know what has to be learned and know whether they have learnt it. Staskun's (12) evaluation of a chemistry course, specifying in advance the objectives to be learned, indicated (i) that students preferred this design and, (ii) that their grades improved significantly as a result.

There are numerous examples of rational curriculum planning. A glance at their 'projects' shows the wide variety of interpretations that this model has spawned. A good example is perhaps the chemistry course for paramedical students at the University of the Witwatersrand, as reported by MG Staskun (12). "Mathematics for the Majority", a school council project developed in the UK, is a design based upon performance objectives and is aimed at the school-leaver. G Posner & AN Rudnitsky stress intended learning outcomes in two designs they have published: (a) "A Design for a Summer Hockey School Programme for beginners" and (b) "A Design for German, Level III". A liberal interpretation of curriculum planning by objectives, which is combined with stages of cognitive development is the wellknown Schools Council Project "Science 5 to 13" (13) which aims to develop enquiring minds and a scientific approach to problems. These designs may provide further insights to the points made earlier about RCP.

3 Process Curriculum Planning

'The "rational curriculum planner" who thinks that a rejection of the possibility of planning the educative process must lead to mere disorder is in the wrong frame of mind to understand the kind of orderliness intrinsic in the educative process..... Vital activity is life's path-finder and policy-maker, and, as in life itself, each successive moment of an educative process is an instance in creation.'

'In Bergson's theory creation is not a "capacity" of individuals at all, although life uses individuals as the focus of creation. Creation is the very essence of life... life, like conscious activity, is invention, is unceasing creation, and to the extent that we misunderstand creation we will misunderstand both evolution and growth' (9).

Process Curriculum planning (PCP) rests on assumptions about education, which are inimical with the assumptions of rational curriculum planning. The judgement of individuals is important, as are their beliefs about education: individuals work within constraints and thereby direct their lives; they are committed to activity, which they perceive to be worthwhile: the curriculum on this account indicates the conditions within which learning may take place at all. 'Creativity' is implicit in this account, it is the essence of process curriculum planning.

Two accounts develop these points. L Stenhouse (6) suggests that curriculum activities assist our understanding of the

countless other and unforeseen things of life, whilst Bruner (14) suggests that it is knowledge of the structure of a subject which assists us to make sense of new experiences of the world. Stenhouse adopts Peters' view that education '... implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it' and that it 'must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert'. Believing that education involves taking part in worthwhile activities, Peters argues that such activities have their own built-in standards of excellence, and thus 'can be appraised because of standards immanent in them rather than because of what they lead to'. They can be argued to be worthwhile in themselves rather than as means towards objectives.

In Peters' view the most important activities of this kind are the arts and the forms of knowledge. 'Curriculum activities ... such as science, history, literacy appreciation, are "serious" in that they illuminate other areas of life and contribute much to the quality of living. They have, secondly, a wide-ranging cognitive content which distinguishes them from games.... In history, science, or literature, ... there is an immense amount to know, and if it is properly assimilated it constantly throws light on, widens and deepens one's view of countless other things.' (6)

This is only part of Stenhouse's argument, but it makes his point. Subjects like history, science, literature, called forms of knowledge, are characterized by ways of thinking which are logically distinct from each other. Immanent within them are procedural principles which order subjects, by which they can be recognized and seen to be distinct from each other. Content is thus selected to reflect these principles. A subject is likely to be characterized by many principles, and the principles chosen to select curriculum content are likely to vary from teacher to teacher. They are, therefore, likely to become contentious and give rise to debate, rather than being regarded as settled 'knowledge'. Debate of competing curriculum claims is thus likely to characterize PCP. Furthermore, it is only because curriculum claims are debated that we, as designers, are able to understand the nature of educational acts which constitute the everyday life activities of subject teaching.

Bruner (14) argues that curricula should be organised around the fundamental concepts and relationships of a subject which give it structure. He claims that an understanding of structure makes a subject more comprehensible, aids memory and the transfer of training and, more importantly, helps to reduce the gap between 'elementary' and 'advanced' knowledge

in a field. In biology, for example, he suggests that pupils need to discover tropisms, the regulation of locomotion according to a fixed or built-in standard, which once grasped as a basic relation between external stimulation and locomotive action, would enable the student to handle seemingly new but, in fact, highly related information. Similarly, algebra, he suggests

> ... is a way of arranging knowns and unknowns in equations so that the unknowns are made knowable. The three fundamentals involved in working with these equations are commutation, distribution and association. Once a student grasps the ideas embodied by these three fundamentals, he is in a position to recognise wherein 'new' equations to be solved are not new at all, but variants on a familiar theme. Whether the student knows the formal names of these operations is less important for transfer than whether he is able to use them.

He makes a similar point about the unconscious nature of learning structures in learning one's native language.

> Having grasped the subtle structure of a sentence, the child very rapidly learns to generate many other sentences based on this model though different from the original sentence learned. And having mastered the rules for transforming sentences without altering their meaning - 'The dog bit the man.' and 'The man was bitten by the dog.' - the child is able to vary his sentences much more widely. Yet, while young children are able to use the structural rules of English, they are certainly not able to say what the rules are.

In order to create conditions within which learning may take place, a curriculum designer is likely to take seriously the ideas put forward by Stenhouse and Bruner. Points (a) to (e) (below) do not represent an invariant prescribed sequence or elements of an interaction. Rather, they represent statements about a prevailing milieu which might promote learning. It may assist to create a climate in which pupils are stimulated to perceive 'other' things, or a climate in which the 'discovery' of structural relationships in a subject is taken seriously.

(a) Curriculum content can be selected to reflect the principles of procedure which structure a subject. This is unlikely to be the sole prerogative of a teacher or outside expert, but he/she is likely

to take seriously a variety of views foremost amongst which is the view of the child. If materials are selected and packaged, they are likely to be of the 'pump prime' variety rather than the 'teacher proof' type of RCP.

(b) Processes are likely to be contentious both because of the criteria used to select content as well as the content selected, and because different 'experts' are likely to perceive their subject in different ways. Unlike their rational counterparts, this view of curriculum design suggests that the purpose of education is problematic and for this reason needs to be debated if it is to be understood at all. It thus addresses that aspect of curriculum which is not readily accessible to rational curriculum planning, namely, 'creativity'.

(c) A process curriculum is characterized by worthwhile activities in which pupils engage, rather than by objectives to be learned. It suggests that there is a sense in which learning about a subject is insufficient, if not impossible, without engaging in the activities which constitute that subject.

(d) On this view, both teachers and pupils are engaged in the process of learning. Both engage in continual refinement in their understanding of the subject, of its deeper structures and its rationale. Teacher-pupil relationships are thus likely to be less characterized by vertical authoritarian relationships than by horizontal democratic relationships. This has clear implications not only for teacher-pupil relations, but also for the physical arrangement of desks in classrooms, the architectural design of school buildings, and for school administration and management policies.

(e) The process curriculum, finally, places great emphasis on the breadth and variety of cognitive activities that engage students. To this extent it attempts to reduce the dominance of recall in learning. This model thus suggests that conditions need to be created whereby students can be made aware of the nature of their engagement in activities, and, being aware, can wittingly engage in them. And, perhaps, against the odds, can engage in them voluntarily.

Two examples of process curricula are the School Council sponsored "Humanities Curriculum Project" developed in Britain under the chairmanship of L Stenhouse, and "Man: A Course of Study" developed in the USA by P Dow and J Bruner. (6)

A tradition (15) which aptly describes the conception of education embodied in PCP has not been as influential as the empirical tradition from which RCP is derived. Not surprisingly, critiques of the latter are more numerous than those of the former. This tradition suggests a general criticism of PCP.

It proceeds on the assumption that subjective awareness rather than objectively tested fact is all important in learning. People construct their world with the artifacts provided by society (for example through the use of language). Knowledge is constituted in consciousness by individual acts of will and is not assumed to be 'given'. The curriculum is a statement of the milieu in which teachers and pupils engage in routines in which, firstly, they attempt to make sense of what is to be learned, and secondly, which need refinement to succeed in the classroom. This view suggests that each view of a subject is as 'valid' as any other, a view which fails to address the obvious power differentials which characterizes different subjects and the people who possess that knowledge.

Specific criticism has been directed at different process curricula. A criticism of the Humanities Curriculum Project brings into question criteria used to select its content and teaching method. The project attempts to 'protect divergence of views' (16) by promoting discussion of controversial issues, and it advocates the criteria of teacher neutrality for developing an appropriate teaching method. Bailey (17) points out that controversial issues in the context of the project refers to 'value' issues of universal human concern and argues that they can only be understood if valuative considerations are included.

Bailey makes a distinction between neutrality and impartiality. The former suggests that teachers can promote discussion independent of adopting a 'value' position, whilst the latter is

> ... to consider views and interests in the light of all possible criticisms and counter claims, and to ignore special pleading, whether from authority or whatever, about myself and whomsoever.

Impartiality, in his view, might describe more appropriately the implicit methodological assumptions of the project as stated in its handbook, and perhaps, as practiced. He is unhappy with the suggestion that arguments are merely promoted by the teacher as neutral chairman in classroom discussion. He argues that teachers may have good grounds for thinking some 'value' positions more rational than others, and that not only would the teacher be able to intervene to demonstrate such differences because of his/her commitment to a 'value' position, but that intervention would be necessitated by it. Bailey argues therefore for a much stronger definition of neutrality than is suggested by the project, for a definition which suggests that valuative considerations are what educational discourse is about, and that it is not in some way independent of 'value issues.' The teacher on Bailey's account is a 'potent' rather than a 'neutered' force for promoting discussion in the classroom. This discussion perhaps indicates the contentious nature of criteria used in designing process curricula as well as the difficulty of achieving clarity on the criteria involved.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is hoped that different approaches to curriculum design have been fairly represented in the preceeding discussion. Each approach has been used in a variety of curriculum projects. It is suggested that each approach addresses different aspects of curriculum design, and, rather than the one excluding the other, both need to be taken seriously in any curriculum.

The design problem thus becomes one of balance. This suggests that that part of a curriculum which might be considered settled needs to be held in tension by at least the recognition that what is regarded as settled is also contentious and hence open to change. Conversely, that that part of a curriculum which may be regarded as contentious and thus open to ongoing debate, needs to be held in tension with at least the recognition that aspects of learning can be routinized in fairly settled ways. It is in the search for balance in curricula that teachers lay the foundation for school-based curriculum development. Thus teachers, rather than professional curriculum designers outside the school context, become the force behind curriculum projects by assuming responsibility for designing balanced curricula which are appropriate to the contexts within which they teach, rather than merely accepting handed-down prescriptions. It seems to me that teachers in the PWV complex are nudging curriculum development in this direction.

Notes

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THE INDIVIDUAL VERSUS THE SUBJECT

David Bensusan

1 Introduction

The treatment of the individual/subject has produced widely differing and contrasting analyses both within the liberal philosophical tradition and historical materialism. The argument is nevertheless that both these traditions converge at one point in their conception of the individual/subject as a theoretical unity; the liberal tradition by aligning it with a pre-social nature, and a thrust of traditional Marxism which relegates the subject to a function (nevertheless unified) of the forces and relations of production.

The aim of this paper is to sketch in a most rudimentary way some of those areas which give rise to this issue, and to suggest some ways for a reconstruction of it within a theory of society. I want to do this by focussing on two separate fields for investigation; a) The liberal tradition which has inherited a concept of the individual apart from society and b) the incomplete treatment of the subject by Althusser in his essay on ISA'S. (1) It is hoped that this paper will provide the basis for a later comprehensive treatment of the issues and that it will also clarify some of the objections misdirected against Althusser.

2 The Liberal Perspective (2)

The general title 'liberal philosophy' is less a set of cohesive and systematic statements and more a generic description identifying a number of converging fields of discourse.

Three of these give a distinctive account of the individual/subject.

(i) Theory of Knowledge (where the issue is rationalism versus empiricism)

(ii) Political Theory (where the issue is the nature of the social contract)

(iii) Moral Philosophy (where the issue is personal autonomy)

(i) Theory of Knowledge

The rationalist tradition inherits from Descartes the concept of the cogito, a pure and pristine subject that has no origin, although ultimately it is accountable to God. This subject enters into the act of investigation, although it is itself never scrutinised. In this investigation, the reflective process is 'private'. It commences by suspending all first order forms of thought and then shifts the content of reflection to the level of a second order doubt in order to arrive at legitimate knowledge of the world. But it never suspends the article of faith in itself, the subject, as an 'absolute' source of certainty. This position contains a number of unexamined assumptions.

It reveals a classical epistemological faith in securing first a reliable point of departure before embarking on an investigation of reality. (In this sense, it sets itself up against any kind of analysis which engages with 'modes of knowledge' (3) without the prerequisite of a prior exclusive categorisation of it.)

Coupled with this is the presumption of an epistemological subject - expressed for Descartes as an originating I, preceding the cogito. This subject is deproblematised by removing it from the locus of doubt (it is always assumed within reflection, never the object of it) and is hence stripped of its social and historical character.

This separation of the cogito from the world around it leads to a view of the world that is independent of it. This view hereby eliminates the possibility of a theory of social formation in which the subject owes the fundamental construction of its identity to the reality from which it emerges. This polarisation is enforced by bifurcating the subject from the social, and by thinking away the range of its social inheritances and dispositional attributes.

Many of the strains in rationalism are reproduced in classical empiricism which is at the opposite pole of the epistemological spectrum. In common with rationalism is a preoccupation with a philosophical certainty, grounded in this instance in a faith of the senses. Empiricism rests on the postulate of an objective field of sense experience definable as the universal recourse to reality. This conception separates the subject, with his feelings, emotions, wishes, judgements, etc, from an exterior set of observables, which can be either sense data or a pure observation language. The moment the subject is reintroduced to radiate knowledge, the distinction between his 'subjective' attributes and the

so-called objective domain is collapsed. The subject is hence at once a voluntaristic interplay of passions and also the unique receptor of a simulated non-subjective reality. Knowledge perceived on the basis of an indubitable stable exterior is constructed in such a way as to by-pass the appeal to a sense of interpretation. The subject conceived after the fashion of a sponge, (4) and initially deprived of any knowledge content and other attributes, later acquires knowledge on the strength of various stringent verification tests. Although his/her role as receptor is clearly defined, what is repressed is the historical process which arbitrates the criteria for verification in the first place.

A brief comparison of the rationalist and empirical models indicates two similarities between them which are significant for the outcome of this analysis.

First, both entertain a notion of the epistemological subject that is unified and unproblematic. The I for Descartes which is a necessity for any thought process, evades scrutiny before the philosophical process of reflective thought, and hence is displaced from theory. For the empiricist, the individual is at the centre of the experiential world; all forms of sense evidence are made to pass through the subject although the historical intervention into this process is theoretically ignored.

Secondly, neither of them entertain any serious considerations about language. Descartes implicitly assumes the public dimension of language but never brings it before the scrutiny of reflection. For the empiricists, language is reduced to a vehicular function, either to be ignored or rationalised to comply with the notion of 'pure observation'.

(ii) Political Theory

In the field of political theory, the unity of the individual emerges in the context of State/individual relations where the theory attempts to justify individual submission to authority.

This issue has its origin in the Theory of the Social Contract, (5) which attempts to answer the question why the individual should submit to the authority of the State.

Basic to this argument is the presumption that each and every human being has some kind of natural characteristic which thereby entitles him to claim certain rights, commonly referred to as 'civil liberties', 'natural rights', or 'rights of man'.

Mankind on entering society faces a dilemma; whether to submit, transmit, or cede certain or all of these rights for the sake of a protected and secure existence. In most instances, the individual abrogates only certain of these as those considered inimical to the running of a civil society. The more basic rights are held to be inalienable. Attempts have been made to enshrine these in the American Declaration of Independence with its 'life, liberty and human happiness', (6) and the French Declaration, upholding 'liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression'. (7)

The cornerstone for the argument relies upon the speculation of a theoretical springboard - a state of nature and of mankind - which is independent of and prior to a political society and is characterised either by equality, inequality, harmony, warfare etc. Furthermore the way this state of nature is envisaged, produces different and incompatible arguments for the legitimisation of a civil society, that is for the accommodation of the individual and his rights by the State at large.

Many of the assumptions entertained in this classical context emerge and are reproduced in contemporary liberal debates. For instance, developments of the problem of political justification for seemingly discrete and independent individuals implicates a commonly accepted notion of social organisation. (8) According to this picture, society is conceived of as a limited space occupied by a finite number of individual members, each claiming for themselves an area within the social boundary within which they are free to move and pursue their own distinctive life style.

This account internalises certain basic assumptions of the individual derived from the Social Contract, by instating the subject within the social context but leaving it nevertheless immune from its formations. It does this by instigating the 'public/private' distinction to accommodate a space for the subject to which only he/she has priveleged access. The realm of privacy is relatively secure so long as the boundaries between each space are never transgressed. On the occasion when this does happen, questions of morality, politics, etc are then said to arise (that is when a hitherto unoccupied area is colonialised or when one person's space is transgressed by another.) Disputes on the basis of this inevitably lead to a compromise since it means removing something from the individual which was uncontestedly his (his rights) or denying to him something to which he feels he has a legitimate claim (his freedom).

Homologous to the delineation of the social into public and

private is the bracketing of the individual into an inner and outer component. The inner pertains to the aspect of the self/cogito, while the outer represents that empirical/ physical part of the individual. Such a dichotomisation however has never been sustained within the Liberal tradition even though it is a direct inheritance from a rationalist or empiricist epistemology. A far more cohesive subject has been propagated in the context of State/individual relations. Three possible propositions underlie their relationship; (9)

a. The individual creates society.

b. Society creates the individual.

c. The individual is the product of the society he creates.

For the liberal tradition, the most viable proposition is the first one. This affirms the political and epistemological status of the privileged subject as the support behind all theoretical explanation.

(iii) Moral Philosophy

There is a third segment in liberal philosophy which explicitly undertakes to defend accounts of an originating self. It goes under the general heading of moral philosophy. Although it explicitly counters a unified description of the subject in terms of natural law attributes, it nevertheless unifies the subject in terms of the category of 'agency'. Expressed in determinate moral language, interest in 'agency' has focussed around the notion of 'personal autonomy' conceived as an ideal target for individual aspirations. (10)

The debates about the features and the desirability of autonomy have been numerous, where criteria like 'reason'; making and following of rules, strength of will etc have been put forward. Some of these debates have even challenged the basic compatability of an autonomous life with a moral one, although such a challenge has issued from a theoretical eccentricity unacceptable to heyday Social Contractists.

Despite these numerous disagreements, there has nevertheless been an equal display of agreement on the desirability for upholding the category of agency. This has been defended almost unanimously by citing the need for a central core underlying all discourses. This is to be found in humanity's surrogate, personal autonomy. Indeed, it cannot be stated too strongly that agency, besides being at the centre of moral preoccupations, is at the heart of contemporary liberal

philosophy. Dearden captures this quite succinctly in the following (11) - "And it is positively valued as an ideal not just for its utility in relation to various role performances, or because of the paradox involved in asking oneself whether it really is of value, but for the satisfaction of exercising this kind of agency, and the dignity which it is felt to accord to the agent".

Leaving aside for a moment the desirability of this ideal postulate I would like to foreground a dimension to this debate which has usually been repressed. This concerns the feasability of moral debate judged against the background of the constituent and determining social processes from which the subject is extrapolated in the first place.

It can be expressed in an extreme form as follows; how far can moral discourse proceed when an investigation of the historical formation of the subject is ignored? Without advancing an impossibility thesis, a weaker claim can elucidate the same structural problematics. Can a theory of morality be defended which dislocates itself from the process of the historical construction of the subject?

Surprisingly as it may seem certain proponents within the liberal camp have conceded somewhat to this claim. Both RS Peters and R Dearden express concern for an autonomous being posited outside of any context. Peters with his grounding in psychology observes the need to qualify the autonomy of the human intellect with a notion of motivation, alias 'weakness of will'. This observation admits the limits of the faculty of Reason and accredits the 'agent' with counter-rational dimensions. Likewise, Dearden exhorts against the existential belief in 'absolute autonomy'. He infers correctly that any primal personal choice is historically incoherent (12) - 'I for one can remember no such event'. His critique is based however on the following proposition; 'By the time we reach a level of reflectiveness at which the scrutiny of criteria makes sense, we are already very substantially influenced by the culture in which we have been brought up'.

But the crucial question is not whether we have been influenced to a lesser or greater degree by culture, rather whether the subject is conceivable in any determinate form outside of a 'cultural formation'. This Dearden does not seem to consider. In certain limited respects, attempts within this tradition have been made to ground the subject by invoking the theory of 'growth'. Piaget has attempted to structure the learning situation around a cognitive developmental model, while Kohlberg has tried to marry stages

of growth with stages of autonomy. Neither of them, however, contend with the subject-as-originator as the locus of the problem, but have proceeded by attempting to reinforce the subject's position rather than interrogate it. This has led Piaget to regress into Kantian hypothesising where the strands of rationalism and empiricism meet, and Kohlberg into a universal ethical theorising. To question the origin of the subject from either of these positions is theoretically impossible.

3 The Treatment of the Subject in Althusser

I have attempted in the foregoing to identify a number of instances in liberal philosophy where the subject has either been assumed or has been at the centre of the debate; In each case, the subject has been immunised against rigorous examination. Enough has been said to indicate the need for the problematisation of this concept.

It is significant now to turn to Althusser. His emphasis of the subject in his ISA paper heralds a concise and novel contribution to the theory of social formation and hence to the possibility for an articulation of its positionality.

Before taking up certain of these issues however it is necessary to dispose of a number of objections/ misinterpretations of Althusser's position.

(i) One of the most sustained of these alleges that varying instances of the individual, expressed in terms of 'freedom', 'morality' 'agency' or whatever, is negated by Althusser at the expense of some kind of structural or deterministic imposition (note the re-emergence of the individual/State dichotomy).

Now, I have tried to indicate certain strands of essentialism which diffuse social theory with notions of man at the centre of morality, history, society, the world. The possibility of divesting these concepts of these strands has to be re-investigated in the light of whether such an investigation re-affirms a subject-orientation or whether it interrogates this orientation, or to put it technically, de-centres the subject.

(ii) Much of the criticism above accompanies a misunderstanding of the 'theoretical' nature of Althusser's work, which is evinced by the all too familiar reduction of Althusser's 'theoretical anti-humanism' to an empirical 'anti-humanist' position. This misunderstanding arises from

the liberal empiricist tradition which claims to circumvent the act of theorising, but in fact represses its object in favour of a 'subject', 'mankind', 'person', 'humanity' posited at the centre of the epistemological world.

As Hirst correctly points out; (13) 'the anti-humanism that I am concerned to defend does not seek to abolish men, or to appropriate the experience of subjectivity, but to problematise the category of the subject'.

Such an act of deconstruction is not primarily out to tackle the existential subject, but to challenge the very concept of subjectiveness ie the conditions under which the subject is made to appear, and the form it comes to assume. This point can be simply demonstrated by observing two discrete applications of the concept 'subject', the one denoting subjectiveness, and the other, a center or originating source - the respective development of each of them leading to very different theoretical positions.

(iii) The question of causation in Althusser is often criticised on crude empirical grounds, by collapsing his notion of 'structural causality' into an empirical one. Admittedly there are problems with Althusser's formulation of this concept, but these have to be seen in the context of his varying appropriations of it- compare for instance the notion of 'structural causality' in "Reading Capital" with the concepts of over-determination and structure in "For Marx". The problems that arise here concerning the compatibility of 'autonomy' with 'determination' are very real and significant not simply for the purposes of disposing of Althusser but explicitly for the reworking of these problematics within a theory of the social formation.

Likewise, any empiricist objections are to be seen in the light of Althusser's own response to them. He warns against a mis-appropriation of the 'building' metaphor by demonstrating the absurdity of conceiving of the basement as a cause of the floors above it when discussing the structural relation between the base and the superstructure. By the same token, critics are forewarned against misconstruing the concept 'determination in the last instance' on the basis of a chain of causal rings.

A far more appropriate critique of Althusser can be offered by questioning the status of the concept of the subject within his theory of social formation, rather than, like liberal critics, defending its presumed philosophical and privileged status. (14)

This invokes a central problematic of this paper which can be expressed in the following way: The initiative taken by Althusser in deploying the concept of the subject adds impetus to a theoretical revolution in which the subject is displaced/decentered analagous to the displacement of the concept earth by Copernicus. This revolution, though it is fuelled by Althusser, is not developed to any final conclusion. The subject in his writings is hence incomplete and is theoretically left hanging in the air once Althusser's development of his theory of ideology is terminated. The question is; why this indirect interrogation of the subject only, that is, only in so far as it sustains the functioning of the ideological mode?

To situate the context for a discussion of this issue, I refer the reader to my remarks at the outset of this paper. There I alleged that a thrust in certain Marxist writing has produced an unproblematic and unified subject by an act of theoretical incorporation.

The context of this debate needs to be referred to now since it gives rise to the very problematic which situates Althusser and which provides for a retheorisation of the primacy of economic determination via his theory of ideology.

This debate can be formulated as follows: within classic Marxist analysis, the problem of the primacy of the forces and relations of production as the principle economic determinant has been a central locus for discussion. One consequence of this position has been a predominant concern with the economic as the primary determination at the expense of the theorisation of the effectivity of other formations. This has produced serious limitations for a theory of the 'superstructure' and has resulted in the following restriction: the notion of ideology is confined to mode of reflection, 'truth' is reduced to the interests of the working class, the political is suspended as a practise in its own right, and the absorbtion of the subject is absorbed into the objective historical processes.

Attempts at justifying these occlusions from within this tradition have often been mechanical and simplistic. Solutions have been proferred by simply transposing the theoretical explanations grounded in Capital to other sites like education, women's rights, nationalism etc. By this token, education for instance has been conceived entirely as a system of reproduction preparing units of labour for determinate places within the economic formation, while the subject has been reduced to an appendix of the objective processes. This suppresses the crucial dialectical

intervention of the subject in history, as provided for in Marx's formulation of dialectical materialism. (15)

It is from this juncture that a critical understanding and development of Althusser's work is to proceed. Likewise it is against the same background that a theory of the subject is to be re-worked.

But to return to the original question; - why the emergence of the subject in Althusser at this point but no concomitant location of it at a site of 'relative autonomy'? The answer to this is to be found in the foregrounding of the theory of ideology by Althusser as his most significant contribution to a theory of social formation. The following rather crude exposition elucidates this point.

On working through the contours of classical Marxism, Althusser can be held to equivocate between two seemingly incompatable positions - the principle of economic determination, and the propagation of superstructural autonomy. The dilemma facing him has been to accord as much autonomy to the superstructure as to the base, but without sliding into a form of idealism. Ultimately his answer to the dilemma is to be found in his theory of ideology which is introduced as a practise in its own right traversing the entire spectrum of the social thereby solving the problem of the causal primacy of any formation. In this way he collapses the base/superstructure barrier (grounded in a false dichotomy between being and thought and vulnerable to exploitation by the rationalist/empiricist positions) and likewise recognises the ISA'S and RSA'S as 'functionally autonomous'. Ideology conceptually unifies the base and superstructure across the whole spectrum of the social and hence itself becomes a determining formation.

The implications of this have been considerable and have given rise to a number of theoretical interventions hitherto repressed.

4 Conclusion

Finally I would like to make two comments on the significance of this for a theory of the subject.

(i) For Althusser, the site of ideology indicates the operation of two distinct but nevertheless comparable practises;

a) The production and reproduction of ideology as a

necessary pre-requisite for the perpetuation of specific modes of existence ie capitalism.

b) The production of the subject of ideology at the site of a discourse in which the subject sees itself as cohesive and originating.

Both these formations are mutually sustaining; the ideological coheses the eruptions which threaten the existence of the social, (hence serving the interests of the dominant controlling class), while the subject by seeing itself as a unity, endorses the naturalising effect of ideology.

(ii) This development (16) has opened the way for a treatment of the subject as a formation (contradictory by nature) in such a way that it can now be added to a more general social theory.

This challenge has been taken up by fields of discourse as diverse as Semiotics, Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridean deconstruction. A discussion of these is the 'subject' of another paper.

Notes

(1) Louis Althusser, "Ideological State Apparatuses" in Lenin and Philosophy and other essays, New Left Books, 1972.

(2) See JS Schapiro Liberalism, Its meaning and History, New York, D Van Nostrand Company, 1958.

(3) See F Burton and P Carlen Official Discourse, London Routledge & Kegan Paul 1979.

(4) See EH Gombrich Art and Illusion, New York, Pantheon Books, 1960 for his discussion of the searchlight versus bucket theory of knowledge.

(5) See SI Benn & RS Peters Social Principles and the Democratic State London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1959 as well as; DD Raphael Problems of Political Philosophy, London, Pall Mall Press 1970 for a comprehensive treatment of the issues.

(6) See (2) pg 124.

(7) Ibid pg 128.

(8) RP Wolff "Beyond tolerance" in RP Wolff, B Moore & Marcuse A Critique of Pure Tolerance, London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1969. Here Wolff develops the implications of this model for a theory of tolerance.

(9) V Molina "Notes on Marx and the problem of individuality" in CCCS On Ideology, London, Hutchinson, 1978.

(10) See RF Dearden, PH Hirst, RS Peters (eds) Education and the Development of Reason, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1972.

(11) Ibid pg 460.

(12) Ibid pgs 448-465.

(13) PQ Hirst "The necessity of theory" in Economy and Society 8 (4) pgs 417-465.

(14) See numerous SCREEN publications for an in-depth-treatment of these issues- Screen, London, Villiers Publications 1974-82. See also S Hall, D Hobson, A Lowe & P Willis Culture, Media, Language London, Hutchinson, 1980.

(15) See K Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy trans H Zwelch Chicago: Charles H Kerr 1910. 'The economists explain to us how production is carried on in the relations given, but what they do not explain is how these relations are produced, that is to say, the historical movement which has created them.' (pg 114)

(16) R Coward & J Ellis Language and Materialism, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, have been forerunners in initiating this direction, and whose opinions have underlined my basic treatment of the problem of the 'subject'.

THE TEACHING OF FILM AND TELEVISION PRODUCTION IN A THIRD WORLD CONTEXT: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Keyan Tomaselli

South Africa offers unique raw material for a cinema exploring inter-racial relationships, rituals of resistance, class struggles and the effects of hard-line political solutions. Images, themes, plots and stories scream out for cinematic treatment. Most are neglected. Captured mainly by foreign television producers, they are screened predominantly to foreign audiences. Very few are made or financed by South Africans for South African audiences.

These productions, although critical, rarely expose the structural conditions of the apartheid social formation. They have little in common with the theory or revolutionary notions of 'Ter Cinema', or Third Cinema, which emerged during the 1960s and 1970s in other countries with colonial legacies. Moreover, the concept of 'Third World' is often misused by orthodox economists and apartheid apologists to rationalize race and class discrimination through dualistic propositions. The Third World assumes its subordinate position in terms of economic exploitation, initially by the First World, Europe, and more recently by the Second World, primarily the United States. It is characterized by a condition of economic dependency on the First and Second Worlds. A domestic colonial system within Third World countries ensures the co-option of internal bourgeoisie by international capital. The result is an active process of underdevelopment.

South Africa is a textbook example. Fortunes accrue to white, and an increasing number of black owners, while black workers function as labour units. Their families and elderly are banished to labour reservoirs called the 'homelands' which subsidise the cost of the reproduction of labour power. Whereas the economic systems of other Third World countries are not entrenched in discriminatory legislation, the pattern of exploitation is similar. In contrast to South Africa, however, the critical cinema of these countries (notably, Chile, Brazil and Algeria) show a consciousness of the structural underpinnings of their economies and their relation to international monopoly capitalism.

Ter Cinema aims at a decolonization of culture, the "making of films that the System cannot assimilate and which are foreign to its needs, or making films that directly and explicitly set

out to fight the System" (1). It aims to deconstruct bourgeois aesthetics, reconstructing them into a revolutionary form and, in so doing, involves the audience in an act of resistance.

In South Africa, a cinema of resistance in the late 1930s was used by Afrikaner Nationalists to fight Hollywood imperialism and preserve an image of the Afrikaner as an idyllic, God-fearing family man, devoted to his Afrikaner soil and his preservation as a chosen race untainted by the evils of capitalism and the city. During the mid-1940s this idealistic attitude was replaced by a more pragmatic support for an Afrikaner socialism which aimed at capturing the 'foreign' dominated capitalist system and moulding it to the Afrikaner national character. Such was the momentum of Afrikaner Nationalism that these early attempts at cinematic resistance were overtaken by the more immediate medium of the press. Today, Afrikaans cimena is mainly a cinema of imperialism, translating economic processes into cultural action where the centralization of capital into white, predominantly Afrikaner hands, is paramount.

A critical and independent cinema which resists the System from a more liberal or socialist point of view only emerged in the late 1970s. Ranging from Super-8 to 35mm, this trend appeared in the face of increasing oppression and set out deliberately to expose and exploit the current crisis in the hegemonic control by the ruling classes. However, in comparison to their Ter Cinema counterparts, South African film makers remain conservative both in terms of political stance and use of the medium. Many, for example, are unaware of the contribution and tenets of Ter Cinema. Most are politically liberal and work from the premise that apartheid is an economically inefficient and irrational, culturally discriminatory system. This view necessarily restricts their cinematic and video treatments and styles to within the limits set by apartheid and capitalist ideology with their emphasis on 'aesthetics', 'objectivity', 'neutrality', 'self-determination' and 'cultural integrity'.

These are not the concerns of Ter Cinema film makers who have an explicit understanding of the determinations of development and underdevelopment, and of how the class structure is harnessed to produce surplus value for the bourgeoisie operating in conjunction with international capital. Armed with this knowledge, Ter Cinema tries to rediscover history from the proletariat's point of view. Together with this historical materialist understanding is a concomitant comprehension of the specific theory which cinema produces about itself. Jean-Paul Fargier lists two key areas:

1. How Cinema reproduces knowledge produced by theoretical ideologies such as geography, history, sociology, medicine, economics, and so on, in a particular way which maintains the existing relations of production; and

2. how cinema, through a specific knowledge about itself, can lift the veil which normally conceals a film's ideological, political and economic function (2).

Christian Metz has commented that "A film is so difficult to explain because it is so easy to understand" (3). It is this property which so often strengthens the veil of ideology at precisely the moment when 'critical' film makers imagine they are revealing the prejudices of a society. In South Africa, this is particularly true where university hierarchies continue to see film as 'a civilizing influence', where departure from ingrained aesthetic values is regarded with suspicion, and noticeably where the film is perceived to indulge in politics rather than 'art'. Furthermore, since film and television courses are generally a sub-section of established liberal arts departments such as drama, journalism, communication and English, lecturers working within these are very often forced to accede to dominant bourgeois terminology in order to maintain their security of tenure. This schizophrenic situation will be exacerbated as increasing numbers of black students enter courses on film and television which are not offered at the tribal colleges. These students bring with them a unique experience of their conditions which is externalised in their scripts and films.

However, for various reasons, this kind of content, whether explored by technically inexperienced students or seasoned professionals, invariably lapses into bourgeois assumptions because little is known of how the cinema reproduces ideology. Consequently, the film and television courses taught by myself and my colleague, Graham Hayman, take Fargier's dictum as their base: "In the Cinema the communication of knowledge is attendant upon the production of knowledge about the cinema" (4). Or, as Nicos Poulantzas says, "a precondition of any scientific approach to the 'concrete' is to make explicit the epistemological principles of its own treatment of it" (5).

It is my intention to examine Fargier's proposition in relation to the way cinema and television studies are taught in South African universities, and in particular, the courses offered in my own department.

The study of film and television in South Africa is a relatively recent phenomenon, largely due to the introduction

of broadcast television only in 1976. Previous Nationalist governments, who barely tolerated cinema, feared its negative influence on Afrikaner culture. However, in 1971 a Government appointed Commission argued that television would be in the 'national interest' and was necessary to counteract the impending world-wide satellite saturation (6). Television thus became an extension of the state controlled radio network and is firmly placed within the hegemonic bloc (7). With it came the inevitable spin-off - home video, advertising, video games, CCTV for commerce and industry and a popular media jargon which owed more to Marshall McLuhan than rigorous theoretical considerations. Reluctantly, schools, Technikons (colleges) and universities bowed to the need to teach film and television, neatly tucking them under the auspices of other academically questionable disciplines like drama, fine art, communications and English. The Technikon (college) housing the Film School, however, has been well funded.

Not surprisingly, knowledge, patterns of learning and organizational structures were imported and transplanted in a way which perpetuates dominant ideologies and the capitalist relations of production. This co-option of film and television courses, of students and graduates, is controlled by the way their learning is structured as either:

1. professional training;

2. theoretical courses with no practical content;

3. the teaching of television in terms of the ideology, structures and organizational methods used by the television service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC-TV);

4. an integration of film and television theory and practice within conventional approaches and styles, but which are critical of the status quo, or

5. of a much more radical nature is the Rhodes University course which aims to mesh theory with practice against the background of Fargier's dictum.

The following section will briefly outline in more detail the differences between the above educational positions and explain how they are co-opted by the ruling hegemony (8).

1. Professional Training

This is provided by the Pretoria Technikon Film School established in 1964. It houses the best equipped teaching facilities in the country. The School's courses and ideology hinge on vocational training. The films produced by its students take the grammar of film for granted and make it primary: the 'ready-to-wear' set of conventions through which ideology works unnoticed. In contrast to the essentially realist, critical films made by students in departments in which I have worked, their productions have a predeliction for fantasy and the super-natural. The films are often violent in content and, owing to the conservativeness of the School, the students unconsciously reflect their social experiences within genres offering suitable disguises. The emphasis is on story-telling where the alienating influences of capitalism are hidden under narrative techniques. Legitimizing this approach with the maxim - "Even the news is a story" - the Technikon teaches that film is a story like Little Red Riding Hood. Technique and film grammar - 'the way things are done' - are considered fundamental to proper production skills. Emphasis is on the how of film making rather than the what, and the making available to the industry of "immediately productive" technicians (9).

2. History, Theory, Criticism and Appreciation

These are usually offered as part of the English syllabus in some Transvaal schools, English and drama departments, and communications arts courses at universities. They are almost entirely concerned with the bourgeois notion of 'film-as-art', narrative and an orthodox view of the major film theories (10).

The films of Eisenstein, for example, are taught as 'art' - something which resides within the film itself - rather than in terms of contextual, class and materialist relations. While these influences are acknowledged, they are hardly ever satisfactorily connected in a critical analysis of his films. Historical materialism is simply not understood by most South African film lecturers. This has obvious implications for courses in criticism which are unable to come to terms with the increasing number of Marxist films being shown on alternative circuits (11). Even the early amateur Afrikaans film makers who referred to Eisenstein as their 'Bible', ignored his ideological context, decontextualizing his techniques and appropriating them for their cultural resistance.

3. Television Courses with an Institutional Emphasis

These courses uncritically reproduce the norms, organizational structures, procedures, production and programming guidelines used by SABC-TV. They are product orientated and, in the case of Afrikaans universities, are often drawn up in conjunction with the SABC. Emphasis is on technology, technique and Herbert Zettl's phenomenological notions of aesthetics. Indeed, Zettl has collaborated with the SABC as a visiting lecturer, during which time he produced some programmes with a local university communications department. Zettl's humanist (12) emphasis on the technology of television is easily adapted in support of SABC mediated ideology. The bias towards studio based operations and an interpretation of aesthetics which underplays social contexts assumes a centralization of operations and information. It totally ignores, as did Zettl in his workshops, the appropriation of these ideas by the dominant ideology which suppresses alternative, more democratic ways in which information and decisions can be made at grass-roots level, and communicated from the bottom up. The SABC is an utterly centralised bureaucracy where policy, technology, finance, personnel, ideology, content and programming decisions are channeled from the top down. This one-way flow is even symbolic in the architecture of the SABC complex: upper management located in a partially inaccessible high-rise administrative tower communicates decisions to middle management half-way up the building, before they are passed on to production staff in an adjacent low rise studio production centre. The SABC tries to hide its authoritarian nature behind a bureaucratic organization modeled on the BBC, and comments 'impartially' on political affairs. In fact, it is not interested in, and therefore the majority of teaching institutions are not interested in, using television for democratizing functions.

The danger of working within currently available models in South Africa where media freedom is daily diminishing, is that students tend to conclude that only the range to which they have been exposed is the range which is possible (13). An overconcern with specialization and technical 'polish' at the expense of knowledge about the medium and social theory, reproduces the later management/technician split in the industry and must be seen as a hindrance to innovation. This is the first step in the internalization of orthodox conventions and work roles, which are then seen together as part of 'professional' practice, adherence to which guarantees job mobility and higher wages. Both producers (usually university graduates in SABC-TV) and technicians then find themselves in mutually exclusive fields of work.

A more common approach between producers (or directors) and technicians would reveal the job classifications created and maintained by management for what they are: the best conditions for the accumulation of capital, because the products made by the specialists are in line with the dominant ideology of the industry and the nation.

4. Reformist and Adaptive Courses

Where courses interlock theory and practice they are usually couched within a liberal-humanist framework. Student programmes are aimed at providing educational packages which are deemed to assist racially oppressed people 'make it' in the economy. While hostile to the established film and television industries, they take the view that graduates should be equipped to work with philanthropic, medical, social and commercial films which are perceived to be providing strategies for adaption. Predominantly of a CCTV nature, these productions are termed 'developmental media' (14), and are thought to provide immediate personal benefits for individuals caught up in the harsh realities imposed on them by apartheid. This reformist position assumes that firms which are using CCTV to train their increasing complement of black managerial employees are advancing change within the system and should, therefore, be supported. The basic assumption of this approach is that capitalism without apartheid is a democratic structure in which all would be masters of their own destiny. They thus unwittingly work with members of the hegemonic bloc to entrench what is nothing more than a structural shift in the economic class alliance. At their most naive, these producers work from a theoretical 'if only' standpoint, often with the realization that their strategies have little chance of being put into practice.

5. Film and Television as Cultural Practice

In these courses, theory, criticism, and both film and video production are taught within a semiotic/culturalist perspective with a concentration on realism, documentary and ethnography. The productions made by students are expected to reflect this knowledge, together with some understanding of Marxist studies of development and underdevelopment. Students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to cope within the industry, but they are also taught how and when to expose and exploit fissures appearing in periods of hegemonic crisis. This philosophy assumes that alternatives are possible even within the conforming influences of the

established industry. Thus, students are taught both the orthodox patterns of personnel functions, with their artificial distinctions between operators, engineers, producers, directors, writers, editors etc, and the effect these distinctions have on content, where only a certain class of persons is thought capable of producing 'authoritative' messages. Questions of finance, management, media ownership and control, ideology, technology and television's relationship to its audience are critically explored in terms of their effect on content rather than in terms of their market potential.

Whereas the Technikon places great emphasis on skills (it also has the equipment, staff and time to do so), universities tend to place more emphasis on theory and criticism. Because film studies are not self-contained, and because a high number of students and an inappropriate subsidy system in the universities, there is a shortage of staff, equipment, space and time to develop anything more than rudimentary practical skills (15). In contrast, the Technikon receives a high government subsidy and trains about 20 white technicians a year.

As far as television is concerned, there is a threshold to the teaching of operational practices. The rate at which automation is being applied in broadcast television makes too great an emphasis on those skills redundant. An understanding of the structure of influences affecting production is preferable, yet often they can only be appreciated by first hand experience as the graduate is sucked into the production of the cultural commodity that is television. In order to give the student a critical awareness, the role playing of various positions gives an overall competence, but more particularly, equips them with an understanding of how semiotic structures are subordinate to organizational arrangements. Ultimately, we hope that the studio or camera would become a tool for exploration rather than a means of blindly executing previously finalised, tightly scripted blueprints, which is what the pressures of daily production, the assumptions by management and the distance from the audience demand.

Unlike most courses offered at university level, both in South Africa and elsewhere, the Rhodes course not only marries theory with practice, but places an emphasis on the ideology of technology which has only recently become an academic concern (16). This is probably because both I and my colleague are practitioners turned academics. Our courses do not assume technology as an autonomous and neutral product. It is inextricably bound with productive forces and itself

suggests the creation and perpetuation of various techniques and conventions, ranging from 'given' rules of continuity, Zettl's media aesthetics, to sharp focus. The television studio, for example, is an extension of modern urban industrial capitalist economies. It is a system for the efficient production of images and sounds whose chief aim is entertainment, and the reproduction through genre, style convention and aesthetics, of the status quo. The issue here is not whether a particular convention or technique is used 'professionally', but how it is used, and to what ends. An ability to operate apparatus competently forms only one part of the production process. More important is the question of what happens to that information while it is being processed by technology and the techniques it demands of the film or video maker. The answer lies in the way the student directors marry a clear understanding of content (the theoretical) with style (knowledge about the medium itself) in relation to the technology and techniques at their disposal.

The studio, for example, almost by definition excludes the presence of those for whom the message is intended. On the rare occasions where a studio audience is needed they are, as it were, taken into the confidence of the production staff. Portable video, 16mm and Super-8 equipment is less forbidding and can approach people in their own environment, on their own terms. But even here one still finds the tendency to construct a pre-determined reality. The smooth building of apparent continuity via conventions such as cuts, fades, dissolves and so on is a product- and entertainment-oriented procedure. Their over-use in student productions can often be traced to lecturer imposition where convention and accepted film grammar are used for their own sake. This structured control can easily alienate the student's potential and be a factor in the reproduction of the status quo. This process is often reinforced by departments which set up advisory boards drawn from the industry. Usually, they are employers, and in at least two cases, members are representative of SABC-TV and companies which have had proven, secret and discredited dealings with state propaganda bodies in the recent past.

The oppositions identified here are between those who adhere to the dominant ideology of conventional film/video making, and who teach technique as if it has no ideological connotations and who hope that content and structure will follow. On the other hand are those who take a holistic view, one which is designed to liberate and exploit the specific qualities of the medium which have been hidden under the weight of convention, aesthetics and bourgeois notions of art.

Once students get away from the 'product-orientated' use of film and television, and become involved in a process-orientated application where the medium is used to assist discovery of deep structures, the production becomes a cinema/video which not only redefines information, but also the medium's relationship with its audience. In such a situation there are no considerations of what kinds of 'news' are appropriate for the System, but what kinds of information, encoded in what ways are appropriate for which audiences.

At a student level, this philosophy extends to distribution which is done by the film maker on alternative channels. This subtly changes the context of production and the film maker's relationship to the audience. Through his/her presence, the producer remains in touch with the audience. Not only is this a valuable learning experience, but through it, the film maker is able to appreciate the world view and social experiences of the subject community. The very act of making the film and screening it in defiance of the system, to people who are often on the screen but rarely in the audience, is itself a strategy of resistance. Ironically, this process has been made possible by capital itself through miniaturization and continually falling costs of 'amateur' media like Super-8 and cassette video. These students have been sensitized to their social environments in a way not normally done by 'working within the system'. The subject audience, therefore, is taken into account in the film making process. Emphasis is on themes rather than stories, ethnographic understanding and contexts, of both the film maker and his/her subjects. Treatments include loneliness, old age, orphans, the repressive nature of the educational system, feminism, the suppression of indigenous political music, student protest, ideology and sport, Group Area removals, squatters, and homeland resettlement.

These films exploit the 'poverty of their freedom' in a way which is denied large budget productions which are remote from their subjects and reliant on a return on investment (17). Costs range from R50 to R1000 for software, with the university providing hardware facilities. Emphasis is on mobility, getting to the people, speaking to them on their terms, getting their impressions and communicating these on film or video in a structurally conscious manner. Photography and video recording are aesthetically demanding media. It is all too easy to inject the idyllic into the ugly, the picturesque into the ordinary and to transform the ugliness of actual poverty into aesthetically pleasing shots. That is why we are suspicious of convention and a distancing from the audience that large budget productions and narrative demand. Theoretically conscious films connect their makers

to their audience and remind the audience of its context and produces a style which propels its own thematic consistencies beyond the limits of our pre-conditioned assumptions about aesthetics and content.

The Future

South African film makers have a long way to go. They have yet to work through the Third Cinema notion of 'garbage aesthetics' which rejects the dominant codes of 'well-made' cinema (18). Indeed, many have yet to come to terms with conventional cinema. University graduates and independent film makers working on small format media have begun to produce material which, if still naive, at least is beginning to reveal social conditions from a perspective approaching Ter Cinema. These film makers have found alternative sources of finance and have not been automatically co-opted into the System or industry.

Currently, most are white, petty bourgeois, and able to use the privilege of their dominant class position to make critical statements. Many, particularly those drawn from other disciplines, lack a knowledge about cinema/television itself and the result is often a confused use of signs and codes which are invested more with enthusiasm and counter-ideological commitment than semiotic, or theoretical consciousness, and technical skills. The result is contradictory interpretations which lend themselves to appropriation by the hegemonic alliance (19).

It is hoped that these problems will be overcome with the entrance of more knowledgeable graduates into film and video making, but ultimately there will be more people, assisted by unlimited funds, who will be working for the status quo than against it.

Notes

Paper presented at the 36th Annual Conference of the University Film and Video Association, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, United States, July 29 - August 6, 1982.

(1) Solanas, F and Gettino, O 1976: "Towards a Third Cinema" in Nichols, B (ed) Movies and Methods. University of California Press, Berkeley.

(2) Fargier, J-P reproduced in Williams, C (ed) 1980: Realism and the Cinema. Routledge and Kegan Paul in association with the British Film Institute, pp 181-2.

(3) Metz, C quoted in Monaco J 1981: How to Read a Film. Oxford University Press, New York, p 128.

(4) Fargier op.cit. pp 181-2.

(5) Poulantzas N 1977: "The Problem of the Capitalist State" in Blackburn R (ed): Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory. Fontana, Glasgow, p 240.

(6) Meyer, PJ 1971: Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffend Televisie. Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, RP 37/1971.

(7) For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the media and the hegemonic bloc see Tomaselli KG and Tomaselli RE 1981: "Ideology/Culture/Hegemony and Mass Media in South Africa: A Literature Survey", Critical Arts, Vol 2, No 2, pp 1-27. For a discussion of how the state co-opted the emergent television manufacturing industry in the interests of apartheid, se Rogerson C 1978: "Corporate Strategy, State Power and Compromise: Television Manufacture in Southern Africa", South African Geographical Journal, Vol 60, No 2, pp 89-102.

(8) My observations in this discussion are drawn from the following sources: (1) my previous article on film and television education published in 1980: "The Teaching of Film and Television Production: A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives", Perspectives in Education, Vol 4, No 2, pp 65-74; (2) my introduction to The SAFTTA Journal, Vol 1, No 2, 1980: "Film Schools: Their Relevance to the Industry"; (3) my observations as co-organizer of the First National Student Film and Video Festival and the conference report which emanated therefrom: Tomaselli KG and Hayman G 1981, and Grove J 1981 published in Critical Arts Vol 2, No 2; Hayman's report in The SAFTTA Journal, Vol 2, No 1, 1981: (4) my experience as a lecturer in four courses offered at two universities, my discussion with lecturers at the remaining universities and my experience as a member of

the Advisory Board of the Pretoria Technikon Film School in my capacity as Chairman of the South African Film and Television Technicians Association. Finally, Vol 1, No 2, 1980 of The SAFTTA Journal contains a special issue on film and television education in South Africa.

(9) Van der Merwe F and Theunissen CH 1980: "Film Produksie by Die Technikon van Pretoria", The SAFTTA Journal, Vol 1, No 2, pp 1-5.

(10) See eg Davids A 1980: "Film as Art at University of Cape Town" and Fourie PJ and du Plooy G 1980: "Film and Television Training at the Dept. of Communications at the University of South Africa", both in The SAFTA Journal Vol 2, No 1.

(11) The films of Godard, Bertulluci and Wertmuller have been shown at the three major film festivals in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban which contain a partial censorship clearance for limited periods.

(12) This is not to deny the usefulness or contribution of Zettl's two books to the study of television. Anyone's work is capable of being appropriated. However, bland collaboration is another thing altogether. His presence at the SABC offered a certain legitimacy to their propagandistic functions. His books Television Production Handbook (1976) and Sight, Sound, Motion: applied media aesthetics (1973) are standard reading for most production courses.

(13) Hayman G 1980: "Television on Journalism: Problems, Aims and Solutions", The SAFTTA Journal, Vol 1, No 2, p 16.

(14) This is the term used by Dr John van Zyl of the School of Dramatic Art at the University of the Witwatersrand. A number of pioneering video programmes on social work activities have been produced by students under his supervision. Topics include child-minding in Soweto, how to admit patients to hospital and a monitoring exercise on folkways and norms of inter-racial encounters.

(15) Hayman op.cit. p 15 points out that because of the way the government subsidizes universities - according to the numbers of students compared to the numbers of lecturers - it suits a university administration to think that once a certain amount of equipment has been

bought and lecturers and technicians hired, that student numbers can be increased willy nilly. This places extreme pressures on staff, students and equipment. In addition, university accounting procedures are not geared to the provision of funds for replacement of non-durable components and preventative maintenance. See Hayman G 1982: "Are You High on Hi-Tech? How to take a short cut in the technology race", Quad, No 3, pp 6-7

Other than the Technikon, no university course is a full-time one. At most, film and television studies might contribute 4 out of a 10 credit BA. In an Honours degree this might rise to 4 out of 5. There is thus a constant tension between the time allocated to technical skills on the one hand and reading on the other.

(16) de Lauretis I and Heath S 1980: The Cinematic Apparatus. MacMillan, London.

(17) The phrase is Ross Devenish's and was used in a discussion of his and Athol Fugard's films. See Devenish R 1977: "The Guest - A Personal Reminiscence", Scenaria, No 12.

(18) See Stam, R and Johnson R 1979: "Beyond Cinema Novo", Jump Cut, No 21.

(19) For an in-depth discussion on this point see Tomaselli KG 1982: "Oppositional Film Making in South Africa: Resistance or Co-option?" Fuse, Vol 6, No 3.

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Notes

(1) Carole Pateman Participation and Democratic Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

(2) PF Strawson "Freedom and Resentment" in Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays, London: Methuen, 1974, pgs 15-23.

(3) L Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in BJ Cosin (ed) Education, Structure and Society, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977, see pg 81.

Substantial quotations (more than about 3 lines) should be indented, shorter quotations should be enclosed in single quotation marks. Omissions from a quotation should be indicated by three dots.

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