

GEOGRAPHY AND SCHOOLING

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I went out last night for inspiration, to the pub and friends of my age who went to similar or nearby schools. I asked them, 'Do you feel you were promised something in school you didn't get when you left?' One said, 'A job.' Another talked about them making our expectations too high. Another said we were promised nothing definite except maybe an ability to apply their ragbag of knowledge to the outside world. The last said that we had been given a fair education in an unfair society and that comprehensives ought to be as revolutionary as the public schools are elitist.

I just nodded at all the suggestions and comments, said I still didn't know what the promise was and that I would have another pint. (Roger Mills 1978)

Despite thousands of hours spent in school, hundreds of them in geography lessons, Roger Mills and his friends remain uncertain as to the purposes of it all. They and many others leave school with a profound sense of disillusionment which is rapidly reinforced as what they have learnt in the classroom proves of limited value in helping them cope with the world. Why is so much schooling profoundly anti-educational? Why do so few geography lessons develop a sensitivity to place and landscape and a critical awareness of one's location within economic and social structures which inevitably limit freedom? What are the alternatives and which are likely be realized in the future?

The chapter attempts to answer such questions by relating school geography, mainly in Britain, to economic and social change. It argues

that the future of a subject which owes its very establishment within higher education to the needs of schools, will be partly determined within school classrooms. Lessons taught here shape public images of the subject and the fortunes of academic geography are to a considerable extent linked to its popularity amongst older pupils. While the future of school geography will have a central bearing on the future of the subject, it will only be partly determined by geography teachers. That there are more powerful influences at work can be seen by considering the source of the disillusionment referred to above.

SOCIETY, STATE AND SCHOOLING

Each historical form of society has developed ways of raising and socializing children. In an advanced capitalist society such as ours, class-specific forms of education are largely controlled by those who control economic and social life. As part of its overall task of managing the economy and society on behalf of this group, the state establishes schooling as a mechanism of social reproduction and control. Education serves two main functions. It provides the general capabilities and vocational training necessary for different social classes to carry out different economic roles, and it transmits ideology which legitimates the existing form of class domination. State schools are therefore a public investment in labour and ideas which serves to lower capital's costs and legitimate its activity. They provide a publicly accepted mechanism for sorting future workers, and their work environments provide prior conditioning for life in the office or factory. Useful workers and citizens are created without raising their awareness of the inadequacies of the existing order. This is done by imposing a sharp divide between school and production and by using schools to create a hierarchy within the working class. The abstract knowledge which dominates so many lessons is used both to stratify pupils and to exclude genuinely relevant and critical ideas. The uselessness of school learning makes it a suitable preparation for alienated work while the hierarchies schools reproduce undermine class consciousness and are justified by reference to individual ability.

From such a view of schooling it follows that geography teachers fulfil both a general and a more specific role in social reproduction. Along with other teachers they sustain a hidden curriculum, or practical ideology (Sharp 1980), consisting of particular forms of social and technical relations, mediated by differing forms of language use. Social relations in classrooms vary between the coercive authority of the factory floor and

the moral rationality of the teacher. The relations range from strict control to more independent learning, from a high to a low degree of self-management, from a range of assumptions and procedures.

The specific role geography teachers play in this hidden curriculum and the practical rhetoric, of school geography, is to cultivate a voluntary subordination of pupils to the state. They are to accept unproblematic facts: maps, given a dehumanized and abstract form, are to be accepted as given; success or failure depends on the application of skills, and attitudes which are to be accepted as given; the relationship between economic and social life, and the well-being of society, are to be accepted as given; the description of the world is to be accepted as given; Ideas and 'theories' are to be accepted as given; pupils are to be encouraged to see institutions as given, as neutral and static. Pupils are to accept these as given within a consensus view of society, and little attention is given to the critical analysis of the world. Geography fails to draw upon humanistic and critical theory, and fails to develop its potential to raise pupils' social awareness. As far as possible, the teacher's role predominates. Although the teacher is not the only influence on pupils, the media and other resources are but an extension of classroom control.

Geography teachers fulfil a general role in social reproduction, where behaviour and attitudes are shaped by the necessities of capitalist production, by the teacher's class position, the teacher's role in the school, and their acceptance of the teacher's role as a professional. They fulfil a more specific role in social reproduction, in our view of society, since they are but one element in the teacher's role by offering control over pupils.

Marxist theories of education emphasize the role of the teacher in social reproduction, the emphasis they give to the teacher's role, the degree of autonomy given to the teacher, and the teacher's role in the dynamic. First, school, family, the media and other resources of technology.

the moral rationality of technocracy, while corresponding technical relations range from standardized routines designed to instil dependency to more independent learning and problem-solving designed to develop a degree of self-management. It is largely through taken-for-granted assumptions and procedures that schools help to reproduce society.

The specific role geography teachers fulfil is more related to the overt curriculum and theoretical ideology. The reality, rather than the rhetoric, of school geography, suggests that the majority of lessons cultivate a voluntary submission to existing social, spatial and environmental relations. The subject is generally presented as a body of unproblematic facts; many of them dull, boring, or redundant. Pupils are given a dehumanized and depoliticized view of the world and their success or failure depends largely on their ability to reproduce ideas, skills, and attitudes which sustain the status quo. There is little reference to economic and social processes which could explain the phenomena being studied, and what is generally offered as explanation is mere description. Ideas and material critical of capital are largely excluded, 'theories' are not placed in an historical and social context, and pupils are encouraged to see institutions, processes and knowledge as pre-given, neutral and static. Problem-solving and decision-making are usually cast within a consensus view of society, conflict is regarded as dysfunctional, and little attention is given to radical social alternatives. By failing to draw upon humanistic and structuralist philosophies school geography fails to develop its potential for cultivating environmental sensitivity and social awareness. As far as pedagogy is concerned, didactic teaching still predominates. Although this is made tolerable by a range of audio-visual media and other resources, there is little pupil-initiated enquiry or extension of classroom work into the community.

Geography teachers do then contribute to the process of hegemony where behaviour and common sense are shaped to conform to the necessities of capitalist production. Most of them accept this role due to their class position, the hold of hegemony both inside and outside the school, and their acceptance of educational ideology which offers notions of professionalism and political neutrality (Harris 1982). Further refining our view of society, state and schooling, suggests that geography lessons are but one element in a larger process, and that other teachers resist such a role by offering content and activities which are counter-hegemonic.

Marxist theories of education and the state (Carnoy 1982) vary in the emphasis they give to the economic or cultural role of schooling and in the degree of autonomy they allow education within the overall social dynamic. First, schools act with other agents of hegemony such as the family, the media and the workplace. Carnoy suggests that the imperatives of technology and bureaucracy in the workplace, threats of

unemployment, and real increases in wages, living standards and welfare, have been more significant than schooling in persuading people to accept existing social relations and their role within them. Post-war welfare capitalism and economic growth produced a prolonged period of social consensus during which schooling's role in sustaining society was relatively minor compared with that of state intervention in the economy. Second, hegemony is both contested and dynamic. Schools reflect the resistances, antagonisms and struggles which characterize the overall process, and alternative practices, which undermine the existing order, are therefore found within them. Schooling must adapt to capital's changing economic and cultural needs and its continuing attempts to mediate or deal with evolving problems or contradictions. The state of the education system and school geography at any one time therefore represents a dynamic settlement between different interests and it is their power and actions which determine the course of educational change.

THE NATURE OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Contrary to the beliefs of many geography teachers, changes in the nature of schooling, curriculum content, and methodology are not then simply a response to the growth of knowledge or the changing preoccupations of geographers and educationalists. A dialectic view of education and society suggests that debate on the nature of schooling will be particularly intense in periods of rapid economic and social change when the dominant class seeks to adapt education to new needs and subordinate classes can use the breakdown of the existing form of education to put forward radical alternatives. While the education system has some autonomy to interpret and shape the resulting demands in its own interests, it should be remembered that capital has core problems which form permanent items on the state's agenda and place recurring limits on educational change. Dale (1982) has identified three such problems and it is the last of these which hints at the primary function of school geography. The state must maintain support for the capitalist accumulation process, guarantee the context for its continued expansion, and ensure the legitimization of the capitalist mode of production, including the state's own part in it.

Salter and Tapper (1981) provide a model of educational change which focuses on the varied contexts within which economic and social demands are translated into educational practice. They recognize that such institutions as the examination boards, the Department of Education and Science, the subject associations, and the former Schools

Council, are bureaucracies. Their need for routine procedures, power, means that they can which may significantly affect geography curriculum must their own needs and priorities overdetermined correspondence geography. Nor should it be set of demands upon the education tradition also give rise to contradictions as the need to satisfy popular demands outcome within secondary education concealed by the education's power and the ideology embraces new or modifications allow significant and promote ideas and attempts to restructure education teachers, one of the most been the subject associations form of school geography as a school subject.

GEOGRAPHY AS A SUBJECT

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Council, are bureaucracies with their own preferences and ambitions. Their need for routine procedures, desire to appear rational, and lust for power, means that they can acquire a developmental logic of their own which may significantly affect the nature of change. Attempts to alter the geography curriculum must be negotiated within contexts which have their own needs and priorities and it is therefore simplistic to seek an overdetermined correspondence between the needs of capital and school geography. Nor should it be thought that capital's needs form the only set of demands upon the educational system. Patriarchy, racialism and tradition also give rise to strong social demands as do such contradictions as the need to reproduce inequality while at the same time satisfying popular demands for greater equality of provision and outcome within secondary education. Change is facilitated and contradictions concealed by the propagation of ideology which legitimates education's power and the social inequalities it helps to perpetuate. This ideology embraces new or modified images of the educated person and the role of education in a desired social order. While the early work of correspondence theorists in education appeared pessimistic, subsequent modifications allow significant scope for teachers and others to formulate and promote ideas and practices which oppose capital's continuing attempts to restructure education according to its needs. For geography teachers, one of the most significant contexts for political debate has been the subject association. Its power in determining the past and future form of school geography can only be realized by considering geography as a school subject.

GEOGRAPHY AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT

Geography's history as a subject is one of aspiration. As we shall see, the subject started with low status in the schools and eventually became established as a university discipline. Goodson (1983) presents a social history of geography, together with other school subjects, in order to show that by promoting their subjects as academic disciplines, some subject groups have had a considerable influence on the course of curriculum change.

Such groups are not monolithic entities but shifting amalgamations of subgroups and traditions which give the subject changing boundaries and priorities. In the case of a field of knowledge as broad and philosophically diverse as geography, there is a constant identity problem and threat of fragmentation which means that periodic attempts to redefine the subject and unite its practitioners are necessary. Goodson shows how in order to become established as an academic

subject, geography sought to associate itself with the academic tradition in education and dissociate itself from alternative utilitarian and pedagogic traditions. Its pursuit of status and resources was best served by gaining acceptance amongst the other areas of high status, abstract knowledge taught in the universities and associated with a classical, liberal education. It was largely to promote geography as an academic discipline that the Geographical Association was established in 1893 and its success can be measured by the rapid establishment of geography within both the universities and school examinations over subsequent decades. Recognition as an academic subject brought geography teachers access to the brightest pupils, a share of the more generous resources allocated to their education, and also improved career prospects. Their desire to promote academic, rather than utilitarian or pedagogic versions of school geography, has to be seen as a response both to existing demands on the education system and their own material interests.

School geography teachers needed university geography in order to legitimate their claims to academic status, and its associated rewards, within the school curriculum. Once established, however, university geography developed its own needs and the school subject was increasingly shaped from above. The Geographical Association's role now became that of mediator between geography as researched and taught in the universities and geography as taught in schools. The status of the subject remained low in the universities long after it had been accepted at the highest levels in schools, and school geography was to continue to reflect the material aspirations, and associated shifts in philosophy and methodology, which characterized the university discipline. At both levels it is possible to recognize subgroups promoting different interpretations of the subject and associating these with different educational traditions or ideologies. Those likely to be most successful are in harmony with the material interests of the subject's scholars and teachers and the major vested interest groups within education and the broader society. They largely determine the subject's history.

THE EARLY YEARS

Geography gained a strong hold on the school curriculum in the nineteenth century due to growing recognition of its utilitarian value by the middle and upper classes. Suiting the vocational needs of future merchants, clerks, statesmen and strategists, school geography also served to facilitate increased exploitation of the physical environment and legitimate nationalism and imperialism. The resulting demand for teachers explains the survival of academic human geography which was

earlier in a state of crisis. The turn of the century (Capo) all children until 1870 to workers for new products and provide a means of education of the working moral code, the new elements and Empire, and a new such schools rapidly changed conceptions of the working supportive to capital. The time.

The rise of industrial utopian thought concerned Romantics, such as Robert Owen, which was to shape all his experimental schools. Robert Owen combined Godwin. Like later anarchist function of state education ideology transmitted by was based on the real designed to help the Geography and history economic and political to counter narrow pre-

While Owen's experiments including Marx and Engels central to socialist thought workers in decisions to involve the pupils that would need to gain control instrument of ordinary work in order to learn schools to break the old also erode the basis of

From the ideas of polytechnic education applied, in various forms, education aims to prepare for productive work and the future nature of society, pupils are taught

earlier in a state of crisis, and its establishment in the universities by the turn of the century (Capel 1981). The state did not provide education for all children until 1870, by which time it was necessary in order to qualify workers for new production processes, free parents for factory labour, and provide a means of ideological control which would counter the self-education of the working class. In addition to basic skills and a strong moral code, the new elementary schools taught identification with nation and Empire, and a new vision of the world of work. Geography entered such schools rapidly after 1875 serving to counter children's 'magical' conceptions of the world and instil a view of economy and society supportive to capital. This can be clearly seen in the school readers of the time.

The rise of industrial society produced a range of ideological and utopian thought concerning alternative forms of education and society. Romantics, such as Rousseau, proposed a child-centred form of education which was to shape all subsequent advocacy of progressive education. At his experimental school in New Lanark in the early nineteenth century, Robert Owen combined progressive ideals with the anarchism of Godwin. Like later anarchists Godwin was alert to the social control function of state education and wished children to be able to resist the ideology transmitted by the school. Geography teaching at New Lanark was based on the real environment and curiosity of the children and was designed to help them understand the natural and social world. Geography and history were used to provide an insight into the economic and political relationships of society, to develop character, and to counter narrow prejudice.

While Owen's experiment was much valued by later socialists, including Marx and Engels, it failed to reflect two principles which are central to socialist theories of education. Owen failed to involve the workers in decisions relating to their children's education and failed to involve the pupils themselves in productive work. The working class would need to gain control of education if it was to become the political instrument of ordinary people, and pupils would need to be involved in work in order to learn that labour is essential to self-realization. Using schools to break the division between mental and manual work would also erode the basis of class domination.

From the ideas of Marx and Engels developed the concept of polytechnic education (Castles and Wustenberg, 1979) which has been applied, in various forms, in socialist states throughout the world. Such education aims to produce fully developed human beings capable of productive work and of understanding and controlling the present and future nature of society. Within the general component of such education, pupils are taught the scientific foundations of the production

process and sufficient economics and social science to enable them to understand the mechanisms which shape society. Geography can make an important contribution to polytechnic education but it will need to be integrated with other areas of the natural and social sciences, with productive work, and with growing participation in political decision-making.

While Marx regarded the centrally controlled socialist state, with polytechnic education, as a transitional stage to communism, other socialists have advocated the reform of society and education from below. Two leading theoreticians of late nineteenth century anarchism, Peter Kropotkin (Breitbart 1981) and Elisée Reclus (Fleming 1979; Dunbar 1981) were both geographers who wrote a great deal about education. Reclus was encouraged to give increased attention to education as an instrument of revolutionary strategy, by state repression and his dismissal of political activity within the state. He regarded education as a form of consciousness-raising which could lift the masses from their state of prejudice and ignorance. In a circular of 1876 he outlined a scientific socialist education, outside religious, national and political influence, and suggested that this could best be encouraged by the provision of alternative textbooks. Aware that existing education amounted to 'bourgeois indoctrination', he proposed not a counter-indoctrination but an education free from indoctrination. Amongst the projects which Reclus encouraged the Vevey section of anarchists to promote was a geography project designed 'to expose the laws regulating the planet, to study the species inhabiting it, the races which quarrel over it and whose common property it is'. The project was to represent a scientific argument in support of universal brotherhood but unfortunately it never materialized, partly due to Kropotkin's belief that money would be better spent on political tracts. While as aware as Reclus of school geography's role in spreading imperialist ideology, generating disrespect for other cultures, and stifling independent thought, Kropotkin did not share a faith in 'scientific education' within existing society. By 1882, Kropotkin had persuaded Reclus that attempts to establish libertarian or integral education within a capitalist society would only be diversionary; that the creation of a libertarian society must come first. Nevertheless Kropotkin's statement 'What Geography ought to be' (Kropotkin 1885) remains one of the clearest and most influential statements on radical geographical education. Its advocacy of an anti-militarist, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist education which examines issues from the point of view of the working class, fosters social harmony and mutual aid, and involves pupils in the life of the community, was to become part of a libertarian movement in education which subsequently challenged orthodox geography on numerous occasions (Smith 1983).

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Strong advocacy of socialist reforms of the 1920s. By the 1930s the legacy of the First World War was altogether too harsh and was necessary both to progress required by capital's social growing class conflict progressivism and the policies of reform which years (Jones 1983). Importantly progressivism offered the relevance. The ideas of F. D. Roosevelt's more humane and acceptable and socially relevant government in an organized (1980) suggests that progressivism's economic and social order. It did introduce its utopian foundations absorbed and tamed by with policies to first expand. In the debates of the 1920s become socialist education were defeated by those who as a means of expanding were converted to a meritocracy which overlooked issues of teachers and others withensions. Geographers were exploiting this situation.

By the 1920s a greater geography's lack of influence. In 1903, Mackinder had proposed schools of geography to specialists, the formulation of the promotion of examination and Herbertson were largely space created by the exploitation by geography's vocational alternative to

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Strong advocacy of socialist education took place during the educational reforms of the 1920s. By then the ending of imperialism, the onset of prolonged economic crisis in the 1890s and the economic and social legacy of the First World War, meant that elementary schooling was altogether too harsh and rudimentary a form of socialization. Its reform was necessary both to provide the increased number of skilled workers required by capital's second technological revolution and to temper growing class conflict. Capital, state and labour were to find in progressivism and the expansion of opportunity, the language and policies of reform which dominated educational debate for the next fifty years (Jones 1983). Imported from European and American philosophers, progressivism offered the twin tenets of child-centredness and social relevance. The ideas of Froebel, Dewey and others were used to justify a more humane and acceptable pedagogy and a more pragmatic, utilitarian and socially relevant curriculum. By providing the image of self-government in an organic unified society based on collaboration, Sharp (1980) suggests that progressivism helped to adjust people to new economic and social forms without threatening the underlying order. It did introduce some criticism and dissent into education, but its utopian foundations have generally ensured that this is readily absorbed and tamed by prevailing interests. Progressivism was coupled with policies to first expand, and later equalize, educational opportunity. In the debates of the 1920s those who wished to see state education become socialist education linked to the interests of the working class were defeated by those who merely wished to improve access to education as a means of expanding occupational choice. The TUC and Labour Party were converted to a meritocratic, or social democratic, view of education which overlooked issues of content and control and therefore left teachers and others with much autonomy concerning curriculum decisions. Geographers were amongst those who were relatively successful in exploiting this situation.

By the 1920s a great deal had been done to overcome school geography's lack of intellectual credibility and specialist teachers. In 1903, Mackinder had proposed a fourfold strategy of reform; university schools of geography to train teachers, school geography to be taught by specialists, the formulation of an efficient and progressive pedagogy, and the promotion of examinations set by geography teachers. Together, he and Herbertson were largely instrumental in ensuring its success and the space created by the social democratic consensus continued to be exploited by geographers until the 1970s. Since a truly technical or vocational alternative to the specialized academic curriculum failed to

develop, growing numbers of pupils were taught and examined in class-specific forms of school geography. While this suited the interests of the school and university geographers, examination of successive text-books and examinations would show that it also suited dominant interests. School geography continued to act as ideology by drawing pupils into a unified national experience.

The state of 'enlightened traditionalism' which school geography had reached by the 1960s has been well described elsewhere (Beddis 1983; Walford 1981). This decade saw a revival of social democracy in education and a series of reforms designed to further expand and modernize provision as one means of sustaining post-war economic growth and political consensus. By now academic geography had gained status by applying itself to 'the technics and mechanics of urban, regional and environmental management' (Harvey 1974), and geographers were to use opportunities for curriculum reform to tighten the correspondence between school geography, university geography and the labour needs of the corporate state. Far from being a revolution or crisis (Graves 1975), the infusion of positivism into school geography, which became known as the 'new' geography, was profoundly adaptive and conservative. It was an élitist exercise from the start; an attempt to render the schooling of a minority of pupils more technocratic and vocationally relevant. Using such agencies as the examination boards, Inspectorate, and text-book publishers, the advocates of reform were able to create a new orthodoxy in school geography within a decade. Their success owes much to the climate of the times and to a renewed appeal to geography teachers' self-interest. Curriculum reform was sold as 'new professionalism' (Tolley and Reynolds 1978) and many of its strongest advocates are now in positions of considerable influence over school geography. Educationalists in university departments and colleges of education played their part by combining positivist geography with rational curriculum theory to provide the professional perspectives on which new kinds of in-service education were based. The 'new' geography had most effect on 'able' pupils but others did not escape the climate of curriculum reform it brought in its wake. Attempts to identify key ideas (HMI 1978), common criteria for assessment at sixteen-plus (Joint Council 1982) and a new syllabus framework for 16-19-year-olds (Geography 16-19 1980), all contained elements of ideology associated with positivism. By the late 1970s school geography had come of age but was little influenced by the philosophical debates which had so enlivened its academic counterpart.

School geography's growth and development was not smooth. It had to be periodically disciplined and redefined from above in response to its

expansive and fragmentary tendencies to its territory from such as Studies. It is difficult to trace contributions but libertarian ideas new forms of environmental mounting crises of capitalist solutions and the resulting radicals to challenge liberal geographers were preoccupied employing humanistic and socialist such topics as environmental redevelopment. It was the encouraged a wider recognition majority.

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION

Economic recession, and the break-up of social democracy, the decline of political consensus contributed much to this economy was the focus for 1976. 'Thatcherism' built Labour (Sarup 1982: 10). offering higher standards educational expenditure was more functional for capital ways had to be found behaviours necessary for economic crisis and high capital restructuring required and new courses reflected ensured submission to all Manpower Services Commission new vocational education schools (Hart 1982). The new Technical and Vocational but their concern to train numbers of pupils represented established role. A tradition alongside the new vocational social sciences, and DE

expansive and fragmentary tendencies, and it also had to fight off claims to its territory from such competitors as Social and Environmental Studies. It is difficult to trace a history of continuing socialist contributions but libertarian ideas re-emerged in the late 1960s to contribute to new forms of environmental, development and urban education. The mounting crises of capitalism were by then requiring interdisciplinary solutions and the resulting debate on integrated curricula allowed radicals to challenge liberal proposals. While the majority of school geographers were preoccupied with the 'new' geography, others were employing humanistic and structuralist philosophies to design lessons on such topics as environmental issues, global inequalities and urban redevelopment. It was the crisis in education which eventually encouraged a wider recognition of these developments amongst the majority.

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION

Economic recession, and capital's attempts to restore profitability, caused the break-up of social democracy in education along with the wider decline of political consensus. While the academic curriculum had contributed much to this consensus, its poor record with regard to the economy was the focus for the 'Great Debate' on education launched in 1976. 'Thatcherism' built on ground first neglected and then created by Labour (Sarup 1982; Wolpe and Donald 1983). Under the guise of offering higher standards, greater accountability, and more choice, educational expenditure was cut back and that which remained made more functional for capital. As far as the curriculum was concerned new ways had to be found of purveying the ideologies, attitudes and behaviours necessary for loyal and disciplined workers during a time of economic crisis and high youth unemployment. Those jobs produced by capital restructuring require less skill of the majority of school leavers and new courses reflected this by inculcating 'social and life skills' which ensured submission to alienated work and the authority of the state. The Manpower Services Commission and other agencies first introduced the new vocational education into further education and then into the schools (Hart 1982). The Certificate of Pre-vocational Education and the new Technical and Vocational Education Initiative are in their early days but their concern to transmit 'economic and social awareness' to growing numbers of pupils represents a direct attack on school geography's long-established role. A traditional academic curriculum is being reasserted alongside the new vocationalism but Sir Keith Joseph's attacks on the social sciences, and DES ambivalence concerning geography's place in

the core curriculum (Walford 1982), do not augur well for the subject's continuing status and level of support in terms of pupil numbers. The restructuring of secondary education is also designed to ensure a tighter control over the curriculum. Such measures as the abolition of the Schools Council, the establishment of common criteria for assessment at sixteen-plus, a stronger role for Her Majesty's Inspectorate and more restricted forms of entry to teaching, seek a stronger correspondence between schooling and the economy and seriously erode the autonomy which teachers have enjoyed for much of the century. Their work is also affected by spending cuts, increased scepticism on the part of the pupils, greater demands from parents and administrators and a general decline in morale induced by falling rolls, school closures and redeployment. The crisis in education is serving to radicalize a growing number who no longer regard themselves as professionals above politics, but as workers who share interests with large sections of the communities within which they teach.

In this new harsh climate geography teachers gradually became more aware of the opportunities presented by developments in the universities. Following some early initiatives (Lee 1977), parallel developments in educational theory provided the basis for new forms of humanistic and radical geographical education by the early 1980s (Huckle 1983). Awareness of these alternatives was heightened by research which revealed the most acute symptoms of school geography's role in social reproduction (Hicks 1981; Gill 1983). The early debate was preoccupied with issues of ethnocentric and racist bias but it was soon realized that there was a more general disease. By 1983 a new subject association had been formed (Association for Curriculum Development in Geography 1983), largely on Dawn Gill's initiative, and debate at the secondary level began to resemble that which had taken place in higher education several years before.

TOWARDS A SOCIALIST SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY

As the study of people's active construction and transformation of their physical and social environment, geography has a central role to play in a critical and emancipatory education. Geography lessons should help pupils to understand how societies are made and remade, and how landscapes and human–environment relations change in the process. Roger Lee (1983) explains why the dialectic between social structure and human agency is central to such understanding and how a theoretical and practical grasp of this dynamic would better enable pupils to create their own histories and geographies. Curriculum content should be based

on the realities to be transformed: unemployment, technological change, lack of social justice which can be transformed. Through a process of dialogue, awareness of their own identity, consequences, and would then reflectively transform the world. It would then become a community and reconstructing society adapted to this purpose. But empiricist or positivist pre-sciences within an overall society should be completed, transforming nature and the people and nation states within. The frameworks should also be realized unless school geography and radical geography will be

A socialist school goes on indoctrination for another neutrality which inevitably creates inequality undisturbed, the pursuit of truth as a duty, structural oppression and a political and social arrangement to pursue political aims, to integrity and honesty. Reformed lines, designed to protect persuasion, allow space for teachers from starting other integral part of an alternative on the concept of dialogue, experiential alternative to dominate classrooms. Reformed the existing practical and is likely to face much opposition.

At a time when the state with productive work and significant opportunities for relevance, critical thinking being used to legitimate argue for genuine polytechnic contradictions of school:

on the realities to be transformed; such material conditions as youth unemployment, technological change, environmental deterioration and lack of social justice which confront young people daily (Donnelly 1980). Through a process of dialogue, teacher and pupils would seek a critical awareness of their own identity and situation, would analyse causes and consequences, and would then examine ways of acting logically and reflectively to transform that reality (Friere 1972). Geography teaching would then become a co-operative exercise in reclaiming stolen humanity and reconstructing society. Much of what is presently taught can be adapted to this purpose, but it will need to be shaken free of its purely empiricist or positivist presentation, and integrated with other social sciences within an overall materialist framework. Study of our own society should be complemented by that of others where people are transforming nature and themselves in different ways. The integration of people and nation states within wider economic, strategic and political frameworks should also be explored. Such aims are unlikely to be realized unless school geographers make much more use of humanistic and radical geography with its potential for humanization and liberation.

A socialist school geography should not substitute one form of indoctrination for another. While teachers should reject stances of neutrality which inevitably leave existing patterns of power and inequality undisturbed, their commitment to justice should require the pursuit of truth as a duty (Wren 1977). In helping pupils to recognize structural oppression and exploitation, critically assess alternative political and social arrangements, and develop the ability co-operatively to pursue political aims, teachers should strive for scientific rigour, integrity and honesty. Robin Richardson (1982) offers suitable guidelines, designed to protect the pupil from the teacher's powers of persuasion, allow space for doubts and differing viewpoints, and prevent teachers from starting other people's revolutions. Such safeguards are an integral part of an alternative pedagogy (Norton and Ollman 1978) based on the concept of dialogue mentioned above, and offering an active and experiential alternative to the didactic methods which currently dominate classrooms. Reformed content and method can seriously challenge the existing practical and theoretical ideology of geography teaching, but is likely to face much opposition.

At a time when the state finds it increasingly necessary to link learning with productive work and raise economic and social awareness, there are significant opportunities for socialist teachers to exploit. The rhetoric of relevance, critical thinking, vocationalism and citizenship, which is being used to legitimate the restructuring of education, allows us to argue for genuine polytechnic education. At the same time the mounting contradictions of schooling, particularly the credibility gap between its

promises and outcomes, create a climate in which liberal and radical alternatives are more acceptable (Husen 1979). While there is a continuing threat that emerging radicals will be tamed and co-opted by the system, growing numbers of geography teachers are looking for the type of curriculum which this final section has begun to outline. The history of our subject suggests that they now need more allies in higher education, for only through joint action can the power of the examination boards, text-book publishers, Geographical Association, Her Majesty's Inspectorate and the DES be challenged. A growing coalition within the subject community should also look for allies outside education, in Labour-controlled local authorities, in trade unions, amongst parents, and in certain groups concerned with political education in the widest sense. The struggle to construct and implement a socialist school geography will face many setbacks as it has in the past, but it remains part of the overall struggle for a counter-hegemony and an alternative future.

REALIZING THE PROMISE OF SCHOOLING

Remember Roger Mills and his friends. Perhaps the one who suggested that comprehensives ought to be as revolutionary as the public schools are élitist, could have explained the others' disillusionment with school more fully. We will never know. What we do know is that his remark hinted at the potential of schooling for social reconstruction which has still to be realized. The success of school geography teachers in meeting that challenge will play a small but not insignificant part in helping to create the future of geography and the geography of the future.

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The mediaeval liberal arts men today; and the human 'social sciences', or the amalgam in which human thermodynamics and responsibility created for scientists. Society discovering what arts will transform our schools the next few decades. M

The last quarter of this century the cultural development of significance in the history of proclaimed twenty years ago trifle conservative, when emerging after the revolution response to pressures and it was wisely designed to be already with us, because we and of our academic subject scholars and teachers; a few discomforts accumulating in our own day. despa