'Policing the boundaries' at work: Exploring the role of the worker in Habermas's colonisation thesis through a case study of teachers' participation in the National Union of Teachers (NUT)

A Thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Ph.D. in the Faculty of Humanities

2006

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Words = 79,345

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ABSTRACT

Habermas's 'thesis of colonisation' has a utility far beyond that prescribed by his 'New Social Movement' (NSM) theory. In this thesis, I demonstrate the theoretical validity of applying the thesis of colonisation to the contemporary labour movement by exploding the series of false dualisms underlying Habermas's theory of modernity. This is done, in large part, by conceiving of 'system 'and 'lifeworld' in a way that avoids a problematic separation between 'labour' and 'interaction'. With this separation collapsed, capital/labour conflicts come within the reach of system/lifeworld conflicts and the thesis of colonisation is not rendered defunct; on the contrary, its net of application is widened. These theoretical revisions do not mark the culmination of the thesis but its start point. What follows is an attempt to utilise the colonisation thesis in empirical social research; an enterprise often overlooked considering the sociological significance of Habermas's ideas. This utilisation of Habermas succeeds in empirically grounding and updating his key concepts for the field of twenty-first century sociology. It also succeeds in generating insight into the fields of education and teacher trade unionism which formed the topic of inquiry.

Drawing upon qualitative interviews with members of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) (N=45), and analysis of a 2004 Labour Research Department Survey 'NUT Membership Participation' (N=1252), I argue that colonisation in the form of government education policy since 1988 is responsible for generating a myriad of concerns and grievances at work for teachers. These grievances are all of a particular type; they cluster around the reshaping of teachers 'lifeworld at work', i.e. changes happening with respect to educational culture, professional identity and workplace solidarities. These concerns, although similar to the 'symbolic' struggles of the NSMs, are nevertheless intrinsically material and interconnected with traditional distributive concerns. Moreover, they feed into struggles over public sector modernisation in the UK; a policy seen here as akin to a unique convergence of processes of commodification and juridification in twenty-first century Britain focused around reorganising schools on the basis of the 'technical' logic of private business rather than the 'communicative' logic of public service.

Contrary to the expectations generated by Habermas's NSM theory, however, the high incidence of strains in teachers workplaces in 2004-5 did not translate into high levels of trade union activism on the part of NUT members. On the contrary, data pointed towards low levels of mobilisation amongst the membership (particularly in relation to female and young members). As such, the thesis points beyond Habermas's problematic 'strains equals actions' approach to suggest, in line with Resource Mobilisation theory, that teachers require a range of key resources for successful activism, and that these resources are especially lacking in the present context. The resources argument is developed in a distinctly Habermasian direction however, by arguing that the resources of the lifeworld (networks, collective identities and collective memories) are crucial in this respect. Subsequently, the resources which are especially needed for mobilising teachers (and young teachers in particular) in the present educational context are exactly those which have been brought into question; they are resources relating to society, personality and culture, and most importantly, communicative action itself.

DECLARATION

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank first and foremost the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) who have funded this research (PTA-030-2002-01409), and my supervisor, Professor Nick Crossley, whose encouragement and comments on work in progress have been invaluable. I am also indebted to the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT), and several of its members and staff, without whose cooperation, assistance, and interest this thesis could not have been completed. Alongside those members who gave up their time to be interviewed, I give special thanks to Assistant Secretary Duncan Mcfarlane, and Mick Lerry of the National Executive, for helping on numerous occasions and for involving me in the 'Union Democracy Working Party' in 2004-5, the 2005 NUT Annual Conference in Gateshead, and the 2005 Young Teachers' Weekend in Weston. Special thanks also to the NUT's Information Officer, Janet Friedlander, who allowed me access to the NUT Library at Hamilton House and was of great assistance.

I am also indebted to the NUT and Labour Research Department (LRD) for granting me access to the dataset relating to the 2004 LRD survey 'NUT Membership Participation'. Without their generosity in data sharing a large part of this thesis could not have been written. Special thanks in this respect go to Clare Ruhemann at the LRD.

Finally, I must thank the teachers in my life – Barry Edwards, Jason Edwards, Christian Gorman, Louise Boulter and Ivan Button – whose experience, support, and comments on chapters were invaluable. Also to Lorraine, Helen, Jo, and Dan at home, and James, Mark and Shaida at Manchester, for ongoing encouragement and interest, and to Thomas, whose mere presence inspires us all!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
BNP	British National Party
BSA	British Sociological Association
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CTC	City Technology College
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EAZ	Education Action Zone
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education (in UK Education)
GM	Grant Maintained
GTC	General Teaching Council
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LEA	Local Education Authority
LMS	local management of schools
LRD	Labour Research Department
NASUWT	National Union of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NSMs	New Social Movements
NUT	National Union of Teachers
PAT	Professional Association of Teachers
PFI/PPP	Private Finance Initiative/ Public-Private Partnership
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate of Education
SATs	Standard Attainment Tests (in UK Education)
TES	*Times Educational Supplement*
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UCB	Union citizenship behaviours
UDWP	Union Democracy Working Party

INTRODUCTION

> What fascinated me right away with those two *(Adorno and Horkheimer)* was that they weren't engaged in a reception of Marx, that was not what they were up to at all – they were utilising him (Habermas 1986, 77).

This thesis is primarily engaged not in a reception of the work of German critical theorist Jürgen Habermas, but in a sociological *utilisation* of his key concepts. Habermas is one of the major players on the sociological scene since the 1970s, although it would be inaccurate to portray his significance in purely sociological terms. His work has attracted mainstream attention in areas ranging from moral philosophy and procedural democracy, to ethics and linguistics. His keen awareness of the importance of the sociological perspective, his complex model of modern capitalist societies, and his political diagnosis of the times, place him, however, undoubtedly in sociology's court. The way in which he integrates an eclectic mix of sociological thinkers (including a comprehensive assimilation of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim) into one surprisingly coherent body of theory has been widely applauded, if not widely accepted (Scott 1995, 228). Whilst some have disregarded him on the grounds of a misplaced optimism in the project of modernity (Foucault 1977; Lyotard 1984), others have remained fascinated not only with debates around the workability of his prescriptions for democracy, but with the depth and range of his sociological insights (Benhabib 1986; Honneth 1995; Offe 1985; Outhwaite 1994). In recent times for example Habermas has captured the minds of feminist sociologists, who have turned to him to raise important criticisms about his work, and have often come away with valuable insights from it (Cohen 1995; Fraser 1989; Meehan 1995). Similarly, Habermas has presented opportunities to address, if not

overcome, lingering sociological dilemmas over the relationship between structure and agency, and systems theory and interpretivism.

Whilst it would be wrong to underestimate the problems associated with the Habermasian project, it would be equally as wrong from the outset, to deny the utility of the theory for a sociological understanding of the modern world. Much of the criticism that has been levelled at Habermas has been from a certain theoretical point of view, from the perspective which has been termed amongst many things, 'postmodernist'. Here, as with other fundamental oppositions in outlook, there are clearly two sides with little room for persuasion between them. In this respect, certain kinds of theorists are destined not to take on board a Habermasian perspective (Outhwaite 1996, 17), although common ground may not be as rare as at first expected (the similarities in analysis between Habermas and Foucault, for instance, spring to mind) (Habermas 1996b, 360; Outhwaite 1996, 19-20). But without adopting an overly selective approach to social theory, are there important things that sociologists can take from Habermas's repertoire without falling into what we consider to be (from our perspective) the same traps as he did? This is the fundamental question of this thesis, which starts with theory and ends with theory, but seeks to capture something of empirical importance in between. This latter aim, of grounding Habermasian theory in empirical social research, is one that with very few exceptions has been overlooked in existing sociological literature.

Many of the theories debated today remain within the realm of the abstract. Despite some notable attempts, and his own calls for application[1], this perhaps rings even more truly in the case of Jürgen Habermas. In particular, his work in moral

[1] Habermas argues for example that the thesis of colonisation 'needs to be tested empirically in connection with "real abstractions" detected in core zones of the lifeworld' (Habermas 1987, 374).

philosophy and democracy has given rise to a large volume of literature engaged in highly detached philosophical controversies (Benhabib and Dallmayr 1990; Habermas 1996a). Such is the nature of philosophical endeavour. The contemporary sociological relevance of Habermas's work is, however, unlikely to gain wide appreciation, or persuasive criticism, without leaving the comfort of the theorist's armchair. As Radcliffe-Brown pointed out, 'a theory consists of a set of analytical concepts, which should be *clearly defined in their reference to concrete reality*' (Radcliffe-Brown 1977, 11). The position adopted here suggests that if we want to say something of theoretical importance about Habermas's work, then the best way forward is to do something of empirical importance. Empirical research is required to meet pressing concerns on at least two levels: firstly, can a theoretical critique of Habermas be used in an empirical application of his work? Secondly, what do the concepts which make up Habermas's elaborate theory of modern societies actually come to mean in the present British context?

These levels of concern relate to the key assumptions of this thesis; the first being that a concept is only *meaningful* if it can be understood in relation to concrete reality; and the second being that a concept is only *useful* if it can be shown that we can move beyond the abstract and apply it to real situations. The result of the latter does not have to equal a neat and straightforward endorsement. Research is not about finding a way to operationalise the concept, rather it is about finding out if a concept helps us to understand, in some new or interesting way, the aspect of social life under investigation. As Whitty states, 'my own preference is for theories that provide a different set of lenses from those we take for granted' (Whitty 2002, 16). It is my contention that despite the questions which have been raised about Habermasian social theory, a number of indicators exist to suggest that some of his key concepts

may well provide sociologists with this 'different set of lenses' when researching modern capitalist societies today. Ultimately, whether these 'lenses' represent the best way of looking at the phenomena under investigation is not the concern of this thesis. If it succeeds in providing a theoretical critique of Habermas, and then applies it to contemporary society in a way that enhances our understanding of substantive issues and leads to a refinement of his basic concepts, then the aim of this enterprise will have been fulfilled.

This thesis is not, therefore, primarily about a reception of Habermas, although a certain amount of critical re-positioning is conducted here in an attempt to avoid what are considered to be the existing pitfalls in his theory of modernity. Instead the thesis seeks to *utilise* Habermas in a way which updates and empirically grounds certain of his key concepts for the field of contemporary sociology. The concept which is the prime subject of investigation is that of 'colonisation'. Dynamics around the 'colonisation of the lifeworld', argued Habermas, have replaced dynamics around 'capital and labour' in sparking the key conflicts which characterise advanced capitalist societies (Habermas 1981; Habermas 1987). These conflicts are no longer essentially economic. They are instead those 'post-material' and 'social-psychological' strains which culminate in struggles around identity and lifestyle (Habermas 1986, 106). Habermas argues that:

> The origins of the crisis still lie in the economic system of capitalism, but...the welfare state no longer allows the crisis to explode in an immediately economic form. Instead...the symptoms of the crisis are displaced into strains within the cultural and social order. Recent years have rather confirmed me in the conviction that today the onset of an economic crisis does not generally lead to a political response, either by organised workers or trade unions...Instead, reactions to the crisis take the very mediated form of an overloading of the mechanisms of social and cultural integration (Habermas 1986, 58).

'Colonisation' is therefore the process that provides the 'strains' around which the 'New Social Movements' (NSMs) so prevalent in Western Europe in Habermas's decades of writing (the 1970s and 1980s), mobilise, and which appeared from his point in history to have overtaken the workers and the Labour Movement in challenging the capitalist system. For Habermas, NSMs reflected that shift from the 'old politics' of distribution to the 'new politics' of identity (Habermas 1987, 392). The latter does not call for economic compensations, but addresses 'the grammar of forms of life' (Habermas 1987, 323). NSMs included movements like Feminism, Anti-nuclear, Student, and Environmental Campaigns, squaring up directly to the 'secondary dysfunctions' of the capitalist mode of production (Habermas 1986, 60). They took up struggles divorced from labour, and took them up in sites located outside of the workplace.

The idea of a conflict shift from capital/labour to system/lifeworld has, however, been a point of ongoing contention in the field of sociology. The criticisms aimed at the 'newness' of social movements are numerous and persuasive (Barker and Dale 1998; Calhoun 1995; Crossley 2003; Ray 1993; Tucker 1991). Rather than reiterating these debates, this thesis argues that the next logical step for sociologists is to attempt to apply Habermas to an analysis of the contemporary Labour Movement. Taking up this task however requires, first and foremost, a re-examination of Habermas's theory of modernity and the conceptual separations within his schema which lead to the exclusion of the worker and the trade union from the thesis of colonisation. This is the subject of chapter one, which carves out the theoretical space for re-introducing the workplace into dynamics around colonisation. Chapter one argues that by a process of logical re-positioning, we can

actually use Habermas's theory to explore what is termed 'the colonisation of the lifeworld at work', and the reaction to this process of the part of organised workers.

In order to make Habermas's theory accessible to the field of empirical social research, these theoretical revisions are subsequently put to use in a case study of UK state education, which draws upon both quantitative survey data (n=1252) and qualitative interviews with teacher trade unionists (n=45). This case study had the aim of empirically exploring the colonisation of schools and the response to this process on the part of teachers in the largest of the teacher unions; the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT). The rationale for selecting a case study from the field of public sector education is presented in chapter two, followed by a discussion of the multi-staged, mixed-method research strategy employed and the methodological assumptions which guided it (chapter three). Further details on interviewees can be found in the research participants (anonymous) profiles included as an appendix.

It is argued using the empirical material produced in this case study, that colonisation can be understood as a process happening in UK state education. Chapter four establishes this fact through an assessment of government education policy, 1944-2005. In particular, I concentrate upon New Labour's policy of 'modernising' public services as an empirical example of the colonisation thesis in the present British context. Chapter five develops this argument by suggesting that post-1988 education policies, and the 'remodelling' of schools, have introduced a series of strains into teachers' workplaces; strains which are responsible for producing a myriad of grievances and concerns around educational culture, professional identity and professional solidarity. Teachers' grievances thus arise at the level of social integration in the workplace, and can be accurately expressed in terms of a colonisation of their 'lifeworld at work'.

Contrary to expectations generated by Habermas's NSM thesis, however, the existence of a high number of strains in teachers' workplaces did not lead, upon examination of the data, to a high level of active mobilisation amongst teacher trade unionists in the period of 2004-5 (chapter six). In fact, teachers were members of unions in high numbers, but the majority of members tended not to be involved in the union's democratic structures and campaigns. This thesis therefore centres on an analysis of the response to colonisation that Ray terms 'quietism' (Ray 1993, 177). In the latter stages of the thesis, Habermas is criticised for failing to sufficiently recognise that whilst colonisation may supply the 'strains' around which movements can mobilise, it also undermines the specifically 'lifeworld resources' necessary to organise collective struggles (chapters seven and eight).

The task that is taken up here is therefore two-fold: firstly, to reintroduce labour into Habermas's thesis of colonisation; secondly, to push forward the *sociological* agenda within Habermas by turning his key concepts into tools for empirical social research. This dual-purpose is reflected in the structure of the thesis, which begins with a theoretical critique, but quickly turns into an empirical examination of substantive issues. The structure of the thesis is, furthermore, dialogical in nature; setting up a conversation between Habermasian theory and the real-world of labour struggle.

It is necessary in closing to be clear about what this thesis is not. Many different theories exist surrounding the current state of trade unionism in the UK, coming from varying academic perspectives. Applying Habermas to the context of trade unions should not be confused with any suggestion that his colonisation thesis is necessarily *the best perspective* sociologists have with which to understand them. This is not the claim of the thesis. Rather the interest is in exploring how we can

better understand the meaning of Habermas's concept of colonisation in the present UK context by looking at its relationship to struggles happening in the realm of labour. This said, it is also my suggestion that the 'different set of lenses' supplied by Habermas to look at issues relating to trade unionism and membership participation produce insights of a kind that are often overlooked by the more tried and tested approaches in the field.

CHAPTER ONE

HABERMAS'S COLONISATION THESIS: A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a critical introduction to Habermas's theory of modernity in order to explore the meaning, nature, and problems associated with his thesis of the 'colonisation of the lifeworld'. The colonisation of the lifeworld is the process which Habermas sees as the spark for the 'New Social Movements' (NSMs), whose varied examples of activism around identity and lifestyle from the 1970s onwards signalled a shift in the nature of social conflicts in advanced capitalist societies (Habermas 1981; Habermas 1987). For Habermas, capital/labour conflicts over distribution have been replaced by system/lifeworld conflicts as the key line of fracture, and NSMs act to police the 'boundaries' between everyday life and the 'monetary-bureaucratic complex' of the state and the economy (Habermas 1996b, 362-3).

In the wake of a wealth of criticism aimed at the idea of a conflict-shift and the 'newness' of today's movements (Barker and Dale 1998; Calhoun 1995; Ray 1993; Tucker 1991) this chapter assesses Habermas's grounds for leaving the worker and the Labour Movement outside of the process of colonisation. The aim of this dialogue is not to justify an abandonment of the colonisation thesis, but to justify opening it up to a wider audience, which includes the contemporary Labour Movement. This is a move which has been highlighted in existing literature, but up to this point has not been made by sociologists. In his critique of NSM theory, Calhoun for example argues that once the false 'novelty' of NSMs has been exploded, the theory can be usefully applied to an analysis of the Labour Movement (Calhoun 1995). Here, it can highlight the 'identity politics' and cultural aspects of

trade unionism; aspects that have always existed but have been 'obscured from conventional academic observation' (Calhoun 1995, 176). Before Habermas's NSM theory can be turned back on the Labour Movement, however, it is necessary to re-examine the aspects of his theory of modernity which gave rise to its exclusion in the first place. For this reason, this chapter concentrates upon Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld' and attempts to dismantle the conceptual separations which underlie them.

The chapter comprises of three sections. Section one situates labour within Habermas's theory of modernity by presenting his critique of theories of societal rationalisation and his shift to a model of communicative action within a two-level concept of society. It is clear from this discussion that Habermas's critique of the German tradition of critical theory leads him to seek distance from theories based on 'social labour' as the key category. Section two clarifies the relationship Habermas draws between the process of colonisation and conflicts in the realm of social labour, looking at what role, if any, this leaves for the worker and the trade union in 'policing the boundaries' between system and lifeworld in welfare state societies. This discussion pinpoints a series of conceptual divisions underlying Habermas's rationale for excluding the worker from the colonisation thesis; divisions which stem from a false separation he draws between 'labour' and 'interaction'. Section three takes up this separation as the key problematic, arguing that as the basis for Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld' it leads to the false exclusion of the worker and the Labour Movement from the thesis of colonisation.

SECTION ONE: LABOUR AND INTERACTION IN THEORIES OF SOCIETAL RATIONALISATION

The aim of this section is to situate labour within Habermas's theory of modernity. This necessitates a discussion of his approach to societal rationalisation and an introduction to his two-level concept of society in terms of 'system' and 'lifeworld'. Habermas takes as the start point for discussion the thesis of societal rationalisation proposed by Max Weber and reworked in various forms since then by German critical theorists (Habermas 1984, chapter II). Habermas's critique of these theorists surrounds their specific analyses of the process of rationalisation, and more importantly, the nature of the theoretical paradigm to which they are attached. By engaging with this dialogue, the position of labour, and of interaction, becomes clear within Habermas's theory of modernity.

Theories of societal rationalisation

Critical social theorists share in common a notion of 'societal rationalisation'. Despite differences in the way in which they conceive of the concept, rationalisation is seen as a process that goes hand in hand with the growth of capitalism (something Marx had previously pointed out with respect to the forces of production) (Marx and Engels 1967[1848]). Adorno and Horkheimer for instance argued that the expansion of a calculative, instrumental rationality (i.e. means-ends rationality), in the process of capitalist development would undermine the Enlightenment project of emancipation as it became an all-pervading, and ultimately dominating, feature of modernity (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979[1944]). Marcuse, on the other hand, argued that instrumental rationality *per se* was not the problem, but the uses to which it was put in a political-administrative system (Marcuse 1955). Habermas takes

something from each of these approaches to rationalisation, but essentially discards them for a concept much more closely linked with Weber.

Habermas argues that Weber is the only one in the German tradition who can offer a sufficiently complex notion of societal rationalisation (Habermas 1984, 143). Weber looks, for example, at the disenchantment process in the history of religion, which fulfilled the internal conditions for the appearance of occidental rationalism (Habermas 1984, 167). In this idea, Habermas finds the seeds of the process he will develop in terms of the 'rationalisation of the lifeworld'. Weber predominantly talks about rationalisation, however, in terms of subsystems of purposive rational action that gain ascendancy and lead to a loss of freedom and meaning (for example, the idea of the 'iron-cage' of bureaucracy) (Weber 1978[1921]). In this sense he still shares the one-dimensional concept of rationalisation posited by Adorno and Horkheimer. Habermas therefore concentrates on unearthing the first, neglected, form of rationalisation embedded in Weber's work by focusing on his analysis of culture and personality systems, rather than the state and the economy (Habermas 1984, 159). In addition to his theory of disenchantment, for instance, Weber discusses the rationalisation of modern societies in terms of the differentiation of 'value spheres' relating to science, morality and art (Habermas 1984, 177). Each of these spheres has its own criteria of value, and progress could be made according to each. These cultural processes signal to Habermas that there is another type of rationalisation going on in the course of capitalist development; one that can have positive rather than negative effects for society.

Habermas therefore saw in Weber that rationalisation had dual tendencies: on the one hand, to give freedom (for example, from tradition), and on the other hand, to take freedom away (for example, the iron-cage of bureaucracy). What Habermas

does is to differentiate between these 'dual tendencies' in order to articulate two separate processes of rationalisation. Firstly, the rationalisation of contexts of everyday interaction, in which social arrangements, once governed by tradition, become open to rational assessment and critical restructuring. Secondly, the rationalisation of economic and political activity into market and administrative structures, which, through legal formalisation, become subsystems in their own right and grow in strength and complexity. The latter type of rationalisation does indeed see that expansion of means-ends rationality that Adorno, Horkheimer, and ultimately, Weber, talked about. The former type of rationalisation, however, spreads a 'communicative rationality', which rather than denoting instrumental reason, refers to the expansion of conditions for discursive will formation (something that will be discussed in more detail later). In failing to appreciate the distinction between these two processes, Weber missed the crucial point: the way in which societal rationalisation has developed in the west ('occidental rationalism') involves only a *partial* and *selective* form of rationalisation, and more importantly, things could be different if the rationalisation of everyday life was free to develop unhindered instead (Habermas 1984, 183).

It is only one of the two possibilities for rationalisation, then, that accounts for the development of subsystems of economic and administrative activity that gain autonomy from lifeworld structures and the consensual norms that govern them. Nevertheless, Habermas argues that these subsystems do develop, with dynamics of their own steered by media of money and bureaucratic power (Habermas 1984; 1987). The relations within them are not grounded in linguistic communication, but are interrelated functionally. The way in which they are organised bears much resemblance to the way that the systems functionalism of Parsons and Luhmann

approaches the social environment, revealing the marks of their influence on Habermas's thought (Habermas 1987, chapter VII). It is a 'functional form of reason' (Habermas 1991, 258) that coordinates actions within these subsystems, for example, the logic of supply and demand, balancing inputs and outputs. Habermas's key point about this 'functional' rationality is that it bypasses the norms and values of the lifeworld; in other words, these subsystems are divorced from communicative contexts and cannot be subjected to the principles of critical debate expanded by the rationalisation of everyday life. As such, they appear as objective structures outside of our control. The result is what Lukács termed 'reification', in that social relationships, for example those between capital and labour, are seemingly transformed into relationships between things (Lukács 1971[1920]). Habermas, however, develops the concept of reification beyond that of Lukács, with the aim of divorcing it from the realm of social labour. A discussion of this enterprise reveals the relegated role attributed to labour within Habermas's theory of modernity.

Labour and interaction

Essentially, Habermas conceives of labour in the same terms as Adorno and Horkheimer. Labour involves technical[1] interests and knowledge aimed at the manipulation of the objective world. Habermas states that, 'work, or instrumental action, is governed by technical rules' (Habermas 1976, 9). Adorno and Horkheimer conceive of the history of the species in terms of this technical 'mastery over nature' by the subject, who reproduces itself through labour in order to secure self-preservation (Habermas 1984, 366-79). Subjective reason is, for them, instrumental reason. Action is, for them, goal-directed, purposive action. Societal rationalisation,

[1] 'Technical' is defined as 'the form of making and controlling' (Shapiro 1971, vii).

therefore (as discussed above) was, for them, the expansion of instrumental reason into ever more realms of society, including culture and personality. Just as we approach objects in the external environment as things to manipulate for our own ends, so we come to treat other people and ourselves in the same way. Elements of these ideas clearly come from Marx, such as the 'species-being' forming itself in dialogue with nature, and the rationalisation of productive forces in the process of social evolution (Marx and Engels 1965[1845]). For Adorno and Horkheimer, however, science and technology do not harbour the potential for emancipation, but offer instead the means for dominating inner and outer nature. For them, the victory over outer nature (through the growth of instrumental reason), leads directly to a loss of freedom over inner nature (which cannot help but be subsumed under the same rational dynamic); hence the 'dialectic of rationalisation' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979[1944]).

Habermas's critique of this theory of rationalisation is that it is ultimately tied to a 'philosophy of consciousness', whose paradigmatic limits have been exhausted (Habermas 1984, 386-9). Essentially, this model views the subject, through labour, as the carrier of instrumental reason and the victim of reification. As such, it is theoretically incapable of identifying that other process of rationalisation which, as we have seen, Habermas finds embedded in Weber's thesis. In opposition to the philosophy of consciousness and the equation of purposive rationality with rationality *per se*, Habermas introduces the idea of the subject as the creator of a 'communicative' reason when in a relationship of speech and action with one or more other subjects, and so it follows, he posits the idea that what is under threat from reification is the very conditions of intersubjectivity and communication itself (Habermas 1984, 398-9). This latter idea, of subjects belonging to a 'lifeworld'

which immerses them in communicative interaction with others, draws upon ideas from a different sociological tradition: that of the social psychology of Mead[2] (Mead 1968[1934]), and Schutz's phenomenology (Schutz and Luckmann 1974).

In an effort to move away from a theory based on labour and the purposive type of action he sees as bound up with it, Habermas draws a line between 'labour' and 'language' (Habermas 1974, 8-9), and later in his discussion of Hegel, between 'labour' and 'interaction' (Habermas 1974, 142-69). For Habermas, the sphere of labour and purposive action is only one part of the story. On the other side, there exists a sphere of interaction through linguistic communication. In this sphere, action *has* to be orientated not towards the manipulation of objects for one's own ends, but towards reaching mutual understanding through an agreement secured in speech. The latter form of action is called 'communicative action' and involves a communicative form of rationality (Habermas 1987, 119-52). This rationality is essential as a resource for reproducing the modern lifeworld (modern in the sense that traditional world views can no longer be relied upon as the medium for reproducing everyday life). Mead, for instance, saw that symbolically mediated interaction between subjects in linguistic communication was essential for the formation of identity, transmitting knowledge, socialisation, and securing group solidarity (Mead 1968[1934]). Communicative rationality is a resource that is itself a product of societal rationalisation, but as outlined above, not via the expansion of instrumental reason, but via the rationalisation of the lifeworld. Labour and language are,

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[2] Habermas sets up a critical dialogue between the work of G.H. Mead and Emile Durkheim in order to develop his concept of the 'lifeworld' and the process of its rationalisation. For instance, he uses Durkheim's ideas on religion to posit a 'linguistification of the sacred' as part of the process of lifeworld rationalisation, and also finds in Durkheim the origin of Mead's 'generalised other' (Habermas 1987, chapter V). For a critical discussion of the process of 'linguistification' see Berger (1983).

therefore, distinct spheres, or '"objectifications of reality" which we undertake daily', says Habermas, 'either from the viewpoint of technical control, or the viewpoint of intersubjective communication' (Habermas 1974, 8). Habermas makes the either/or position on this point extremely clear, our actions are to be categorised as one *or* the other, and actions relating to work are clearly situated in the realm of instrumental 'labour', not communicative interaction. It is the relationship between the two realms that is the subject of discussion in terms of Hegel (Habermas 1974, chapter 4). On this point Habermas fails to give a sufficiently clear answer. Labour and interaction he argues are distinct, but closely connected. But one thing is for sure, for Habermas, liberation in the realm of labour will not necessarily lead to liberation in the realm of interaction (Habermas 1974, 169). This has to do with the fact that at the present stage of 'organised capitalism' (Habermas 1976, 36), the modern state joins the sphere of capitalist enterprise to form a 'system' of purposive-rational actions steered by money and bureaucratic power, which grows to a point at which it 'uncouples' from the lifeworld and impinges back upon structures of communication with 'pathological' side effects (Habermas 1987). These effects are what 'colonisation', as a conceptual tool, is tailored to capture.

System/lifeworld and the colonisation thesis

Habermas's theory of colonisation starts from the assumption that the continual growth of functional rationality means that subsystems of market and administrative structures have become 'uncoupled' from the communicative contexts of everyday life in a way that creates a separation between what he calls on the one hand 'system' and on the other hand, what we have already discussed as 'lifeworld' (Habermas 1987, 152-97). The boundaries of the 'system' are therefore drawn by the modern

state (as the nucleus of administrative subsystems) and the capitalist economy (as the nucleus of market subsystems), formalised through law into functionally organised realms of action. Material reproduction, for example, used to be synonymous with the private activity of the family-household, but with the development of capitalism was subjected to the rational organisation of markets and formalised in bourgeois private law, before becoming increasingly regulated by social legislation (Habermas 1989, 151-6). Hence, material reproduction has been converted over to a system environment; what Habermas calls 'the world of work' (Habermas 1989, 152). Whilst it is divorced from communicative contexts, the system is still dependent on the lifeworld for functions of symbolic reproduction which it cannot substitute. The lifeworld is sociologically prior in the sense that as the site of cultural transmission, socialisation and symbolic reproduction of identities, it supplies resources that the system cannot do without (Habermas 1987, 154)[3].

The theory of the 'colonisation of the lifeworld' however, does not refer simply to the rationalisation process that converts economic and political activity into a functionally integrated 'system'. This process alone is not sufficient for the term 'colonisation' to be applied. Colonisation refers instead to the process whereby this system, which having grown to a point at which it becomes uncoupled from the lifeworld, impinges back upon it in a way that attempts to convert areas of everyday life that *are responsible for symbolic reproduction* through communication into system environments. Just like the imperial superpower that colonises foreign land in search of more power and resources, the system seeks to colonise the lifeworld as the only place left to direct its growth. The point, however, is that the system cannot continue to grow into these areas unproblematically. When addressed to areas of the

[3] Habermas states, for example, that 'systemic mechanisms need to be anchored in the lifeworld' (Habermas 1987, 154).

lifeworld that function to symbolically reproduce everyday life, such dynamics can only create what Habermas calls 'pathological' side effects. These are the effects produced by the colonisation of a lifeworld *modus operandi* by system rationality. Internal colonisation is thus the key to Habermas's own concept of 'reification' in advanced capitalist society as the systematic distortion of communicative action:

> I have explained the symptoms of reification appearing in developed capitalist societies by the fact that the media-controlled subsystems of the economy and the state intervene with monetary and bureaucratic means in the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld (Habermas 1987, 356).

The net result of this re-theorising, and the establishment of the two-level concept of society in terms of system and lifeworld, is a re-focusing of the 'critical' project[4]. Habermas argues that what once understood itself as a critique of 'instrumental reason' (Adorno and Horkheimer), could now be more accurately understood as a critique of 'functionalist reason' (Habermas 1984; 1987). Instrumental reason still marks the start point for critique, but in a radically altered manner. The problem of reification for instance, occupies different terrain, which is capable of capturing *just what it is* that is under threat from the spread of instrumental reason (Habermas 1984, 389). This is not subjectivity as such, but communicative action (the very basis of intersubjectivity), and what drives the threat is not instrumental reason, but the 'colonisation' of areas of everyday life by the functionalist reason of the system as it extends its mechanisms of coordination into areas that rely upon linguistic communication (Habermas 1987, 386). It is the media of money and power, then, that are the real culprits in advanced capitalist societies.

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[4] ' "Critical" retains the Kantian sense of self-reflective examination of the limits and validity of knowledge' (Shapiro 1971, ix). The characteristics of a 'critical theory' were outlined by Horkheimer in his critique of 'traditional theory' in the social sciences (Scott 1995, 228).

In keeping with the tradition of critical theory, this re-theorising on Habermas's part is not without practical intent. Only after we have properly understood the nature of conflicts arising from capitalist economic development - how they are manifested, and where they arise - can we identify the political potential at the present stage of development. Importantly for Habermas, his system/lifeworld model highlights 'new' potential exactly *because of* the displacement of economic conflicts on to the terrain of culture and personality (the opposite conclusion to Adorno and Horkheimer, who saw only the potential for domination in this move). This is why conflicts arising from capitalist modernisation can disrupt identity formation, social integration and cultural reproduction. Only once this is understood can we see the 'new' potential for protest *and for apathy* in those for who issues of identity, the destruction of existing lifestyles, and the undermining of structures of motivation (summed up in Weberian terms as the 'loss of freedom' and the 'loss of meaning') become critical and form either a basis for collective action or apolitical withdrawal (Habermas 1974, 6-7). In terms of protest potential for example these issues are taken up by 'New Social Movements' like the Women's and Alternative Youth Movements, and Peace, Environmental and Anti-nuclear campaigns (Habermas 1981). What is asserted through protest is a critique of the 'growth of the system', which in and of itself polices the boundaries between system and lifeworld by reasserting the autonomy and priority of the latter via the discursive activity of a genuine public sphere (Habermas 1981). The criticisms, therefore, which have been levelled at the separation between system and lifeworld because of confusion about where certain types of activity should be put[5], misrepresent the problem of boundaries as a theoretical one. Ultimately, the question

[5] See Cohen (1995), Fraser (1989), Giddens (1982).

of what is 'system' and what is 'lifeworld', and how they are to be related, is not a question for theory but for activists to decide.

The problem with labour within the system/lifeworld schema is, however, more fundamental than the problem of where to put it. The problem with labour stems from the question of what has happened to the worker in this process of capitalist modernisation, and specifically, the role of the worker in 'policing the boundaries' between system and lifeworld. Habermas's aim is not to challenge the concept of labour which came before him (i.e. as purposive rational action), but to supplement it with, and ultimately to swap it for, a concept of communicative interaction (within the framework of a two-level concept of society) (Habermas 1996b, 345). This is because theories focusing on labour could not capture the effects of the capitalist economic system that Habermas is interested in; those which result from a distortion of communication. This result has an interesting connection with the worker and the Labour Movement within Habermas's theory of modernity, for the real irony of colonisation is that it is unleashed by the very thing that was set up to defend the workers in the process of capitalist modernisation – the welfare state (Habermas 1996b, 360). How the welfare state relates to the colonisation of the lifeworld, where it leaves the role of the worker in social conflicts, and what this says about the relationship between labour and interaction, will be the subject of the next section.

SECTION TWO: THE ROLE OF THE WORKER IN HABERMAS'S COLONISATION THESIS

In the previous section of the chapter it was made clear that Habermas's characterisation of modernity involves a displacement of theories based on social

labour as the key category. Whilst Habermas's two-level concept of society attempts to redress the balance between different forms of rationality by separating labour and interaction, it ends up with labour fading from view altogether in a theory of reification in capitalist societies. For example, Habermas argues that labour was *the first* site of reification, and that capital/labour was *the first* instance of system/lifeworld confrontations, but that the situation has moved on from this at the present stage of development (Habermas 1996b, 352-3). What is not clear however is where this leaves the worker and the Labour Movement, and what role, if any, they have in 'policing the boundaries' between system and lifeworld. This section aims to clarify the relationship Habermas draws between the process of colonisation and conflicts in the realm of social labour.

Labour and the process of colonisation

It cannot be denied that Habermas is right to argue that an analysis of colonisation requires a theoretical approach which is capable of linking, in an integrated but distinct manner, the system level of society to the level of everyday interactions ('lifeworld') (Habermas 1987). Although Habermas's two-level concept of society is unique in drawing these areas so distinctly and so comprehensively, the basic idea that system-level changes can have affects at the level of everyday life is one that can be found even within theories of rationalisation based on the concept of labour. To put it another way, there always was recognition that the development of capitalist productive forces disrupts the lifeworld of the proletariat. Marx articulated this as alienation and the 'double nature' of the commodity (Marx 1946[1867]), and Lukács reworked this as 'reification' (Lukács 1971[1920]). In concession to this point, Habermas argues that capital/labour can be viewed as part of the dynamics between

system and lifeworld (Habermas 1996b, 353). Marx's analysis of the everyday effects of capitalist production for those who sold their labour power, captured in Habermas's mind, the first confrontation between system and lifeworld:

> Marx was the first to analyse this conflict between system imperatives and lifeworld imperatives, in the form of the dialectic between dead labour and living labour, of abstract labour and concrete labour; and he vividly illustrated it with materials from social history concerning the irruption of new modes of production into traditional lifeworlds (Habermas 1996b, 351).

The positioning of capital/labour conflicts within system/lifeworld dynamics does beg the question of why we cannot therefore place workers within a theory of the colonisation of the lifeworld. Such a theory might argue that the 'taking over' of household based working environments by system imperatives (which organise work into a functionally integrated capitalist enterprise), was the first instance not only of system and lifeworld confrontations, but of colonisation as well (Widmann 1981)[6]. Habermas states, 'traditional forms of labour and of life broke down under the grip of gainful labour organised in business enterprises' (Habermas 1996b, 352). Work, which used to 'belong' to the lifeworld, becomes organised via 'delinguistified media' of money, and thus 'deworlded', as Habermas puts it (Habermas 1987, 342; Habermas 1996b, 352). Further attempts to intensify the labour process in the interest of capital would thus qualify as a colonisation of workplaces by the system. Protest by workers and trade unions against this process could also be seen as a form of protest which 'polices the boundaries' between the system and the lifeworld. This kind of argument is supported by critics of the NSM thesis, who argue that the

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[6] This point was debated by Widmann and Habermas in an interview appearing in *Telos* 1981, and reproduced in a collection of interviews edited by Peter Dews entitled *Autonomy and Solidarity*, published in English in 1986.

Labour Movement always did take up issues of lifestyle and identity in the course of capitalist modernisation, albeit related to work (Calhoun 1995; Knodler-Bunte 1981; Tucker 1991). Capital/labour conflicts are therefore part of the wider process of colonising the lifeworld, and not a stage prior to it. In this way, workers could be reintroduced to the colonisation thesis (Edwards 2004).

Habermas, however, is careful to argue otherwise. Despite his concession that capital/labour conflicts are to be seen as a moment in the dynamic between system and lifeworld, for him it is a moment belonging to, 1) a process of societal rationalisation, not colonisation, and 2) the past. The conversion of labour into a functionally integrated system environment in the course of societal rationalisation, although it had negative effects for everyday life, did not have the kind of 'pathological' side effects that Habermas investigates in present times under the title of 'colonisation' (Habermas 1987). Situating the worker within the process of colonisation is, then, not as straightforward as following a Marx inspired analysis of capitalist development and its destructive consequences for the reproduction of the proletarian lifeworld. There are three reasons for this which can be deduced from Habermas's writings (a-c).

Habermas's three-fold rationale

a) Habermas argues that the conversion of work into a system environment is not akin to the colonisation of the lifeworld because functions of material reproduction *can* be converted over into system environments without pathological side effects for communication in interaction. Material reproduction lends itself favourably to organisation via mechanisms of cooperation that involve delinguistified media, such as money. In Habermas's terms, 'work' (governed by 'technical rules'), is a goal-

directed, instrumental activity anyway (Habermas 1976, 9). Although it involves basic forms of social cooperation through communication, the realm of work does not necessitate that action be orientated to reaching a mutual understanding through speech. Habermas states:

> ...technical rules, to be sure, are first elaborated under conditions of language communication, but they have nothing in common with the communicative rules of interaction (Habermas 1974, 159).

In this sense, labour is separate from the sphere of interaction. The organisation of material reproduction in a capitalist form, therefore, did not undercut vital resources of communicative action. As such, it did not lead to that distortion of communication which would transform such a redefining of system/lifeworld boundaries into an instance of colonisation.

b) Marx's connection between capitalist economic development and the destruction of the lifeworld of the proletariat was not sufficient as an outline for a process of colonisation because the effects for everyday life that Marx could capture were *economic in nature* (Habermas 1974, 195-198). It was the material reproduction of the lifeworld of the proletariat that was endangered by capitalist economic development; problems of unemployment, low wages, bad working conditions, poor standards of living, the unpredictability of boom and bust. They were direct economic expressions of the crises involved in the capitalist mode of production. As such they were taken up by trade unions and labour parties, and the combined efforts of 'old social movements' led to the victory of the welfare state. The welfare state, as guarantor of basic rights and freedoms, such as insurance against the worst economic effects of the capitalist system, effectively removed the direct expression of material crises in the lifeworld of the worker (Habermas 1986, 58; 1976, 37-8). Through trade

union bargaining, the worker achieves a 'political price' for their labour, which became the basis of a 'class compromise' (Habermas 1976, 38). The subsequent rise in the standard of living means that 'conflicts over distribution lose their explosive power' (Habermas 1987, 349-50). As a result, the role of 'employee' is pacified as a channel of social conflict (Habermas 1986, 135; 1987, 347) and 'alienation has been deprived of its palpable economic forms of misery' (Habermas 1974, 195). At the stage of 'organised capitalism', therefore, when the state now intervenes in the economy to manage key sources of conflict, Marx's analysis can only take us so far (Habermas 1974, 195-198). The point it can take us to is one demarcated by the welfare state[7]. Beyond the establishment of the welfare state the ways in which the conflicts produced by the capitalist mode of production enter everyday life are fundamentally altered. This is because the way in which the welfare state mediates the problems of a capitalist economy creates problems of its own in different areas of the lifeworld, namely in areas responsible for symbolic reproduction. The state does not intervene in the lifeworld in a 'neutral' way, but in a specifically 'administrative' manner (Habermas 1996b, 360). Rights and benefits are guaranteed and delivered through legal, bureaucratic means, which extend mechanisms of cooperation based on administrative power into the lifeworld with pathological effects. For example, welfare rights as legal rights have to be provided through a bureaucratic system, whose exercise of power forms one of the subsystems of the state. The way that agents in the lifeworld therefore relate to the welfare system is through the role of 'client' who has dealings with the bureaucratic process. They do this when, for

[7] In line with this argument, Habermas does stress that attempts to dismantle the welfare state would lead to a resurgence of 'classical' forms of class conflict and trade union activity (Habermas 1986, 63). He does not see this as a likely strategy in advanced capitalist societies however because of the central role the welfare state plays in securing the 'class compromise' and thus warding off social crisis.

example, they receive their benefit from the job centre, or their child allowance, or their long term sick pay. Further, as more and more functions of the lifeworld are encompassed by the welfare system (like health care and education), client relationships spread more widely and these areas also become converted over to system environments via the steering media of bureaucratic power. The effect of this 'juridification' process is not only an extension of client relationships, however, but a process of individualisation (Habermas 1987, 362). For example, welfare rights work by giving benefits to people who are conceived of in law in a particular way. Agents are 'individual subjects' constituted as the bearers of rights, and who will act in accordance with those rights to maximise their private interests. Whilst the guaranteeing of these kinds of positive freedoms protects people 'from the cradle to the grave', Habermas argues that they also force people to redefine lifeworld situations, their relationships to one another, and even their image of themselves:

> ...the individualising definition of, say, geriatric care has burdensome consequences for the self-image of the person concerned, and for his relations with spouse, friends, neighbours, and others; it also has consequences for the readiness of solidaristic communities to provide subsidiary assistance (Habermas 1987, 362).

The juridification processes relating to the welfare state therefore have the effect of reorganising and regulating areas of everyday life. They reorganise these areas on the basis of a system environment by extending bureaucratic power as steering media. As a result, more areas of everyday life become regulated by a functionally integrated subsystem of the state, which people relate to through the role of 'client'. Habermas argues that unlike the efforts to convert work over to a system environment, this time there *are* pathological side-effects for everyday interaction as

the state and economy are now 'encroaching upon territory that the lifeworld can no longer relinquish' (Habermas 1986, 112).

At this point it is clear why Habermas concentrates on colonisation primarily in terms of a process of 'juridification' related to the welfare state in advanced capitalist societies (Habermas 1987, 332-73). He does add to this a process of 'commodification', although it gets short thrift in comparison. The process of commodification involves money as well as administrative power being used as media to orient actions in areas of everyday life (Habermas 1987, 364). Examples of this would centre on the introduction of market forces in areas such as leisure, education, health and public space. In recent times, commodification strikes a chord with analyses of anti-corporatism (Klein 2000; Monbiot 2000), and Negri's idea of the 'social factory' (Hardt and Negri 2001; Negri 2005). In turn, these resonate with Marx's theory of 'real subsumption' (Marx 1946[1867]), and Adorno's theory of 'mass culture' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979[1944]). Here, ever more areas of life become subsumed under the logic of capital. The difference is, however, that commodification is linked to colonisation and thus the two-level concept of society that Habermas has introduced as system and lifeworld. Only within this framework can we understand more accurately *what* is being threatened by this process. Marx, having no concept of a communicatively structured lifeworld, could not process within his account the kind of social-psychological consequences of the capitalist system which would become the predominant features of the 'organised' stage of capitalism (Habermas 1986, 106). These come when conflicts are shifted from the realm of economic consequences to cultural and psychic consequences created by the distortion of communication: exactly the situation covered by the concept of colonisation.

c) Habermas does, however, have some notion that the development of a capitalist economy could also have effects at the level of culture and psyche for the worker. In this sense, surely, one could argue that there was a 'colonisation' of the lifeworld of the worker in the process of capitalist modernisation. Again, Habermas closes off this line of argument by stating that the forms of life uprooted in the process of 'deworlding' work were *traditional* in nature (Habermas 1986, 123; Habermas 1987, 349). It was the traditional lifeworld of the worker, anchored in *ascribed* norms, which became eroded, not a modern differentiated lifeworld which secures symbolic reproduction via *achieved* norms, agreed upon through speech. Only the latter 'modern' lifeworld can result in problems for the symbolic reproduction of life when undermined. The erosion of traditional lifeworlds merely supplies an aid to the establishment of communicative ones, and in this sense is part of that process of 'disenchantment' or 'linguistification of the sacred' to which Habermas attached a positive role in the process of lifeworld rationalisation (Habermas 1984; 1987). Thus any connection between capitalist modernisation and the negative effects for the culture and personality systems in which the worker was immersed is not adequate for a theory of colonisation. Habermas states that:

> Marx could not sufficiently distinguish between traditional lifeworlds, which are worn away through modernisation processes, and a structural differentiation of the life-forms which are today threatened in their communicative infrastructure (Habermas 1986, 123).

This point seems at odds with other aspects of Habermas's theory. Many of the 'new' social movements for instance, are responding to the erosion of *traditional* forms of life by system interference. In Habermas's example of Feminism, system interference in the realm of the family through the net of client relationships linked to

state provided welfare, helps to dislodge traditional ways of doing things and thus leads to a critical awakening and attempts to establish new lifestyles (Habermas 1987, 393-4). Just why the worker is different when faced with the erosion of traditional forms of life is not clear. Presumably for Habermas, the reason would lie in the connection between the three factors discussed. Work, as a realm of material reproduction, is not essential to symbolic reproduction. Traditional ways of 'doing' work can thus be eroded without undercutting a realm of the lifeworld necessary for the reproduction of culture, society, and personality *per se*. Families on the other hand, cannot act as systems for the very reason that they are integral to symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld. When tradition is undercut, a new, communicative way of doing things '*must*' be found (Habermas 1994, 111). The underlying reason for placing work outside the process of colonisation is thus related to the separation Habermas makes between functions of symbolic reproduction and functions of material reproduction (Habermas 1987, 138). This separation rears its head in several forms in Habermas's writing, not least in the separation between labour and interaction.

Considering this three-fold rationale against the inclusion of workers in dynamics surrounding the colonisation of the lifeworld, it is clear that colonisation as a process is tied to specific kinds of conditions: firstly, to a lifeworld which takes on a modern, rationalised form and is differentiated in terms of structures of society, personality and culture; secondly, when the conflicts created by a capitalist mode of production are no longer experienced in directly economic form, but through state intervention, assume a social-psychological nature; and thirdly, when the areas of everyday life that are threatened by the expansion of action orientated to the delinguistified media of money and power are those areas which are unfavourable to

a 'functional' form of integration because they involve symbolic and not material reproduction.

The rate at which Habermas marches on without the worker is only justified if his rationale for their absence is proved water tight. All three of the reasons he gives for excluding the worker from the colonisation thesis are, however, problematic. The underlying cause of their problematic nature rests upon a series of false divisions. Each of these divisions finds its origin in the separation between 'labour' and 'interaction' outlined in section one. This will be the subject of the next section, which presents my critique of Habermas's theory of modernity. This critique suggests that the only obstacles in the way of including workers in the colonisation thesis are ones that Habermas has put there himself.

SECTION THREE: THE COLONISATION OF THE 'LIFEWORLD AT WORK'

The problematic divisions outlined in section two stem from the separation Habermas makes between 'labour' and 'interaction'. In this section I argue that this separation is problematic, not least because it becomes the basis for Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld'. The characterisation he offers can be justified neither theoretically, nor upon a reflection of the nature of work in modern capitalist societies. What is required, however, is not an abandonment of Habermas's two-level concept of society (a framework which is methodologically essential to the project of critical theory[8]), but a way to conceive of system/lifeworld which avoids the temptation to draw rigid separations between: firstly, material and symbolic reproduction, and secondly, purposive and communicative action; and by this token opens up the thesis of colonisation to the include the worker and the Labour Movement.

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[8] This point is discussed further in chapter three.

1) The relationship between material and symbolic reproduction

Firstly, Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld' in terms of a separation between 'labour' and 'interaction' makes it difficult to appreciate the fluid and multi-directional nature of the relationship between material and symbolic reproduction. For Habermas, labour as purposive activity is geared towards the material reproduction of life and thus belongs to the 'system', whilst areas of everyday life as communicative interaction are geared towards the symbolic reproduction of personality, culture and society, and so belong to the lifeworld.

For example, it is precisely because work is concerned with the material reproduction of the lifeworld and not symbolic reproduction that it could, in Habermas's estimations, be converted over to a system environment in the course of societal rationalisation. Habermas argues that the taking over of the lifeworld, 'went well as long as it only touched on functions of material reproduction that need not necessarily be organised communicatively' (Habermas 1986, 112). As labour involves purely purposive, technical rationality, the problems caused in this 'deworlding' process did not come at the level of communication, but were manifested in directly economic form (Habermas 1996b, 352). As such, grievances surrounding low pay, unemployment and working conditions could be pacified by compensations built into the system through the roles of 'client' (for example, of welfare) and 'consumer' (for example, of leisure and commodities). These compensations keep workers orientated to rewards within the system (and presumably to traditions of civil and familial privatism[9]) (Habermas 1976),

[9] Habermas refers to 'civil privatism' as 'an interest in the steering and maintenance performances of the administrative system but little participation in the legitimising process', and refers to 'familial privatism' as 'a family orientation with developed interests in consumption and leisure on the one hand, and in a career orientation suitable to status competition on the other' (Habermas 1976, 75).

effectively pacifying the role of 'employee' as a channel of conflict. Equally, it is precisely because symbolic reproduction happens in the lifeworld that the colonisation of areas of everyday life through bureaucratisation and monetarisation creates pathological side effects for social integration. No compensations can be offered when questions of a symbolic nature are the source of grievance, i.e. issues around identity and lifestyle. In this respect *only* do explosive conflicts and meaningful resistance live on in modern societies. Habermas states that in the course of capitalist modernisation the system has:

> ...been successful in overriding the defensive reaction of those affected so long as it was primarily a question of transferring the material reproduction of the lifeworld over to formally organised domains of action. Along the front between system and lifeworld, the lifeworld evidently offers stubborn and possibly successful resistance only when functions of symbolic reproduction are in question (Habermas 1987, 351).

The idea of a separation between material and symbolic reproduction is therefore evident in Habermas's approach to system and lifeworld. This separation has not been accepted without criticism. Fraser for example, questions it by pointing to the material reproduction functions of families, which Habermas locates in the lifeworld (Fraser 1989). Equally, she stresses the symbolic reproduction functions of workplaces. Fraser uses the example of the 'family wage' to argue that work has always had a close association with identity formation. Male heads of household built their identities as patriarchal figureheads who were the providers for their dependent families through the unequal pay structures operating in workplaces (Fraser 1989, 124-5). Whilst Cohen questions Fraser's conception of the family as an 'economic system', she argues that there are problems with the system/lifeworld distinction in terms of Habermas's location of 'power' exclusively in the system

(Cohen 1995, 65-8). Furthermore, Giddens has argued that strategic and communicative interactions are often interwoven in any given context, like the workplace, and cannot be divided as the basis of 'system' and 'lifeworld' (Giddens 1982). The cumulative effect of these criticisms is to cast major doubt over the validity of Habermas's divisions. But the critical point they make needs to be taken further than a mere casting of doubt. In no instance has this criticism actually been reflected back on the theory to question the very nature of the colonisation process that Habermas posits.

For example, if material reproduction is interconnected with symbolic reproduction (in other words, if work is also part of identity formation), then the bureaucratisation and monetarisation of areas of the lifeworld responsible for material reproduction cannot be unproblematic, but must also count as attempts at colonisation (i.e. as attempts to subject to system rational principles areas of social integration responsible for symbolic reproduction). Historical studies questioning Habermas's NSM thesis have long pointed out that the resistance of organised workers to capitalist modernisation took the form not just of distributive conflicts, but conflicts over identity and lifestyle (Calhoun 1995). From the Luddites who dismantled the machinery which would redefine what they did and who they were (Thomis 1970), to early trade unionists trying to find alternative ways to live and work (Knodler-Bunte 1981), there have been practical examples of the fact that aspects of material reproduction do not become (or further become) commodified and bureaucratised without a fight. To lose that fight, or not to articulate it in the language of identity, does not mean that it is divorced from symbolic issues.

When actually reflected back on the theory itself, the full force of the criticisms made by Fraser (1989), Cohen (1995), and Giddens (1982), is to suggest that rather than lying outside of Habermas's colonisation thesis, the world of work could actually be right at the centre of it. This is because the characterisation of system and lifeworld in terms of a separation between material and symbolic reproduction cannot be upheld, and misses the multi-directional and fluid nature of the relationship between them. Consequently, labour cannot be so easily divorced from symbolic reproduction and therefore be so readily placed outside of disruptions created at the level of lifeworld communication. Compensations from the system cannot pacify the worker when questions of a symbolic nature are at issue. The kind of reification effects of capitalist modernisation arising in realms of symbolic reproduction are, therefore, not necessarily generated *outside* of the workplace.

The relationship between issues of distribution and issues of recognition

Habermas's characterisation of system/lifeworld in terms of a separation between labour and interaction also fails to capture the implications of the point discussed above for the relationship between questions of distribution and questions of recognition, and thus the overlap of concerns between the Labour Movement and 'new' social movements.

Labour as a source of the symbolic reproduction of identity, for example, takes on a specific character in capitalist societies. Habermas himself argues that the system of wage labour, like any other complex subsystem, has to be institutionalised in the lifeworld in order to secure the necessary motivations or legitimations it requires in order to operate (Habermas 1987, 154). Wage labour did this by forming a connection between structures of income and patterns of social status and esteem,

related to the recognition of socially valuable labour. Hegel, for instance, acknowledged that in bourgeois society labour and interaction were linked in that recognition was tied up with property relationships formalised in law; 'not only my possession or my property is posited here, but my person, because in my existence lies my all: my honour and my life' (Hegel quoted in Habermas 1974, 159). The idea that wages have to be connected to resources for identity formation is not a new one; it is what Simmel talked about in his discussion of money (Simmel 2004[1900]), what Honneth refers to in the 'struggle for recognition' (Honneth 1995), and what Fraser highlights in her discussion of the 'family wage' (Fraser 1989). The entrepreneurial attitude to succeed is motivated by two types of factor; either the desire for more income to purchase consumer goods, or the desire to prove to others that one is *worth* something more than their current income suggests. In this sense, distributive issues arising in the realm of capital/labour have always had the potential to affect resources for the symbolic reproduction of identities in the lifeworld: it is the very way in which the system of wage labour expropriates the motivations necessary to its operation.

What this means of course is that direct economic expressions of the conflicts arising from capitalist economic development, e.g. low wages and wage cuts, have always had the potential to crop up at the margins of the system – i.e. in the socio-psychological realms of culture and personality systems, as struggles for recognition. This means that Habermas's idea that there has been a shift in the consequences of capitalist development from the 'corporeal' to the 'psychic' cannot be upheld (Habermas 1996b, 360). More fundamentally, neither can the assumption that economic issues around distribution are separate from symbolic issues around recognition. Rather, the psychic and corporeal 'embody' each other. As such, socio-

psychological manifestations of capitalist crisis are not 'new' in the sense Habermas attaches to them (i.e. as products of the administrative intervention of the welfare state), but always could be experienced in the realm of social labour. Further, this point reinforces the first: rather than being divorced from symbolic reproduction, areas of material reproduction, i.e. 'the world of work', actually provide key resources (in the form of structures of social esteem linked to income and property) for the symbolic reproduction of identity, social integration and group solidarity in the lifeworld

In this sense the colonisation thesis can be expanded to include the worker. The fixing or cutting of wages in order to meet 'system' requirements of financial management and cost-cutting (rather than providing wages on the basis of comparability and fairness) could create pathological effects for communication at the level of the lifeworld as it erodes resources necessary for securing identity, group solidarity and motivation. Such a situation has been found at the heart of recent trade union activism in Britain on part of striking firefighters (2002-3) (Edwards 2003). Far from representing a narrow 'problem of distribution' (Habermas 1981, 33), their grievances over low pay encompassed the same kind of communicative struggle for self-realisation that is central to the NSMs. The 'struggle for recognition' is therefore a struggle which is as central to the workplace as it is to life outside of it. Honneth sums it up well:

> Since... relations of social esteem are, as Georg Simmel already saw, indirectly coupled with patterns of income distribution, economic confrontations are also constitutive of this form of struggle for recognition (Honneth 1995, 127).

What is being talked about here, however, is that classic argument around the interconnection between class position (defined through occupational status) and

formations of identity and lifestyle. In recent times, this argument has become a source of controversy and debate. Claus Offe, for example, argues that as capitalism has developed work has lost its power to structure other areas of social life and subjective experience (Offe 1985). For him, work is no longer a 'touchstone for personal and social identity' (Offe 1985, 142). There is a break, for instance, between a person's class position and their values and attitudes, such as which political party they vote for, or what preferences they express. Groupings are seen as much more heterogeneous and harder to predict. Others argue that there has been a shift from production to consumption as the key basis for identity and lifestyle (Baudrillard 1998; Bell 1976; Featherstone 1991). These kinds of arguments suggest that work-based issues have diminished in their significance for identity formation and social recognition, as a variety of other possibilities for self-realisation are opened up outside of the workplace (i.e. through leisure and consumption). The denial of a fair or comparable wage does not therefore have the same potential for producing distortions at the level of everyday communication and symbolic reproduction. Habermas's work does not lie outside of these debates, but is situated at the centre of them. Offe's argument against the 'materialist preoccupation' in social theory (Offe 1985) clearly coincides with Habermas's desire to offer a theory of modernity which swaps the basic concept of labour for that of communicative action (Habermas 1996b, 345). Indeed, Habermas reiterates Offe's arguments about the decline of the sphere of work, making reference on occasion to the 'end of the work-based society' (Habermas 1986, 141).

Wherever one stands in respect to this debate an even more compelling reason exists to question Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld' in terms of separation between 'labour' and 'interaction'. This lies in a reflection on the

nature of work in advanced capitalist societies. The work of Claus Offe (1985) crops up in this respect once again, but this time presents a so far overlooked opportunity to bring labour back into view in Habermas's colonisation thesis.

The relationship between purposive and communicative action

Offe suggests not only that work is losing significance in advanced capitalist societies, but that the nature of labour is changing (Offe 1985). The expanding set of needs widens the net of socially necessary labour. Whilst manufacturing work is on the decline, private and public sector service work are on the increase. This type of labour concentrates not on material reproduction, but symbolic reproduction and as such is indirectly productive for the capitalist system. For example, schools take over functions like socialisation and the transmission of knowledge, and in doing so increase 'human capital' for future use in the economy. This change in the nature of labour, away from the model of industrial production which Marx used as his focal point, is a change that Habermas also takes on board through his reading of Offe:

> ...labour seems to be shifting into domains which are unfamiliar with activities modelled on industrial labour, which rather demand communicative interaction with persons; for another, this need is shifting into domains which do not fit the organisational forms of industrial and administrative enterprise. Here I am thinking of social and educational tasks, also political ones, which cannot be transposed into formal occupational structures, because they do not offer a profit; but which also cannot be organised as services, because this would deliver up the lifeworld even more to the clutches of experts (Habermas 1986, 142-3).

The point, however, is that this different type of labour does get organised into services, for example there is a growth in public sector services related to the first wave of juridification of the welfare state (i.e. guarantees of state provided education,

social work, health, emergency services, which were part of the 'freedom giving' stage of welfare) (Habermas 1987, 361). Habermas sees this move as one which puts areas of the lifeworld (for example, education and health care) in a constant battle to protect and retain functions that 'naturally belong to them' (Habermas 1986, 60). From the examples that Habermas gives of colonisation, it is indeed the public sector consisting of state provided 'collective commodities' (Habermas 1976, 55) that seems to be the main place to observe the pathological effects generated by the growth of the system into realms of symbolic reproduction (Habermas 1987, 372).

In this respect it is crucial to stress that Habermas *already sees* a role for the public sector worker in policing the boundaries between system and lifeworld, as those engaged in occupations like teaching, medicine and social services are, as he says, 'naturally involved' in struggles launched by NSMs to defend the priority of communicative rationality in delivering these services (Habermas 1986, 60). Crucially, he sees no role for the trade union here, however, as 'such currents do not represent the classical potential for protest delineated by Marxism' (Habermas 1986, 60). The fight is not one around the workplace *per se*, but the lifeworld, and any formal organisation of this 'new' type of protest, would merely throw up the exact problem these groups are trying to fight against – ever-increasing bureaucratic intervention.

The problem is that Habermas fails to feed back this insight about the changing nature of work into his own conception of labour, which gets stuck in the realm of industrial production (with its focus on technical action), and hence stuck in the 'system'. For all his theorising, labour goes nowhere, it is thought of in the same terms as Habermas found it in the writings of Marx, Adorno and Horkheimer before him (Habermas 1974; 1976; 1987). In the service sector, however, labour is certainly

not synonymous with a purposive rationality, but (as Habermas concedes in the aforementioned quote) must involve a degree of communicative rationality characteristic of the lifeworld. As Offe argues, the economic and technical rationality governing industrial labour does not govern the service sector in the same way (Offe 1985). Different criteria of rationality are required when what is produced through labour are concrete 'uses' not monetary 'profit'. Whilst 'economic rationality' sets the boundaries for these workplaces, within them:

> The normatively based 'substantive' rationality which had been successfully repressed in productive work and in the transformation of labour power into a 'marketable 'commodity' resurfaces (Offe 1985, 138-9).

In this sense, service work is situated *between* principles of purposive and communicative rationality and therefore *between* system and lifeworld. The old separation between labour (as purposive action aimed at manipulating the external world for our own ends), and interaction (as the sphere of communicatively grounded symbolic reproduction), cannot be upheld. The crucial point, however, is that because service sector workplaces require communicative rationality in order to carry out their tasks (i.e. they must coordinate their actions via a mutual agreement reached in speech), we can posit the idea that there are a growing number of workplaces in advanced capitalist societies in which a 'lifeworld at work' is essential to the nature of the occupation. A 'lifeworld at work' involves more than the basic forms of cooperation Habermas argues underlie all labour (Habermas 1974, 159). It involves background resources necessary for achieving a common definition of the situation amongst colleagues, for establishing and reproducing professional identities (securing the personality system), for transmitting occupational knowledge and skills and organisational traditions (cultural transmission), and finally, for building

solidarity between workers on a daily basis (social integration). The clash between principles of system integration and principles of social integration is therefore a structural tension built-in to service sector workplaces because, as Offe puts it:

> ...the criteria of rationality of the organisation (effectiveness, efficiency, control, standardisation....etc) clash with the autonomy and flexibility requirements *(of service activities)* (Offe 1985, 107).

The relationship between work and identity in this context is arguably even more fundamental than in industrial production, for what must be secured through labour is not only a sense of personal identity and status (conditions of subjectivity), but a sense of collective identity as a workforce (conditions of intersubjectivity) – a self-image as a profession which is an essential resource for carrying out the tasks in hand. Public sector workers, for example, have been well documented in their particular characteristics. Parkin for instance found that radical or left-wing political orientations were more widespread amongst them, either attracting them to the job, or being the result of such roles (Parkin 1968). The culture of service sector organisations has also been distinguished from other types of workplaces in capitalist societies (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 122-3). It is here that 'people' are supposed to come before 'profits', where serving the public forms the moral duties that bind the workforce. Taking these aspects into consideration, it would be short sighted to deny that service sector workplaces do not have a 'lifeworld' of their own, cemented by a specifically communicative rationality, which workers would be concerned to protect the autonomy of from a colonising system which tries to force upon them principles of organisation, which are 'for them, dysfunctional' (Habermas 1987, 373). In response we may therefore get a reaction from workers, and most importantly, *their*

unions, to the process of colonisation; a reaction which may well include not just the defense of symbolic reproduction functions which have become their occupational responsibility to fulfill, but a defense of the communicative contexts that constitute their own workplaces and provide the resources necessary for the reproduction of collective identity, organisational culture, and structures of motivation. The reason we can include the trade union in this struggle is because, as argued earlier, economic issues that crop up at work are intimately related to struggles around symbolic resources. Traditional union issues of wages and working conditions are not divorced from the concern to protect the communicative context of the workplace.

Service sector workers are, therefore, situated in the middle of system/lifeworld dynamics, and have an interest in protecting their 'lifeworld at work' from system forms of rationality that are dysfunctional for them. Whilst Habermas does create space within his theory of colonisation for public sector workers to be involved in activism aimed at defending areas of the lifeworld that 'belong to us', he misses those areas which exist *inside* workplaces and which workers and their unions have an interest to protect through struggles which attach both *economic and symbolic* significance. The question now is how this situation can be understood as involving the workplace directly in the process of colonisation.

The colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work'

What would it mean to say that a 'lifeworld at work' could be subject to colonisation? For Habermas, basing system/lifeworld on a division between 'labour' and 'interaction' means that the world of work (as one of the autonomous subsystems of the economy) is actually part of the system that intervenes in everyday life, not a

place where intervention could now happen (Habermas 1987, 196). Workplaces have, however, always occupied a complex position between system and lifeworld even in Habermas's writings. Habermas talks of the way in which work has moved from a private area of civil society to a realm that is subject to formalisation and regulation through law (Habermas 1989, chapter V). Not only did the state intervene in the world of work to regulate hours, wages and conditions with 'social legislation', but private employers began to offer employees welfare benefits through the company (Habermas 1989, 142). The world of work, therefore, is an arena that although part of the state-economy complex, has enough autonomy from it to itself be subject to intervention by the system. This surely means that the idea that the system can intervene in workplaces is not precluded within Habermas's own estimations. Therefore neither is the idea that workplaces can be subject to colonisation.

One problem still remains however. Habermas argues that colonisation, in terms of legal interference at least, cannot apply to realms that are already formally organised, but 'regulate exigencies that, as lifeworld situations, belong to a communicatively structured area of action' (Habermas 1987, 367). As a formally organised realm, therefore, the world of work could not be subject to colonisation. Colonisation attacks the communicative structures of the area in question therefore it flows that to already have had these structures undermined by formal organisation would omit the site from the thesis. In another respect, however, Habermas suggests that such realms can be subject to colonisation. As the system grows it expands its bureaucratic-monetary complex in two ways; either by *extending* it, or by *intensifying* it through an increase in density:

> ...politically supported, internal dynamics of the economic system result in a more or less continuous increase in system complexity – which means not only an extension of formally organised domains of action, but an increase in their internal density as well (Habermas 1987, 351).

By definition, to increase in density, the bureaucratic-monetary complex must have already intervened in the area in question. Thus realms that have been formally organised by these media to some extent (like the world of work) must be able to be subjected to an *intensification* of colonisation. Service sector workers can thus be seen as defending their 'lifeworld at work' from a further *intensification* of processes of commodification and bureaucratisation, which as we have seen in the work of Offe (1985), represent a structural tension between the technical rationality of the system and the communicative rationality of service work. In this way it makes sense to talk about the colonisation of workplaces: a process which directly involves the worker in advanced capitalist society in conflicts at the boundary between system and lifeworld. The 'new' potential for protest *and for apathy* that comes with the undermining of structures of motivation, existing lifestyles, and collective identities, is thus located as much within the workplace as outside of it.

Together, the points made in this section suggest the need for a collapse of the rigid separation between 'labour' and 'interaction' and through it a re-characterisation of system and lifeworld. It is this separation which is the main culprit in generating that lack of ability to capture the fluidity and interconnection between purposive/communicative action and material/symbolic reproduction, which places labour – in terms of the workplaces in which an expanded range of socially necessary tasks are carried out - in a far more complex position between system and lifeworld. This move does not, however, have to mean a return to the type of one-dimensional theories of rationalisation and reification that Habermas had sought

distance from (Habermas 1984). It does not, for example, require a collapse of the distinction between 'system' and 'lifeworld'. This is a distinction which is methodologically essential to the project of critical theory as a critique of 'functionalist reason'. Critical theory can fulfill this task through an exploration of 'colonisation' all the better with a characterisation of the two-level concept of society which does not rely upon a separation between 'labour' and 'interaction' because it allows the workplace, the worker, and the trade union, to be brought back into view in Habermas's theory of modernity.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined Habermas's theory of modernity in terms of his critique of existing theories of societal rationalisation based on social labour, and his shift to a model of communicative action within a two-level concept of society. I have argued that this re-theorising results in a contraction of the theoretical space for contemplating the role of the worker in policing the boundaries between system and lifeworld. The workplace is falsely separated from dynamics around colonisation in several ways in Habermas's theory, not least through the separation he makes between 'labour' and 'interaction'. The crux of the problem comes when this separation forms the basis of his characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld', unnecessarily placing communicative interaction and symbolic reproduction outside of the workplace in advanced capitalist societies, and in turn, unnecessarily placing the workplace outside of the colonisation thesis.

Ultimately, the most unproblematic way to draw the line between 'system' and 'lifeworld' is to place the functional rationality of the capitalist economy and the modern state on one side, and the communicative rationality of public and private

areas of everyday life on the other – *without* seeing symbolic and material reproduction, and labour and interaction, as separable functions to be divided up between them. Fraser makes the reason for this clear when she states:

> If the real point is the moral superiority of cooperative and egalitarian interactions over strategic and hierarchical ones, then it mystifies matters to single out lifeworld institutions – the point should hold for paid work and political administration as well as for domestic life (Fraser 1989, 135).

This substantiates the argument presented here; that social institutions (like the family and the workplace), should not be approached as areas of life to be categorised in theory as 'system' or 'lifeworld', but rather as sites where the struggle over system and lifeworld logic take place[10], and where *activists themselves* police the boundaries between them. The real utility of dividing system from lifeworld in the first place was to be able to show how different logics of rationality belonging to the capitalist economy, modern state and everyday life are interrelated, clash with, and confront one-another in the course of capitalist modernisation. This was only possible if factors were made distinct and not collapsed together as Habermas rightly saw happening in Marx, Weber, Adorno and Horkheimer. But in keeping them distinct Habermas's particular characterisation runs the risk of turning the problem of collapsing factors into the problem of falsely dividing them.

The crucial point in terms of this research, however, is that a critical discussion of these false divisions, rather than merely casting doubt on the colonisation thesis, actually helps to open it up to a wider audience. It brings back into view not only the level where work transcends the separation between system

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[10] This point coincides with Ray's emphasis on the lifeworld as 'the terrain within which these conflicts *(i.e. over system and lifeworld)* are fought out' (Ray 1993, 31).

and lifeworld as the level at which material and symbolic reproduction are inseparable, but also that level of possibility for an intensification of colonisation in areas already formally organised, like workplaces, and most importantly, the level of reaction to colonisation that comes not from clients but from workers and their unions. Rather than abandoning Habermas's critique of modernity via the colonisation thesis, this chapter has freed it from false limitations and has expanded its use to an analysis of the contemporary Labour Movement.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CASE OF PUBLIC SECTOR EDUCATION: A STRATEGY FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

The general theoretical nature of the arguments posed so far is inadequate on two counts. Firstly, whilst chapter one opened up the theoretical space needed for an inquiry into the colonisation of workplaces, the theory alone cannot capture exactly how this process can be understood in the present British context. Without up-to-date empirical research it is impossible to assess the political relevance of Habermas's 'boundary conflicts' for twenty-first century Britain (Habermas 1996b, 363). This is a point which should not be underestimated in importance considering that the idea of 'colonisation' was initially formulated twenty-five years ago in dialogue with German welfare state politics. Secondly, without empirical investigation the important question of how workers actually respond to colonisation cannot be addressed. This aspect is important because the task of establishing whether colonisation *is* a dynamic relevant to workplaces only makes sense as an enterprise if it can be related in significant ways to struggles taken up by organised workers, and furthermore, if it connects with issues relating to their trade unionism.

The questions central to this thesis can therefore be posed theoretically, but can only be meaningfully addressed through empirical research. This chapter follows the development of a strategy for empirical research. Outlining the logic behind the strategy employed is essential, not only for revealing the rationale behind my choice of case study, but for showing the evolution of thought involved in translating a theoretical problematic into an empirical research project of a particular nature. There are, no doubt, countless other projects which could have been drawn from the

same theoretical premises. The pursuit of public sector education as a case study was, however, far from arbitrary. Establishing this point, alongside clarifying key research questions and providing some essential historical background, is the overall task of this chapter.

The chapter comprises of three sections. Section one confirms the pressing need for more research into the colonisation thesis by providing a brief review of existing literature. Section two outlines the particular direction that research took by discussing the relevance of a case study involving public sector education and teachers in the NUT. It also presents the key questions guiding the research project. Section three provides a background to the case study of the NUT by discussing the history of political organisation amongst teachers in England and Wales.

SECTION ONE: THE COLONISATION THESIS AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

As an abstract theoretical concept, the notion of 'colonisation' presents a number of challenges for the researcher attempting to use it within an empirical research strategy. There is, for instance, a lack of precedent in terms of the type of research appropriate to the concept, and little specification of the methods to be used to investigate it. In another sense, however, this weakness becomes a key reason for pursuing the enterprise in the first place. Habermas made clear, for example, that 'colonisation' was always meant as a conceptual tool for the sociological investigator, and highlighted the need for empirical research aimed at 'testing' the thesis and preventing 'overgeneralisation' (Habermas 1987, 356):

> The thesis of internal colonisation states that the subsystems of the economy and state become more complex as a consequence of capitalist growth, and penetrate ever deeper into the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld. *It should be*

> *possible to test this thesis sociologically* (Habermas 1987, 367, my italics).

Habermas himself, however, was unable to give anything but a very limited example of the kind of research appropriate to the colonisation thesis, and so the question of what direction research should take remains largely unanswered. In the *Theory of Communicative Action* (volume two), for example, Habermas pursues colonisation in terms of 'juridification' processes relating to German social welfare law (Habermas 1987, 356-373). Here, colonisation is explored in terms of the growth of the welfare state, which extends bureaucratic forms of organisation and client-based relationships into areas of the lifeworld through legal means aimed at guaranteeing certain rights and freedoms. Habermas's point is that 'juridification' has a 'paradoxical structure', and that successive waves of social legislation in Germany have actually undermined freedom because of the administrative nature of the state's intervention in everyday life[11] (Habermas 1987, 361).

Looking to other literature presents a similar void. Despite its vocalisation, Habermas's research gap has not been sufficiently filled by existing sociological research. Here, there is scant attention paid to his call for an empirical application of the concept of colonisation. Despite some notable exceptions which will be discussed in this section (Hyde and Roche-Reid 2004; Pugh 2004; Ray 1993; Rodwell 1987) the thesis of internal colonisation remains largely unsubstantiated. In terms of the research which does exist, none questions dynamics around the colonisation of workplaces and the responses of trade unionists. Rodwell, for instance, focuses on the process of 'juridification' in a study of social policy relating to the elderly infirm (Rodwell 1987), whilst Ray situates colonisation within a global context of social

[11] Habermas's discussion of 'juridification' was presented at length in chapter one.

movement activism (Ray 1993). Pugh remains with an example of public welfare referred to by Habermas on several occasions, by looking at 'juridification' in education through a study of the National Curriculum in primary schools (Pugh 2004). In this study, Pugh highlights the ways in which teachers resist the colonisation of the lifeworld in schools by adapting government education policies to their own values and beliefs (Pugh 2004). Pugh does not, however, provide any discussion of how this relates to the resistance of organised teachers, and does not implicate teacher unions in a struggle against the colonisation of the *workplace*. Hyde and Roche-Reid come closest to a focus on workers in their examination of the changing role of the midwife as childbirth is increasingly medicalised and brought under the auspices of the monetary-bureaucratic complex (Hyde and Roche-Reid 2004), but the idea of this forming a concern for organised workers, or undermining a specific 'lifeworld at work' is not considered. If anything, the trend in the most up-to-date research is to take the concept of colonisation further away from labour by exploring processes of legal control and censorship in cyberspace (Dahlberg 2005; Salter 2005).

There are two points which need to be made about the existing literature surrounding colonisation for the development of this project: firstly, there is not enough of it (an observation made all the more cardinal in the light of Habermas's own invitation for it); secondly, there is a gap in terms of looking at the colonisation of the workplace and the response of trade unionists. As such, existing literature confirms the need for more empirical applications of colonisation. Furthermore, it supports the originality and sociological importance of the task of exploring colonisation in relation to the Labour Movement. It does not, however, present any particular form of research or method of investigation as central or indispensable.

The methods employed in existing studies are wide-ranging, from policy and archival research (Rodwell 1987; Pugh 2004), to participant observation (Pugh 2004) and comparative approaches (Ray 1993). Parts of the existing literature are persuasive, however, in arguing that an adequate investigation of colonisation can only be achieved through *contextual examination*, which breaks down its generalising tendencies by offering an understanding in terms of concrete processes in one particular field. Ray makes this need clear in his application of Habermas to global social movements:

> The intention is to push critical theory more clearly into engagement with political practices and to clarify the kinds of issues that a critical theory needs to resolve – both about itself and about the external world – if it is to critically address contemporary reality (Ray 1993, xx).

The need to understand theoretical concepts through specific examples means that research was best pursued here through a case study investigation. Following on from chapter one, a particular sector of workers presented itself as theoretically strategic for my purposes. This was the sector of workers involved in service work relating to public welfare.

SECTION TWO: THE CASE OF PUBLIC SECTOR EDUCATION

There are three main reasons for selecting a case study from the field of public services. Firstly, social welfare law relating to education, health, and social work are the 'test cases' that Habermas himself provides as examples of the type of research appropriate to the concept of colonisation, and as discussed above, these are often the kinds of examples taken up in successive studies (Habermas 1987, 372; 1986, 112). Secondly, remembering Offe's arguments presented in chapter one, service sector

workers inhabit that 'middle ground' between system and lifeworld because the nature of their work *must* involve communicative interactions (Offe 1985). As such their workplaces can be referred to as 'lifeworlds', which are characterised by a structural tension between the functional logic of capital and the communicative logic of the workplace. Consequently, public sector workers offer a strategic opportunity to critically address the colonisation thesis in the present British context through empirical research which looks at the response of the worker to what I have called the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work'. Third, and finally, the selection of public sector workers represents a diversion from Habermas's own writing which is straightforward enough to comprehend. Here, we already find references to the involvement of teachers and doctors in struggles to protect the lifeworld (Habermas 1986, 60). The leap from this to an analysis of public sector workers in terms of their response to the colonisation of the workplace is not one radically inconsistent with Habermas's theory in this respect and was, therefore, a logical move.

From the range of public sector services in contemporary Britain I decided upon state education as a case study topic. Although in one respect a subjective choice on my part, the selection of education was not without a further rationale drawn from the literature. Indeed, several reasons presented themselves as to why education would be an appropriate field for researching colonisation at work. Most importantly, Habermas makes clear in his discussion of juridification that the school can be considered as an area of the lifeworld and can be subject to colonisation (Habermas 1987, 368-73). He states:

> In no way are family and school formally organised spheres of action...in these spheres of the lifeworld we find...norms and contexts of action that by functional necessity are based on mutual understanding as a mechanism for coordinating action. These formative processes in...school, which take

> place via communicative action, must be able to function independent of legal regulation. If, however, the structure of juridification...convert*(s)* them over to the medium of the law, then functional disturbances arise (Habermas 1987, 369).

Habermas also makes clear that education, as an area of cultural reproduction, must be conducted through the medium of communicative action and that the school should therefore be regarded as a socially integrated area of life (Habermas 1986, 106 and 116-7). He states that, 'an educational task...can be accomplished only by way of action orientated to mutual understanding' (Habermas 1987, 372). The school (for our purposes, a workplace) can, therefore, with little controversy, be considered as a place where communicative interactions are essential, and where further colonisation by the system has problematic consequences.

In this respect, schools are mentioned on a number of occasions in Habermas's discussions of colonisation and protest. In interviews published as *Autonomy and Solidarity* (Dews 1986), Habermas talks about parental resistance to the educational reforms happening in Germany in terms of a struggle against the colonisation of the lifeworld:

> Let us take, for example, the resistance to educational reforms in Germany: in this case parents react against their loss of a field which they have always considered *naturally belongs to them*, and which they now see stolen from them by an extension of the sphere of competence of the public authorities (Habermas 1986, 60).

It is in relation to increasing juridification, and what he terms 'educational planning', that Habermas also mentions the National Curriculum (Habermas 1976, 71; 1987, 371). As cited in section one, the National Curriculum formed the subject of Pugh's recent empirical research into colonisation, verifying the contemporary significance

of education as a site of investigation (Pugh 2004). Furthermore, the most explicit statement from Habermas suggesting that employees should not be exempt from the colonisation thesis comes in relation to schools:

> The new conflicts arise along the seams between system and lifeworld...it is institutionalised in the roles of employees and consumers, citizens and clients of the state. It is just these roles that are the targets of protest. *Alternative practice is directed against the profit-dependent instrumentalisation of work in one's vocation*, the market-dependent mobilisation of labour power, *against the extension of pressures of competition and performance all the way down to the elementary school* (Habermas 1987, 395, my italics).

Like the rest of the existing literature, however, Habermas does not go any further in suggesting that the colonisation of schools may lead to a reaction on the part of teacher trade unionists.

From this discussion of Habermas's references to education, it is clear why the colonisation thesis formed a political connection with the 'Alternative Schools Movement' in Germany (Habermas 1986, 110). When looking more closely at these political connections, it became clear through the work of Australian educational theorist, Robert Young (1990), that an important tradition in German critical theory focused exclusively on education. This tradition takes its origin from Adorno's 1966 essay 'Education after Auschwitz' (Young 1990, 60). In this essay, Adorno talks of the 'coldness of the classroom' as principles of competition and self-interest begin to restructure educational practice (Young 1990, 60). These ideas were adopted by a collection of authors articulating a 'critical theory of education'; a practical movement which addressed themes like curriculum planning and the effects of the

bureaucratic administration on classroom relationships (Klafki 1969-70 and the Carr-Kemmis model)[12].

In his own work, Young argues that communicative interactions are essential to the practice of education, and that they are being undermined by the 'intrusion of governments' (Young 1990, 4). More importantly, he sees this administrative intervention as a process leading to the colonisation of schools. Young calls it:

> ...a further attempt to replace autonomous standards internal to education with a government-decided set of economic and technological priorities. The essentially consensual lifeworld of the school is to be increasingly penetrated by contractual and legal oversight and made an administratively accountable and measurable part of the production system (Young 1990, 8).

Whilst Young talks about the ways in which this process of colonisation undermines structures of meaning and motivation for pupils, producing in his eyes a 'youth crisis' (Young 1990, 48-9), he gives much less attention to its impact on teachers, and like Habermas (1987) and Pugh (2004), provides no discussion of how it relates to the concerns of teacher unions. In fact, the only research pulling together Habermas's social movement theory and teacher trade unionism focuses on the emergence of 'new' organisations, erected outside of the trade union movement, to deal with teachers' identity-based issues at work (Troman 2003). In this respect, Troman employs Habermas's NSM thesis to investigate the formation of teacher self-help groups in an English Local Education Authority, designed to help teachers cope with stress and staffroom bullying (Troman 2003). Although pointing to 'more continuity' in some respects between 'old' and 'new' movements (Troman 2003, 155), Troman remains tied to the false division between the *distributive* concerns of

[12] See Young 1990, 158-161, and Habermas 1987, 371-2, for discussions relating to critical theories of education.

the Labour Movement and the *identity* and recognition concerns of NSMs, arguing that teacher unions cannot address the 'new' type of conflict experienced in modern societies:

> The teacher self-help group, in combining 'power' and 'identity' orientations and networking, were clearly adopting new social movement strategies to progress their aims...Social movements such as the self-help group networks indicate the disintegration of traditional institutions and demonstrate the development of resistance identities in the (re)invention of collectivities (Troman 2003, 155).

Existing literature therefore posits that, 1) communicative interactions are essential to education (Habermas 1987), 2) that the school can be subject to colonisation (Habermas 1987; Young 1990; Pugh 2004), and, 3) that this creates problems for teachers and students (Habermas 1987, 371-2; Young 1990, 48-9). What is lacking, however, is any examination of the relationship between the colonisation of schools and the mobilisation of teacher trade unionists. Utilising the theoretical space carved out in chapter one, it was a logical step for this thesis to pursue research into the colonisation of teachers' 'lifeworld at work', and the response to this process on the part of organised teachers.

Organised teachers are, however, not a homogenous category. Whilst the overwhelming majority of teachers belong to a trade union (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 161), they do not necessarily belong to the same union. Since 1919 the original teachers' union, the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT), has split into other organisations with different internal structures and different political trajectories[13].

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[13] The split came over the issue of equal pay for women teachers, which was eventually accepted in principle by the NUT in 1911. This created a clamour amongst a number of male members who felt that NUT women had taken advantage of the absence of men due to the war effort in order to push through the equal pay agenda. These men subsequently broke away from the NUT and formed the National

Today, three[14] main unions exist for classroom teachers: the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT), the *National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers* (NASUWT), and the *Association of Teachers and Lecturers* (ATL). Due to the differences between the unions in terms of their history and their position on educational policy, it was not possible to account for the response of all three sets of organised teachers within the limited resources available for this research. For this reason I decided to develop my case study around teachers in the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT). This union was selected because it was the first union for teachers, and today has the largest membership amongst classroom teachers in the UK. It is also a union made up exclusively of classroom teachers (and excludes other educational workers and support staff, unlike the NASUWT).

This section has presented the reasons for selecting a case study of colonisation from public sector education and for focusing on the response of teachers in the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT). It must be stressed at this point that this response can take various forms, and is by no means to be looked for exclusively in organised campaigning. Although the NSM thesis focuses upon the relationship between colonisation and activism, Habermas makes clear that colonisation can also lead to an erosion of structures of motivation and thus to a withdrawal of action (Habermas 1974, 6-7). This point is highlighted by Ray, who argues that three different types of response to colonisation can be discerned from

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Union of Schoolmasters (NAS) in 1919. This became the NASUWT when sex discrimination laws ruled out single-sex unions in 1975. See Kean (1990); Partington (1975).

[14] A fourth union for teachers has been in existence since 1970, called the *Professional Association of Teachers* (PAT), viewed primarily as a professional society and with a 'no strike' mandate.

Habermas's writings[15]: 1) 'Quietism' (apolitical withdrawal, call it 'apathy' or acquiescence), 2) 'Defensive social movement activism' (those seeking to re-establish lost communities or lifestyles, the 'Countryside Alliance' being a topical example), 3) 'Offensive, emancipatory social movement activism' (Habermas cites Feminism in this category) (Ray 1993, 177). Subsequently, the research was designed to address four key questions (figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1: Key Research Questions

i.	What changes at the level of policy are affecting the field of state education in England 2004-5?
ii.	Can these changes be usefully understood as an experience of the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work' for teachers in the present context?
iii.	How do organised teachers respond to these changes in terms of the level of active mobilisation within the NUT?
iv.	What factors account for this response?

Before embarking upon issues of methodology (chapter three) and presenting the empirical analysis (chapters four to eight), it is useful to provide a brief background to the political organisation of teachers in order to situate the present-day case study of the NUT in its proper historical context.

SECTION THREE: THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL ORGANISATION AMONGST TEACHERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

> Schoolteachers are amongst the most highly organised of English workers, and the associations that recruit them are

[15] Habermas outlines the potentials for resistance and withdrawal in the *Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 2, 1987, 393.

> amongst the oldest of interest groups and the earliest of white-collar unions (Coates 1972, 1).

The first organisation of teachers in England and Wales came in the form of the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT) established in June 1870 and originally known as the National Union of Elementary[16] Teachers (NUET, until 1889). Its formation was preceded by the 1870 Education Act, which enabled teachers of different religious denominations to unite collectively for the first time[17] (Manzer 1970, 27). Whilst the 1870 Act was an enabling factor, Thompson points to the 1862 Revised Code as the legislation that contributed the most to union organisation (Thompson 1927, 53). The Revised Code was extremely unpopular among British teachers, not least because it abolished their right to pension entitlements[18], and created several more problems with pay, conditions and tenure in the education sector. These problems became part of the collective grievances that promoted solidarity amongst teachers. Firstly, there was no national uniformity of pay, with the level set at the discretion of the local school managers (often the local clergyman). Secondly, pay was dependent upon the performance-related budget granted to a school by the inspectors. As a result, it was usual for pay to be very low for elementary teachers, who were forced, and often expected, to supplement their incomes through extra duties carried out at the church. This did little to help their abject status in the community.

The issue of occupational status recurs throughout the history of teacher struggle, and added to a further problem for teachers in the nineteenth century: the lack of promotion prospects. Even though school inspectors were to be recruited

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[16] 'Elementary' refers to non-selective schools for the working classes, where a minimum education was received and taught mostly by working class teachers. 'Secondary', on the other hand, referred to selective schools, or as Thompson says schools for 'the masters' (Thompson 1927, 55).
[17] The Cowper-Temple Clause in the 1870 Act on Religious Education.
[18] Pension entitlements had been granted to teachers in 1846.

from schoolteachers as stated in the 1862 Lowe's Code, few rose to the position. The following quotes illustrate well the obstacles of prestige faced by elementary teachers:

> The real reason for the exclusion of the teachers *(from inspector positions)* was that they were up against an aristocratic caste, which did not consider them 'gentlemen', and that besides the supposed stain of their origin, they had been further contaminated by service in the elementary schools and contact with the working classes (Sir George Kekewich 1920, quoted in Thompson 1927, 57).

> The elementary schoolmaster is thought very little of; in fact, so much despised, that men of respectable attainments will not undertake the office of schoolmaster (J. T. Crossley, Select Committee on Education, 1834, quoted in Tropp 1957, 9).

Events moved on somewhat from the Revised Code with the 1870 Education Act. Foster's Act, as it was also known, was historic in erecting a national system of education, locally administered by School Boards. This structure was crystallised further in the 1902 Education Act, which set up Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to handle the provision of schools and salaries. Problems of status, pay and conditions, however, remained, as did the assumption that schools should provide only a minimal 'elementary' education for the mass of Britain's children. Indeed, much of the key literature locates the origins of the NUT in a fight by working class teachers for a national system of free and, later, comprehensive, education for the working classes (Manzer 1970, 38; Barber 1992, 12). The issues of early importance to the NUET are presented in figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2: NUET Annual Report 1872

In need of 'immediate attention':

i. Revision of the New Code
ii. Working of the New Education Act
iii. Establishment of a Pension Scheme
iv. Opening of Higher Educational posts to elementary teachers
v. 'The proposal to raise teaching to the dignity of a profession by means of a public register of duly qualified teachers for every grade of school'

Source: Thompson 1927, 72

Proposal v. on the list is of particular interest considering that the history of teacher unionism is characterised by a struggle over the nature of white-collar organisation. The question is whether teacher unions are to be regarded (or regard themselves) as professional associations engaged in a fight for professional status (like doctors)[19], or whether they are trade unions in line with the labour model of craft and industrial organisations. The significance of this question for early NUT activists was reflected in the internal debates over affiliation with the TUC, which happened as late as 1970. Part of the reason for this was to be found in the nature of the NUT, who, from the outset, had claimed to be a politically neutral organisation and felt that participation in the TUC would link them with the Labour Party. On the rejection of TUC affiliation in 1968, however, the TUC General Secretary stated:

> Evidently they still think that affiliation implies a political commitment, which it doesn't. The other thing is sheer snobbery. They don't think they have anything in common with manual workers (1968 TUC General Secretary, quoted in Manzer 1970, 38).

[19] This is reflected in their goal of 'self-government', including control of entry to the profession, see Coates (1972).

Clearly, the question of professional status was present, for some, alongside that of political neutrality. Edward Short, for example, addressed the NUT Conference in 1969 with this statement:

> There are loud, even clamorous, voices among you today who do not want professional status, but something akin to industrial status...if this course is pursued and you end up with a rule-book instead of a contract of service...you will, I am sure, live to regret the day (Edward Short in *The Teacher*, 18 April 1969, quoted in Coates 1972, 60).

The emphasis placed upon professional status means that Barber is right to state that the initial aims of the NUET were:

> Interesting for what they leave out: salaries and conditions for a start. The proposals of the Nottingham Association, which presented a straightforward trade union shopping list, were rejected on the grounds that the union should not concentrate so narrowly on the material interests of teachers (Barber 1992, 9).

In line with the arguments of chapter one, therefore, the origins of teacher unionism suggest that it would be misleading to approach trade unions as organisations narrowly focused on distributive concerns. Although, two years later, the recommendations of the Nottingham Association were accepted onto the NUET agenda, the initial aims *count in* symbolic issues as their priority (questions of social prestige and occupational status). Ultimately, moral struggles over professional identity were asserted above material questions of wages in the early NUT. The interconnection between distributive issues and issues of social recognition was also apparent. Manzer, for example, argues that struggles by teachers for higher wages had to do with:

> A deep-rooted feeling that society is not giving them their due in terms of status and prestige.... / ....any decision about

> that level *(of salary)* is a political one about the social value to be attached to particular jobs, not an economic one (Manzer 1970, 118-119).

Essentially, figure 2.2 presented two key factors shaping the agenda of the early NUT: the political context of education policy; and, the issue of professional status. These factors remained central, although by no means exclusive, to teacher union activity through to the present day. In fact, what is striking about the history of teacher unionism is the apparently cyclical nature of the issues that crop up on its agenda. For example, in 1922 the NUT were campaigning for, 'no placing of children in charge of persons unqualified by education, training or experience to teach' (Thompson 1927, 178), echoing the struggle ongoing from 2004 against the remodelling of the teaching profession to allow unqualified persons to take whole classes. Additionally, Barber points out that the NUT was 'a union that began by defeating payment by results' (Barber 1992, 136) when it contested the performance-related school budgets set by inspectors, and used as a basis of salaries. Once again, the NUT revisited this issue in the late 1990s, campaigning, albeit unsuccessfully, against performance-related pay and thresholds, which now operate in pay structures throughout British schools (Richardson 1999). 'A Union that began', in 1870, 'by defeating payment by results' (Barber 1992, 136) had, by the end of the twentieth century, been defeated by its modern day counterpart.

Whatever the issue, grievances held over the nature and provision of education in Britain and the conditions of employment in which teachers found themselves were strong enough to see the growth of the NUET from 4,168 members in 1870 to 48,151 by the turn of the century (Thompson 1927, 117)[20]. Grievances were coupled with the increasing power and recognition of the union machinery on a

[20] Thompson uses statistics from the NUT Annual Report 1922.

national scale, with NUT members gaining representation in a number of organisations, including Parliament. This kind of visibility led *The Times* in 1880 to state that the NUET was, 'a Frankenstein's Monster which has suddenly grown into full life' (Tropp 1957, 148). This growth in power and participation helped the NUT to gain the kind of political influence that led to major successes; notably the minimum salary scale and representation on the Burnham Committee to negotiate pay (1918). It also went some way to improve the status of teachers in society. As Thompson eloquently puts it in 1927, 'recently the Minister of Labour in His Majesty's government was formerly a member of the once despised class of elementary schoolteachers' (Thompson 1927, 62). It is the position in history from which it is written that makes Thompson's study on *The Professional Solidarity among the Teachers of England* (1927) such a vibrant read. Unsurprisingly though, the same passage of time should lead us to question her main conclusions: firstly, that further progressions towards full professional status would be inevitable[21], and secondly, that this struggle was, and would remain to be, the raison d'être of the NUT.

Twentieth century teacher unionism

Struggles to assert the professional status of teachers were interrelated with campaigns to increase the pay of teachers. This was partly due to the problem of low pay in itself, requiring teachers to supplement their incomes elsewhere until this was legislated against in 1903. It was also partly due, however, to the continuing realisation of the interconnection between pay and status:

[21] The General Teaching Council (GTC), seen by some as the pinnacle professional body for teachers, was only established by New Labour in the 1998 Teaching and Higher Education Act (Tomlinson 2001, 107).

> The more effectively they can convince government and the public that teaching is of value, the more likely they are to see investment in education and hence in their salaries and conditions of service (Barber 1992, ix).

The issue of pay is central to some accounts of the history of twentieth century teacher unionism found in the literature (Seifert 1987). Seifert perhaps concentrates on the mobilising potential of pay issues more than most, because his study is looking explicitly at teacher *militancy* and the factors behind teacher strikes. Whilst the history of teacher unionism cannot be adequately captured in terms of struggles over pay, the history of teacher strikes is a different matter[22]. Indeed, the question of pay has recurred throughout the twentieth century and has been a major factor in sparking mass participation by teachers in collective action. The history of pay struggles can, for our purposes, be categorised into three phases.

Phase one saw action campaigning for both higher wages and national uniformity of salaries, reflected in calls for a national minimum pay scale. Key protests in this phase included the 1907 West Ham strike, where teachers opposed a new salary structure that would lower pay in the area and 'inflict professional degradation' (Seifert 1987, 19). Bitterness was also stirred by the West Ham Council's underhand tactics, for they offered teachers higher wages to attract them to the area and then cut them in the hope that they would stay to avoid the expense and inconvenience of moving (Seifert 1987, 18). Also indicative of this phase was the 1913-14 NUT strike in Herefordshire, where teachers called explicitly for a national minimum pay scale. This wish was granted in 1918 in the form of the Burnham

[22] This is not to say that issues of pay have been the only issues sparking teacher strikes, more that they can give an adequate overview of teacher militancy throughout the twentieth century. Other important strike issues include pensions (1954-6) and the Durham Closed Shop dispute (1952).

scales, setting minimum wages for different categories of teachers. Crucially, the NUT also gained representation on future Burnham Committees to negotiate teachers' pay.

Phase two predominantly saw action by teachers to defend this victory. For example, the Rhondda strike of 1919 was sparked by the local council's refusal to implement the Burnham scales, forcing teachers to protest in its defence. Similar strikes happened in North Riding, involving 900 teachers and the closure of 300 schools (Seifert 1987, 39). These protests ended with councils forced to honour the Burnham agreement, and helped to formalise its existence nationally. The economic depression and inevitable cuts of the inter-war years also saw defensive struggles to protect the new pay scales, such as in Lowestoft 1923-4. Barber, however, argues that, on balance, the 1920s saw in a new period of stability in industrial relations between teacher unions and the state, which lasted for the next forty years (Barber 1992). This period was marked by successful cooperation between teacher unions, LEAs and the government over the direction of education; a notable example being the 1944 Education Act. Action against pay cuts returned, however, to contribute to the strikes in 1969-70, in which teachers fought a national campaign against Labour's prices and incomes policy[23]. Teacher militancy of the 1960s helped to radicalise left-wing teachers within the NUT and prompted a growth in factionalism[24]. It also paved the way for phase three of teacher struggles surrounding pay: the 1980s. The disputes of the 1980s deserve to be categorised as a distinct phase of teacher union activity due to both the scale of action and the outcomes of it,

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[23] Coates provides a thorough account of teacher militancy in the 1960s and the 1969-70 strikes (Coates 1972, 70-80).

[24] Teachers on the left of the NUT formed a group called 'The Rank and File' in 1967, and later 'The Socialist Teachers Alliance' (STA) was formed in 1976. It continues to campaign today.

and also, due to the fact that relatively little has been written about these influential events (Barber 1992, 60[25]).

Barber argues that the teacher disputes of 1984-7 were not only about pay[26] and conditions, but over the ways in which these were to be negotiated (Barber 1992, 59). The origins of the 1984 strike action can be traced back to the Houghton Committee on Teachers' Pay, which reported in 1974 that teachers were in need of a substantial pay rise in order to attain comparability with similar occupations. This evidence led teachers to reject pay increases of 3 percent and 4.5 percent offered by Thatcher's Conservative Government after coming to power in 1979. The NUT called for arbitration in order to assess a just figure for salary increases, but the employers and the government rejected this on the grounds that they simply did not have more money for teachers' salaries. As Seifert points out, it was made obvious at this juncture that teachers' salaries were now to be fixed by the dynamics of a free market economy and not by the principles of fairness, comparability and justice (Seifert 1987, 184). The problem of teacher's salaries was compounded by cuts in the education budget (£360 million in the year that Thatcher took power, with more to follow). This aroused concerns over the shortage of resources in schools, and the decrease in money made available for school buildings and maintenance. It also added the threat of redundancy to the threat of low pay, albeit seemingly to save money elsewhere in the economy (Seifert 1987, 199-200). The response from teacher unions was to call for national strikes, with teachers commencing one-day action on May 9 1984. This was followed by three-day action by 20,000 teachers in the same month. Coupled with intermittent strikes throughout 1984-7 was a 'campaign of

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[25] Barber cites Seifert's work as an exception.
[26] Barber suggests that teachers' main grievances about pay stemmed from its unfavourable comparability with other non-manual workers (Barber 1992, 60-1).

withdrawal of goodwill', whereby teachers refused to carry out any voluntary duties such as lunchtime supervision, after school clubs and even the training for the new GCSE programmes[27].

With rejected agreements, arguments between (and within) teacher unions, and failed attempts at arbitration the government passed a bill to impose a settlement on teachers. On 2 March 1987 the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act became law, legislating the Burnham Committees out of existence and abolishing the right of the NUT, or any other teacher union, to negotiate national salary scales. Unsurprisingly, more strike action followed by the NUT and the NASUWT, but the NUT were finally forced to compromise on deals with Labour-controlled Local Authorities, rather than wait for a worse fate to be imposed by the Conservative Government (Seifert 1987, 237-8). Teacher unions could not, therefore, escape the blow to trade unionism so effectively dispensed by Thatcher's Government to other sections of British workers; most notably the miners. As Barber points out, the opportunity was taken by the government at this point to reassert control over teacher unions and education in the form of the 1988 Education Act (Barber 1992, x).

It is this piece of legislation that sets the present scene for the struggles of contemporary teacher unions under Blair's New Labour Government (1997 to date), engaged as they are in conflicts over workload, bureaucracy, and resources, as well as general attacks on the public sector. It would be misleading to suggest that the question of pay is devoid from current agendas of the NUT, or absent from the minds of its activists. It is perhaps fair to say, however, that its last moment of frank expression remains frozen in the teacher militancy of the 1980s.

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[27] This issue contributed to increased factionalism within the NUT, who had helped campaign for the new GCSE in the first place. They did change their mind on the boycott, thus aggravating the more radical wing of the union as well.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has established the purpose of this thesis in an attempt to ground the theoretical critique of Habermas developed in chapter one in empirical research relating to the colonisation of workplaces in the present British context. It has justified the need for further empirical research into the colonisation thesis, and importantly, its relationship to trade union mobilisation, by reviewing gaps in the existing sociological literature. Section two presented the development of my thought in terms of how to translate the theoretical problematic into an empirical research strategy. It clarified the rationale not only for adopting a case study approach to research, but for exploring the case of public sector education in particular. Ultimately, this chapter has shown that drawing a case study from the public sector was a theoretically strategic decision, whilst selecting state education in particular, was in part, a subjective one. This does not mean, however, that it was without its own rationale, found embedded in the critical theory literature.

After considering the reasons why state education presented itself as a relevant and appropriate case study, this chapter has outlined four key research questions and has provided essential historical background to the political organisation of the sector of workers now the subject of research: teachers who are members of the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT). The issues turned to now surround exactly how members of the NUT in 2004-5 formed the subject of empirical investigation, and how the research was conducted.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

INTRODUCTION

Empirically exploring the concept of 'colonisation' and its relationship to trade union mobilisation required a multi-staged, mixed-method research strategy. This chapter outlines this research strategy and makes clear the methodological and epistemological assumptions which underlie it. The chapter also provides a detailed breakdown of the survey and interview samples by key characteristics, and discusses the method of sampling used to attain them. In addition, the chapter aims to provide a frank and open account of the process of research and an acknowledgement of the opportunities and obstacles that were presented along the way.

There are three sections to the chapter. Section one outlines the methodological approach of the project and justifies the selection of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Sections two and three discuss survey and interview data respectively, highlighting important issues around access, sampling, data production and analysis, and the limitations of the data. Permeating all three sections is a discussion, where appropriate, of the ethics and politics of the research.

SECTION ONE: CRITICAL THEORY, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

Chapter two noted that Habermas's work does not point to a particular method, or set of methods, which must be adopted when investigating his ideas. Borrowing at times from systems theoretic approaches, as well interpretivism, hermeneutics and linguistics, Habermas's form of critical theory does not come wedded to one particular methodology, and as such, has a certain detachment from methods. This

grants the Habermasian social researcher the freedom to select, from the whole toolbox of social-scientific methods, those which are most appropriate for their purposes. As long as these methods can be justified, or 'assessed rationally' in line with the 'rules of critical argumentation'[28] *per se* (Habermas 1971b, 7), then they are satisfactory for the task.

Given this methodological latitude and my desire to fully address the four key research questions outlined in the previous chapter, a multi-staged, mixed-method strategy was adopted. The research questions are re-stated below, followed by a summary of the methods used to address them.

Key research questions:

i. What changes at the level of policy are affecting the field of state education in England 2004-5?

ii. Can these changes be usefully understood as an experience of the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work' for teachers in the present context?

iii. How do organised teachers respond to these changes in terms of the level of active mobilisation within the NUT?

iv. What factors account for this response?

Methods used to address the research questions:

1) *Document and archival research:* analysis of official government documents relating to education policy (e.g. White and Green Papers[29], Education Acts),

[28] i.e. the critical discussion of 'practical' questions in which procedures can be rationally assessed and the 'choice of standards' justified (Habermas 1971b, 7).
[29] 'Green Papers' are government issues consultation documents to aid the debate and discussion of policy proposals before they become law. 'White Papers' are issued by government departments and contain detailed proposals for legislation.

alongside NUT documents (which outline and respond to government initiatives), and secondary educational literature.

2) *Semi-structured interviews with members of the NUT (n=45):* NUT members were interviewed about their experiences of teaching, the issues and concerns they have at work and the source of their grievances. They were also asked about the level and nature of their union involvement, their impression of levels and patterns of activism amongst teachers, and perceived reasons for these levels.

3) *Survey Analysis (n=1252):* SPSS was used to analyse a 2004 'NUT Membership Participation' Survey, conducted by the Labour Research Department (LRD). Examined variables relating to teachers' key concerns at work, levels of participation in union roles/elections/campaigns/meetings, levels of communication with the union, and engagement with union literature. Factors said to hold back/encourage union participation were also analysed.

The research therefore rested upon a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. This combination was necessitated by the nature of the research questions. Interviews, for example, were essential for generating in-depth, qualitative data about teachers' experiences, attitudes, subjective definitions, and the meanings which they attached to their actions. The time-consuming nature of in-depth interviews meant, however, that they could only provide a very limited, small-scale impression of the levels of active mobilisation within the NUT in general. What was required for this purpose was a much larger and national-scale picture of membership participation; something that was also essential for placing the practices and attitudes

expressed in interview in wider context. These aims could only be met through the survey method, which generated the quantified responses of 1252 NUT members.

Despite traditional associations with positivist and interpretivist paradigms respectively, combining methods in this way has been viewed as increasingly plausible and desirable in the field of sociology. In particular it has been argued that a mix of methods enables the design of more imaginative and rounded research projects (Devine and Heath 1999; Halfpenny 1997). Each type of method for example can be used to explore different aspects of the social world, or to express the same aspect in different terms ('words or numbers') (Halfpenny 1997, 55), and are not mutually exclusive. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, or what has been referred to as 'methodological eclecticism' (Hammersley 1996), means, however, that it is more important than ever to make the underlying methodological assumptions of the research explicit. This is necessary in order to deflect the criticism of 'epistemological naivety', which has been associated with the 'pick and mix' approach to social research (Devine and Heath 1999, 202). In this respect, research adopted two important methodological assumptions drawn from Habermas's critical theory. These assumptions influenced the way the methods were used and how I treated the data they produced.

Methodological approach

Firstly, research assumed that the competing rationalities of the 'system' and the 'lifeworld' could be accessed and explored through different discourses. On the one hand, I used the reflections of individual teachers given in interview; on the other I used official government policy documents (as the scope of the project did not allow for interviews with government officials as well). Policy documents, such as White

and Green Papers, are produced by ministers as part of the process of debate and consultation before educational initiatives become law and therefore represented an appropriate source for examining the logic, arguments, and perspectives of the government.

Secondly, research adopted the system/lifeworld separation as a kind of 'dual-perspectives' methodological approach, rooted in critique. On one level, system and lifeworld represent what Habermas calls 'critical-methodological' *perspectives*[30] (Habermas 1991, 256). They are 'critical' perspectives because they are part of an approach which allows analysis to move between the positions of 'participant' and 'observer' (Habermas 1991, 254). Connecting these two levels in the process of research was essential to exploring the concept of colonisation. It needed to show, for example, how a process of educational change manifested itself from both perspectives: in terms of subjectively felt and experienced issues for teachers (i.e. the 'participant' level of social integration); and as a process which arises 'objectively' out of the contradictions and conflicts of a particular political and economic system (i.e. 'the observer' level of system integration) (Habermas 1987, 152). As such, the dual-perspectives methodology shaped the use of the methods and permeated the argument structure of the thesis. It aimed to generate and present data to reflect that agents construct their own lifeworlds (which must be understood at the level of 'subjective meanings'), and that a particular social system places the lifeworld of teachers within 'objective' and historical structures of conflict.

These methodological assumptions meant that the qualitative interview method had more than practical significance for the research. It also carried a certain epistemological importance as it enabled an interpretive (or hermeneutic) approach,

[30] Rather than 'analytical-methodological' perspectives as Habermas labels Talcott Parsons form of systems theory (Habermas 1991, 256).

which could access the 'participant' level and explore teachers' subjective meanings, experiences, feelings and attitudes towards work and union involvement. Interviews also allowed teachers to 'speak for themselves' (Mason 2002, 65; Miller and Glassner 1997, 100), which was essential because it was these everyday 'participant' discourses which were missing from Habermas's theoretical accounts of colonisation.

In line with the epistemological stance of critical theory, this methodological approach to research was essentially anti-positivist. The emphasis was upon agents constructing their own lifeworlds, with their 'subjective' meanings and experiences constituting valid data about social reality. At the same time, the 'dual-perspectives' approach aimed to avoid subjectivism and the 'postmodern trap', which tends to generate a theoretical 'black hole' in which the level of economic and political processes cannot be adequately explored and linked to the 'participant' level of subjective experience (Morrow and Brown 1994). This anti-positivist stance did not preclude or undermine the use of quantitative methods (like survey analysis), but it did affect the way in which quantitative data were treated. Rather than representing 'facts' about an objective reality, the statistics produced via SPSS were treated as 'social constructions' (as indeed were interview accounts) (Silverman 1997, 42). Both types of data were 'generated' rather than 'collected' in the process of research (Baker 1997, 131).

Survey questionnaires for example are widely criticised for imposing the researchers' own categories on the social world and manufacturing responses in terms of these categories; a process which tends to gloss over divergences in meaning and interpretation. There is also the question of whether people actually act and behave in their everyday lives in accordance with the answers they state on

questionnaires. This may be particularly relevant in this case because of the normative expectations surrounding issues of political participation (Parry, et al. 1992). Despite these problems, the survey questionnaire was the most effective tool available for generating a large-scale, national picture of teachers' practices and attitudes and for detecting patterns worth exploring qualitatively. The data it can provide should by no means be dismissed, but it does need to be approached with caution and an acute awareness of what the statistical results actually can, and cannot tell us, about the social world.

The use of the interview method does not escape problems surrounding the socially constructed nature of data either. Indeed, interview accounts were approached here as constructed 'narratives' shaped by the intersubjective relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Miller and Glassner 1997, 99). Feminist writers have argued that this relationship is influenced by a number of factors, from personal rapport to issues around identity and social position (McDowell 1992). In this sense, the interview situation does not escape its primary place as a *social situation* (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 213).

In particular, my status as an 'outsider' to both the teaching profession and the NUT will have had an impact on the ways in which teachers told their stories and the ways in which their accounts were interpreted. Like many fields of interest, it has been argued that teaching is an area that can only be validly researched by those involved in it. Indeed, the Habermas inspired 'Carr-Kemmis' model (mentioned in the previous chapter) argued that educational research should take the shape of 'action research' conducted by teacher 'insiders'[31] (Halliday 1990, 123-7). It cannot

[31] Halliday critically presents Carr and Kemmis' argument that 'outsiders' do not have access to practitioners' meanings and therefore only further distort educational discourses in the accounts that they give of the field (Halliday 1990, 123-7).

be denied that being an 'insider' provides a natural advantage when it comes to familiarity with the field, its agents, and their meanings; however it in no way overcomes problems associated with difference and distance in the research process. Being an 'insider' for example does not necessarily initiate 'closeness' with research subjects or their discourses, especially in the context of my research where teachers occupied varying positions in a union hierarchy. Sharing the position of a 'National Executive Member' for example would only have increased the researcher's distance from 'ordinary members'.

Being an outsider does also not preclude efforts to 'get inside' organisations in the process of research. I made an effort to get 'inside' the NUT as much as possible, not because I thought it would neutralise my 'outsider' status, but because I thought it would help me to comprehend the NUT as an organisation and put me in a better position to interpret the data. In this respect I managed to join the NUT for a year as student member so that I could receive their literature; I attended NUT meetings in Manchester and Bristol; negotiated an invite to the 2005 Annual Conference; went on an NUT Young Teachers' Weekend, and spoke to as many members as I could. I did not see this as part of any formal process of 'participant observation', but as part of familiarising myself with the research context, immersing myself within the organisational culture of the NUT, and better understanding the dynamics within it. Whilst participation of this kind in no way put me in the *same* position as a teacher or NUT member, it did aid my understanding of the issues that interviewees talked about.

Finding a way to explain exactly how issues relating to my personal position and 'outsider' status affected the kind of knowledge produced in the research process is, however, a difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, task. Up to this point, literature on

'reflexivity' does not provide sufficient guidance on exactly *how* to ascertain the effects of power and positionality on interview accounts, short of taking methodological discussions in an almost biographical direction (something of an undesirable diversion within the constraints of the project). Indeed, it may not even be possible to give an account of these effects in a way that claims to provide some kind of exact 'measure' of them. Feminist researcher, Rose, for example argues that:

> ...the answers are so massive, the questions are so presumptuous about the reflective, analytical power of the researcher, that I want to say that they should be simply unanswerable: we should not imagine that we can answer them (Rose 1997, 311).

Rose is right to suggest, therefore, that the abandonment of an 'all-seeing objectivity' (what she calls the 'god-trick'), should not be replaced with an equally as false 'transparent reflexivity' on the part of the researcher (Rose 1997). She calls transparent reflexivity the 'goddess-trick' as it is often argued for in feminist research keen to highlight the constructed and situated nature of knowledge (see Haraway 1991). The implication of this view is that the knowledge generated in research is relative to the particular context of its production and should therefore be presented, and read, reflexively (McDowell 1992). It is really this latter point which is the one of real methodological importance. What the researcher is left with is a rhetorical path of 'critical reflection' in which the process of raising these kinds of questions (rather than supplying the answers to them) marks its acknowledgment.

Like the data produced by survey questionnaires, interview data is therefore marked by the context of its production and as such is 'socially constructed' in the process of research. Taking a reflexive approach cannot make the issues around its production 'transparent' as such, but can acknowledge what interview accounts (like

statistical results), can, and cannot tell us, about the social world. Whilst the relationship to 'truth' in interview accounts is therefore a problematic one, it should by no means be done away with altogether. Interviewees generate 'narratives' about the social world, but the stories they tell are not fantastical; they are meaningful. The idea that teachers' subjective experiences and feelings can be meaningfully related through their discursive accounts is an assumption which is, furthermore, entirely consistent with Habermas's theory of 'communicative action' (Habermas 1984; 1987), and its epistemological grounding in the principle of 'discursive rationality' (Ray 1993, xvi).

The avoidance of 'false accounts'

Despite these limitations, the interpretation of social reality which is presented in the following chapters carries 'validity' of a certain kind. Following Beynon's approach to writing about union members in *Working for Ford*, the purpose of the research does not lie in producing a 'true' account, but lies instead in not producing a 'false' one (Beynon 1984, 14). A 'false account' is essentially one which is unrecognisable to those who were involved in the research (or whom the research speaks about). This does not mean that teachers have to be persuaded here to take on board Habermas's colonisation thesis. It means instead that the dynamics, experiences and accounts that I give of their situation, whilst not necessarily having to 'ring true' for them, must not 'ring false' or else I have failed in my task.

In the pursuit of avoiding 'false accounts', efforts to gain access to the NUT were increased. A collaborative relationship with the NUT was established with much success, and will be discussed further in the next section. Teachers were also asked to read drafts of the empirically based chapters and to comment on any aspects

of the account that did not resonate with their experiences as workers. What was sought in this process was a 'dialectic' between theory and experience; where 'theory' becomes legitimated in 'experience', as Habermas argues was called for in Adorno's dialectical theory (Habermas 1969). This kind of strategy is arguably essential for any 'armchair' theorist who steps out into the field of empirical research armed with a set of abstract concepts. My approach to research of this nature was not to view fieldwork as a means through which theoretical concepts could be 'operationalised' and 'proved' in reality, but as a way of discovering whether processes that are talked about with some subjective significance for the people involved (and talked about in their own terms), shed any useful light on how we can draw the theory, as Gramsci put it, out of the realms of the 'abstract' and into the realms of the 'particular' (Gramsci 1988[1918], 46).

Having justified the selection of methods, and clarified the methodological assumptions underlying their use, the next two sections of the chapter turn to a detailed discussion of the survey and interview data.

SECTION TWO: THE SURVEY

This section provides essential details relating to the survey data used within the thesis. I start by discussing the process of gaining access to the Labour Research Department (LRD) dataset for personal academic use, and the details of my research collaboration with the NUT. I then go on to provide a detailed breakdown of the survey sample in terms of key characteristics relating to geography, gender and age composition, ethnicity, and teaching sector.

Gaining access to the survey data: the benefits of 'data sharing'

The early stages of research presented an opportunity to utilise a dataset from an NUT national postal survey that was being conducted on their behalf by the Labour Research Department (LRD). Access to the data came about through my contact with NUT headquarters. An interview with a member of the National Executive in June 2004 had highlighted a convergence between my interests around mobilisation in the NUT and the current research agenda of the NUT. The NUT, for example, had recently established a 'Union Democracy Working Party' (UDWP) to explore issues relating to membership participation. This working party had been commissioned by the 2003 Annual Conference to research the issue of membership participation and to produce a Conference Memorandum for Easter 2005 (NUT 2003b).

In August 2004 I therefore arranged a meeting with the Assistant General Secretary at the NUT HQ in London where I presented the intentions of my research and discussed the possibilities for collaboration. The NUT greeted my research positively and I was invited to join the UDWP. I was asked to disseminate and present an introductory paper on issues around membership participation. At this meeting with the Assistant Secretary details about the emerging LRD survey transpired. A deal was struck to share our different types of data for mutual benefit; I would share the analysis of my interviews with the NUT (although not the original transcripts for reasons of data protection and confidentiality), and in return I was given access to the LRD dataset for my own analysis. The process of releasing survey data for personal academic use was, however, a lengthy one due to a lack of precedent at the LRD[32], but I finally received the data in May 2005, eight months

[32] The release of the NUT dataset raised several 'grey-areas' about data ownership. The survey was commissioned by the NUT who saw the data as belonging to themselves and assured me that their consent for its release would be sufficient. The

after the LRD's own survey report had been presented to the working party (to which I was in attendance). Although this report contained relevant observations and statistics (LRD 2004b), it was still necessary to have the raw data in order to conduct an analysis of the survey in SPSS which was in line with my specific research questions. Moreover, it reinstated the element of flexibility which is lost when having to employ secondary analysis.

Collaboration with the NUT culminated in an invitation to Annual Conference in April 2005 in Gateshead, where a summary of my paper was being used within the UDWP Memorandum (NUT 2005). Building a close relationship with the NUT was therefore extremely beneficial to the research; giving me access to data that would have been otherwise unavailable. It also provided a crucial platform for exchanging ideas with teachers and NUT members and in aiding the process of avoiding 'false accounts' of their experiences, both formally (through contact with the working party) and informally (through being immersed in various debates, discussions and networks at Annual Conference). Involvement raised several issues however around the politics of research, with the UDWP more interested in some aspects of my research findings than others. Interviews, for example, had raised issues about the under-representation of female members in official union positions, which were not given a high profile by the UDWP. My points, however, about non-participation being a historically recurrent and normative problem made it into their published Conference Memorandum and speech, and attracted criticism from one member at Conference who argued that my research played down what was in his

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LRD however had generated and inputted the data, and wanted assurances that I was not going to conduct further work on the raw data for the NUT. I had to supply a letter signed by my supervisor stating that I intended to use the data for personal academic purposes only. All of this took time and highlighted how even the most up-to-date secondary datasets soon become 'last-years' data by the time they reach the hands of academic researchers.

eyes, the current 'crisis'. Exchanging research findings with an organisation, no matter how beneficial, is therefore a highly political process in which the selection and presentation of your research by that organisation is relative to a specific context and in the pursuit of a specific agenda. This agenda may not necessarily be your own, but it is one with which you and your research become partially identified.

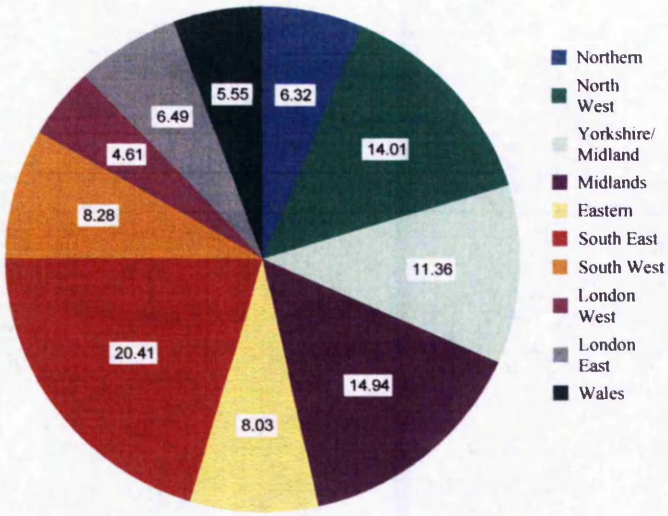
The benefits of collaborating with the NUT and the UDWP far outweighed the negatives, however. Securing the survey data, for example, could not have been achieved without a willingness to engage the NUT and critics in my research. Indeed, this was seen as both a desirable and necessary part of researching union organisations.

The survey sample

The survey consisted of 1252 cases, each representing an individual member of the NUT, and 53 variables relating to the questions they were asked. Overall 6000 surveys were sent out to members so the response rate was 21 per cent (LRD 2004, 3). The 2003 TUC membership return for the NUT stated that the overall membership was 239,976, meaning that the data from the survey is a 0.5 per cent sample of the relevant population. Although limited in size, it was a far bigger sample of members than would have been possible to involve in my research otherwise. This sample size was also deemed acceptable by the LRD who aimed at 1000 responses for 'an adequate representation of the total membership' (LRD 2004b, 3). The sample was a nationwide representation of NUT members, covering the ten NUT regions in varying proportions (figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1

NUT Regions represented in sample

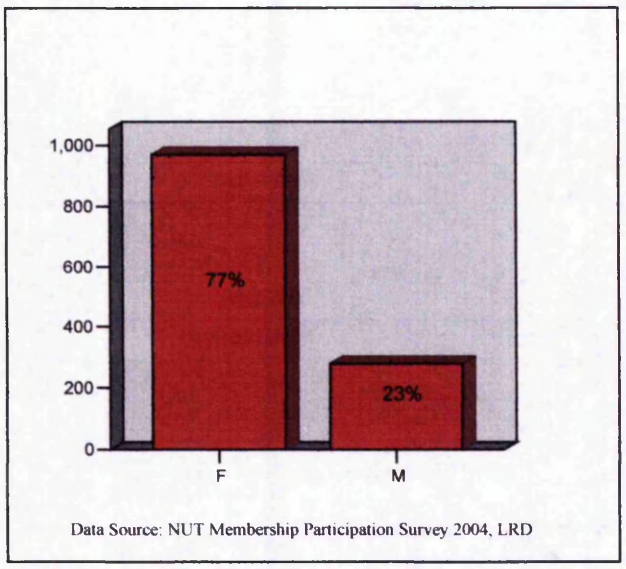


Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The majority of teachers in the sample worked in primary schools (58.6 per cent), but there were also a good number of secondary school teachers (39.5 per cent), and the remaining 1.9 per cent worked in middle schools. The greater number of primary teachers is a disparity reflected in the NUT's membership overall. The gender composition of the sample also accurately reflects the overall picture of NUT membership where women constitute 182,677 of the total 239,796 NUT members, making them by far the majority at 76 per cent (TUC membership return 2003) (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2

Gender composition of the sample

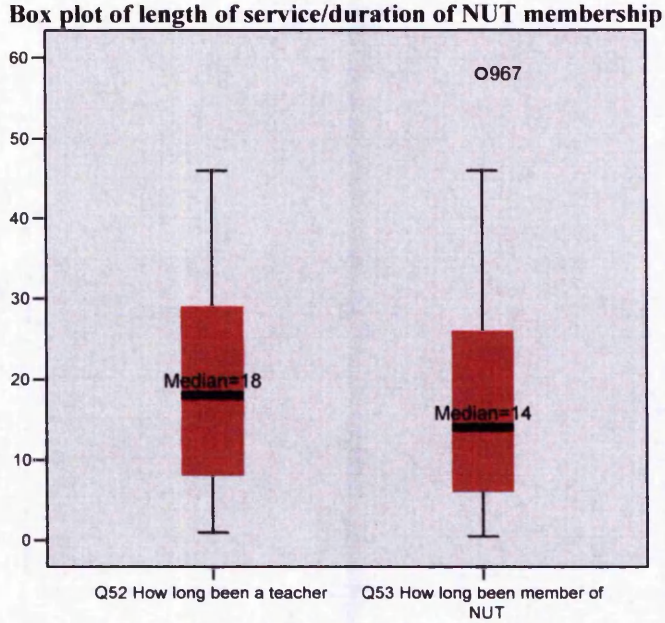


85.8 per cent of the sample were teachers on a permanent contract, and 8.3 per cent were supply teachers. Overall, just less that three quarters of the sample worked full-time. The mean average length of service as a teacher was 18.26 years and the mean average duration of NUT membership was 16.11 years[33]. Further information about the distribution of these variables across the sample is shown in figure 3.3. This box plot reveals the maximum and minimum number of years as a teacher/member of the NUT, the median (middle) value, and the upper and lower quartiles. Case 967 is highlighted separately on the graph as it is unusually far from the median.

[33] Note that the mean average is sensitive to extreme values, such as case '967' which shows duration of membership to be 58 years. For this reason the box plot graph in figure 3 gives a more accurate picture of the distribution of cases in relation to this variable

Figure 3.3

Box plot of length of service/duration of NUT membership

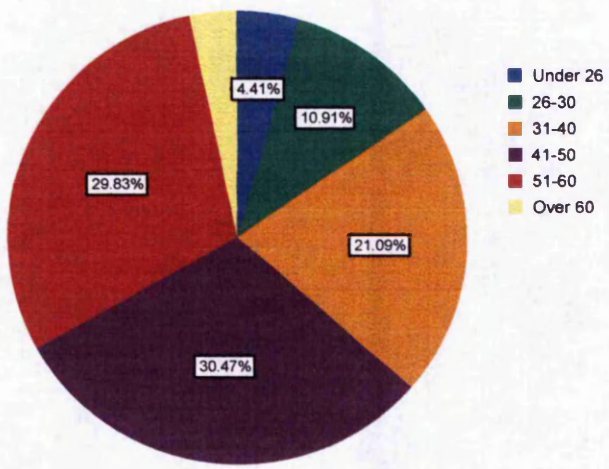


Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The age of members in the sample was reflected in six different categories, including an under-26 category and an under-30 category due to the NUT's desire to look specifically at the case of young teachers using the data (LRD 2004b, 5). Figure 3.4 shows the relative proportions of the different age groups of members represented in the sample.

Figure 3.4

Age composition of sample



Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

Figure 3.4 shows that just over 60 per cent of the sample were over 40 (and around another half of those were over 50), whilst 21 per cent were aged 31-40. Out of those under 30 only 4.4 per cent were under 26, and similarly small numbers are over 60 (3.3 per cent), putting limitations on the statistical analysis of these groups. For the purposes of my own analysis therefore I recoded the variable 'age group' into four more equal sized categories (figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5
Recode of 'age group' into the new variable 'age group 2'

	30 and under	31-40	41-50	51 and over	Total
Under 26	55	-	-	-	55
26-30	136	-	-	-	136
31-40	-	263	-	-	263
41-50	-		380	-	380
51-60	-		-	372	372
Over 60	-		-	41	41
Total	191	263	380	413	1247
%	15.3%	21.1%	30.5%	33.1%	100%

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The ethnic composition of the sample was almost entirely White (96.9 per cent). 1 per cent of the sample was Black, 1.3 per cent Asian and less than 1 per cent was of mixed ethnicity or Chinese. This created an obstacle to any meaningful analysis of how ethnicity is related to membership participation using this data. It is important to note therefore that the analysis which follows in subsequent chapters is referring to the mobilisation of white members and cannot account for possible differences between ethnic groups.

The use of postal questionnaires raises a number of methodological issues for consideration; issues that place limitations on the way the data produced can be interpreted and used. Although the sample can be regarded as representative in terms

of reflecting the overall proportions of male and female members, as well as members who work in primary and secondary schools, some problems do remain. For example, it is likely that the members who have responded to the postal questionnaire (which was sent out at random) are by definition already more engaged with the union than members who did not participate in the survey. This is a problem that arises when using methods which are in themselves a form of membership participation, to gauge membership participation. The likelihood that the sample records the responses of members who are least active and least interested in union affairs is reduced, producing a bias in the sample to begin with. The outcome of this issue is to limit the kind of inferences that can be made about the general population (i.e. all NUT members) from this sample. Generalisations should be cautious at best and call for further corroboration, especially in the case of sub-groups which may suffer from the added problem of being small in size.

Despite these limitations, the survey was still an indispensable tool for exploring the current picture of membership participation in the NUT on a national scale, and provided indications as to the overall extent of participation and any significant patterns. It therefore provided an essential platform for the further exploration of participation using a qualitative strategy. The use of the survey data must therefore be placed not only within its statistical limits, but within the overall methodology of the project which, as stated in section one, was multi-staged and combined both quantitative and qualitative methods.

SECTION THREE: THE INTERVIEWS

This section provides essential details relating to the interview data used within the thesis. I start by discussing the nature of the interviews involved, before outlining the

method of sampling and the key characteristics of the sample. The section ends by providing details on how the interview data was analysed, and the measures which were put in place to acknowledge the ethical issues which surround the social-scientific use of the interview method.

The nature of interviews

Qualitative data was generated by semi-structured interviews with members of the NUT, all of which were tape recorded and transcribed in full. The final sample of forty-five interviews was sized appropriately and generated more than sufficient data for exploring the key research questions.

The interviews adopted a semi-structured format because I wanted to allow interviewees the freedom to discuss issues that appeared relevant and important to their jobs as teachers, and to their union membership, while ensuring at the same time that certain key topics were touched upon in discussion. This also placed the emphasis upon interviewees as 'experts' in their field who could talk creatively about subjects, rather than as respondents to a series of questions which had been pre-determined (I was, after all, neither a teacher nor a member of the NUT). This also avoided further imposing my own values on the interview process by adopting a fixed question format (Miller and Glassner 1997, 100). Interviews sought therefore to establish something of a 'pseudo conversation' (Kitchin and Tate 2000), which became more 'unlike' a conversation depending upon how the interviewee responded to the tape recorder. Some, for example, were hyper aware of the recorder and on one

occasion I was asked to turn it off momentarily so that the interviewee could express a frank political opinion[34].

In reality however the degree of 'structure' in any semi-structured interview is not something that can be pre-decided. Instead it is determined during the interview process itself by the dynamic established between the interviewer and the interviewee. I ended up with two interviews at opposite extremes in terms of structure: one being an entirely free flowing monologue in which I barely posed a question (interview 16); the other consisting of short answers from an interviewee who interpreted the interview as a spoken questionnaire (interview 15). The majority of interviews however occupied the middle ground between these extremes, with periods of extended speech alongside 'steering' questions.

Due to differences in structure the interviews varied greatly in length, ranging from half an hour to two hours. The average length of an interview was around forty-five minutes. Those who had been highly involved in the union over a long period of time unsurprisingly tended to speak for longer than teachers with little involvement, or teachers who were quite new to the job. Time constraints on teachers were also an important factor in the length of some interviews. As chapter five will show, teacher workload has reached overwhelming levels with 'not enough hours in the day' (interview 32) to get everything done. As such, interviewees who were full-time teachers often had to put self-imposed limits on the length of the interview, and when taking place in schools interviews were often interrupted by the distractions of work. I tended to arrange interviews outside, or after, school for these reasons (travelling to homes and public places), but ultimately fitted in with whichever window of opportunity was offered. Interviews also had to cease for an extended period in 2004

[34] This happened in interview 4 with a Regional Officer of the NUT who felt that as an employee of the union he had to appear politically neutral in the official transcript.

because of the summer holidays in which teachers were especially unavailable, producing two real periods of fieldwork January-June 2004, and November 2004-March 2005.

The 'steering' questions used during interviews were contained within an interviewer's schedule. This schedule was divided into three sections. Section one covered questions relating to family background, career and union history, political attitudes and involvement, key concerns at work and current campaigns, and the issues that they have felt passionate and angry about as teachers. Section two went on to ask about levels and forms of participation in the union; both how involved they were personally, and their impression of participation levels in their area. Section three explored further the nature of participation and any perceived patterns in who participates or does not participate, in particular discussing patterns relating to gender and young people, although this depended largely on the issues that interviewees highlighted as significant. It became obvious as the interviews went on for example that issues relating to young people were subjectively the most important for the majority of NUT members at that time.

Method of sampling

The somewhat opportunistic 'snowballing' method of sampling was adopted because of unavoidable constraints posed by the context of the research. There was not the time and resources (like those relating to travel) in order to use the ideal method of random sampling. Additionally, the necessary sampling frame was unavailable. NUT officials talked about the problems of keeping up to date with members on a local, regional, and national basis, and the lack of any comprehensive list at their disposal. Due to issues around data protection, this was also not something that the NUT HQ

could assist me with, and again there were problems with the reliability of their membership data.

Having given up the pursuit of a random and thus 'representative' sample of interviewees, initial contact was made with key people, like NUT Division Secretaries, whose names, email and contact details were listed in the back of the NUT 'Annual Report for 2003' (NUT 2003a), and I followed up personal and recommended contacts in the teaching profession. I also arranged an invitation to an NUT regional meeting in Manchester in December 2003 and handed out flyers about the research; a method which was fairly successful and which was adopted later in the South West. From these beginnings, I developed a network of contacts; in particular the people interviewed early on to put me in touch with other teachers in their area and colleagues in other parts of the country. Often interviewees would point me in the direction of someone else to speak to anyway, something which became crucial in relation to recruiting members who had much less, or no, union involvement and were much harder to identify.

Interviews were limited to members residing in England and concentrated on two areas where networks were the densest: the North West and the South West. Different regions were included in the sample in order to be able to say whether the issues that teachers talked about were reflected elsewhere or whether they were region specific. Despite differences in local education issues, region did not play a major factor in interview accounts and it therefore remains a control variable in the sample more than anything else. Over time, contacts led me outside the North West and South West; to London, the Midlands, and Yorkshire. It was important to use these contacts to strengthen the regional diversity of the sample.

The sample was also diverse in terms of levels of membership involvement in the NUT. This diversity was necessary so that after having established a national picture of membership participation using the survey data, the reasons that teachers gave for different levels of union participation could be probed in more detail. In order to introduce this diversity, interviewees were selected on the basis of union position; aiming to involve teachers on each step of the union hierarchy from Members, School Representatives, Local Division Members/Secretaries, Regional Representatives, and National Executive Members. In the final sample of forty-five, sixteen were ordinary members and the rest held official union positions (figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6
NUT roles represented in the interview sample

NUT Role	No. in sample
Member	16
School Representative only	3
School Representative in addition to another role	(6)
Division/Local Association Secretary	14
Division/Local Association Member	8
Regional Officer	2
Regional Secretary	1
Deputy General Secretary	1
National Executive Member in addition to another role	(4)
TOTAL	**45**

Research did not necessarily assume, however, that there was a direct correlation between union position and level of union activism. Some interviewees for example held official positions but did not engage in the 'campaigning' functions of the union (interview 15), whilst some ordinary members felt that they were an 'active' part of the union (interview 13). Following Parry, et al. in their study of political participation, interviewees defined their own levels of union engagement during the course of the interview (Parry, et al. 1992, 16). Many would label themselves for

example as 'political activists' (interviews 16, 19, and 20), or 'apathetic' (interviews 31 and 35) or as 'wanting to do more than I do' (interviews 14 and 36), and these judgments formed the basis of later categorisations.

The interview sample

The final sample consisted of members from ten out of the twenty-seven NUT Electoral Districts and covered both rural and city areas (figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7
Areas represented in the interview sample

NUT Electoral District*	NUT Regional Area*	No. in sample
4 – Bradford; **Calderdale;** Kirklees; Leeds; Wakefield	3 – Yorkshire/Midlands	1
5 – Barnsley; Doncaster; Rotherham; **Sheffield**	3 – Yorkshire/Midlands	4
7 – Blackburn with Darwen; Blackpool; Isle of Man; **Lancashire**	2 – North West	1
8 – **Bolton; Bury; Manchester**; Oldham; Rochdale; Salford; **Stockport; Tameside; Trafford**; Wigan	2 – North West	11
9 – **Cheshire**; Halton; Knowsley; **Liverpool**; St Helens; Sefton; Warrington; Wirral	2 – North West	4
13 – **Birmingham**; Coventry; Dudley; Sandwell; Solihull; Walsall; Wolverhampton	4 - Midlands	1
14 – Gloucestershire; Herefordshire; **Warwickshire**; Worcestershire	4 - Midlands	1
22 – **Bath**; Radstock & NE Somerset; **Bristol**; **North Somerset; South Gloucestershire; Swindon; Wiltshire**	7 – South West	13
23 – Bournemouth; Dorset; Guernsey; Jersey; Poole; **Somerset**	7 – South West	8
26 – **Inner London**	8 – London (West)	1

*Based on the 'Annual Report for 2003', *NUT: Hamilton House*
Areas in **bold** represent where interviewees worked

The highest ranking member interviewed was the Past National President, who was elected Deputy General Secretary in 2005 a few months after the interview. All were employed in state sector education. The majority of the sample were full-time classroom teachers, or had been teachers before taking up paid posts as union officials, and some mixed union work with teaching posts. Eight of the interviewees

worked in primary schools, twenty-one in secondary schools, three in middle schools, two taught special needs, one was a supply teacher, two taught in pupil referral/behaviour support teams, one was retired and six worked full-time for the NUT. The sample therefore contained a wide variety of experiences, but also harboured a bias towards secondary teachers which must be taken into consideration when approaching the analysis which follows in subsequent chapters.

Although there were no set quotas for the sample in terms of age and sex, the inclusion of more women than men was seen as desirable in order to capture something of the dominance of women in the national membership (76 per cent female). It seemed appropriate that because of this fact research gave more weight to female voices. I also aimed for a wide range of ages in the sample, which proved quite difficult because the majority of members who hold union positions are aged fifty plus. In terms of 'ordinary members', therefore, a particular effort was made to include teachers in their twenties, and also to find teachers with a union position who were aged under forty. In pursuit of this aim, and to get a feel for union activities, I attended a 'Young Teachers' Weekend' organised by the NUT in November 2004 in the South West. Here I participated alongside recently qualified teachers, many of whom were just getting a feel for the NUT themselves, and had the opportunity to talk to them socially about their experiences and ask if they would participate in interviews. A breakdown of the sample by age and sex is shown in figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8
Age and sex profile of the interview sample

Age group	Men	Women	Total
23-28	1	7	8
31-38	2	3	5
40-49	4	5	9
50-59	12	11	23
Total	19	26	45

In the age groups '23-28' and '31-38', one interviewee in each group held an official position in the union. Eight interviewees aged '40-49' held an official position, whilst nineteen of those aged '50-59' did. These proportions reflect the increasing age profile of union activists in the NUT at large.

As stated previously, the sample of interviewees used in this case study is in no way an exact representation of NUT members at large, particularly in terms of the sample bias towards secondary. Furthermore, the sample of interviewees contained no ethnic diversity (all forty-five participants were white). Along with the size limitations of the sample and of sub-groups, these factors must be taken into consideration when making any inferences about NUT members using the interview data. At all times, data should be seen as relative to the particular context of its production and within the limits that this context places upon any wider generalisations.

Method of analysing interview data

The technique of 'cross-sectional categorical analysis' was used to explore the data generated by interviews (Mason 2002, 147-72). This technique uses various categories, or themes, to 'slice up' qualitative data for analytic purposes. The categories used were theoretically informed, and as such analysis in subsequent chapters represents but one route of interpretation (Mason 2002, 147-72).

In order to make the analysis of qualitative data more manageable and efficient a computer-assisted approach was adopted, using NUDIST software to create an electronic database in which interviews could be coded, categorised and analysed. The selection of NUDIST over other qualitative analysis packages was practical rather than a reflection of any inherent preference, with NUDIST software being

readily available. The finer details of the programme were also not of prime importance because NUDIST was used only on a basic level as a computerised tool which could enable large amounts of qualitative data to be 'sliced up' and coded with ease. It also provided a range of other useful tools, like word searches, data summary reports, the ability to link interrelated codes, to code whole sets of transcripts (for example by gender or age), and the capacity for recoding as ideas developed. These tools proved invaluable for getting a feel for the great volume of interview transcripts, for moving around them efficiently, for storing and organising them effectively, and for analysing them without the need for a wealth of paper, charts and highlighter pens. NUDIST was not used however for 'theory-building' on any other level (as is possible within computer-assisted qualitative analysis programmes)[35].

Ethical issues

The involvement of human subjects in interviews meant that attention had to be paid to the ethics of research practice. Essentially, this involved ensuring the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of interviewees. These were protected for research participants in accordance with the guidelines provided by the British Sociological Association (BSA March 2002). Participation in the research was meaningfully informed, voluntary, and by signed consent. All interviewees read and signed a form at the start of the interview, which informed them of their right to stop the interview at any time and to refuse to the tape recording of the interview. It also informed them of how and where the data would be used and assured the protection of their personal details. The names of the interviewees only appeared on this original form, and at all

[35] I did not use NUDIST for theory building as this was not a necessary path to follow within the remit of this particular project which already had a strong theoretical paradigm through which to view data.

other times they were identified by the numbers which appear in the thesis. Tapes and transcripts were also securely stored.

These measures were fully adequate for ensuring that professional and ethical standards of research were met. There was, for instance, no divergence from the conventional social scientific use of the interview method, which is well established in sociological research. In addition, I was speaking to professional adults about subjects relating specifically to their experiences of teaching and their union involvement and therefore there were no special or overly sensitive circumstances surrounding the nature of research or the topics under discussion. This is not to say that the interview accounts of those heavily involved in the union were not highly 'political' in nature. The NUT, like any other trade union, is a political organisation and those involved tend to occupy specific political positions. In this respect, interviews bordered at times on 'sensitive' material or material relating to political and personality clashes. Special care was taken to make sure that the respective parties could not be identified from the information supplied. Generally speaking however, the views of these people were already well known in union circles because they were regularly expressed in union debates, and as such did not constitute especially 'sensitive' data. Similarly, teachers' experiences of work tended to be stories that had been told many times in public, from the staff room to the family meal table.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the multi-staged, mixed-method research strategy used to address the four key research questions, and has placed this strategy within the overall methodological approach of the project. Despite its lack of prescription in

terms of methods, Habermas's form of critical social theory has shaped the assumptions which underlie this methodology; assumptions which were essentially anti-positivist and rooted in the 'dual' perspectives of 'system' and 'lifeworld'. This approach has sought to recognise the constructed and situated nature of knowledge produced in the research process. At the same time, it has sought validity in the account of the social world presented; not through the pursuit of 'truth' as such, but through the avoidance of 'false accounts' (Beynon 1984, 14). This is not the first time that social 'scientific' research has taken 'falsity' over 'truth' as the measure of its enterprise (Popper 1969).

The open discussion of methods selection, sampling issues, and the fieldwork process has aimed to reflect the complex web of opportunities and constraints within which research was conducted. Like any social research project, this was one limited by resources of time and money which forced compromises on the 'ideal' design from the very beginning (Hakim 1987, 1). The process of fieldwork was not therefore the linear execution of a neat plan, but an altogether 'messier' enterprise in which methodological principles, pragmatic compromises, and spontaneous opportunity grabbing went hand in hand. As Buchanan states in relation to organisational research, 'the practice of field research is the art of the possible' (Buchanan, et al. 1988, 55). Despite an acute awareness of limitations however, the mixed-method strategy has been rationally justified as entirely appropriate (both in practical and epistemological terms) for an exploration of the four key research questions. Furthermore, read reflexively, the survey and interview data were of more than sufficient volume and quality to substantiate an exploratory analysis of the relationship between colonisation and union mobilisation in the field of state education in England in 2004-5.

CHAPTER FOUR

COLONISATION AND GOVERNMENT EDUCATION POLICY IN ENGLAND 1944-2005

INTRODUCTION

This chapter marks the beginning of the empirical investigation into the role of the worker in Habermas's colonisation thesis. In line with the developments of preceding chapters, this chapter addresses the question of whether colonisation can be understood as a process happening in the field of public sector education in England in 2004-5. This investigation was essentially approached as an attempt to pin down the concept of colonisation in terms of real-world processes in order to reveal ways in which it can be better understood, both as an empirical and politically-relevant concept.

As was argued in chapter one, colonisation should be conceived of in revised Habermasian terms. Here, it is located in a clash between two competing logics of action; the logic of the state-economy complex, on the one hand, and the logic of education as a public service on the other. To recap, the logic of the system is defined in terms of 'technical rationality', a functional relationship between outputs and inputs, means and ends, which is characteristic of economic and state-political institutions. Methodologically, it is pursued in terms of an analysis of government education policy, which is assumed to be indicative of 'system rationality'. The logic of public service, on the other hand, is defined as existing in a position of tension between the technical rationality of the system and the communicative rationality of the lifeworld. Methodologically, it is pursued in the context of education through primary interview accounts, NUT publications, and secondary literature. Colonisation, therefore, can be summed up as the intensification of

functional/technical rationality into schools, and vitally, as a type of intensification which further disrupts the lifeworld of teachers.

The chapter consists of two sections. Section one briefly explores the context of government education policy since 1944, supplying the historical background necessary for understanding the nature of New Labour's education agenda and the logic behind it. I then move on to a more detailed outline of New Labour's position on education, relating this to the political philosophy adopted by Blair more generally. Key education acts, policies, and papers are noted up until the time when fieldwork was completed in March 2005. The White Paper of October 2005 will be referred to, however, because it reveals something of importance about Blair's vision for the future of education (Cabinet Office March 1999).

Section two explores how changes in education policy, particularly from the 1980s onwards, can be understood as involving processes of commodification and juridification. These are the two key processes which Habermas relates to the 'colonisation of the lifeworld' (Habermas 1987). The purpose of this discussion is to connect changes in the relationship between the state, the economy, and the public sector, to processes which are essential for an empirical understanding of the nature of colonisation in English schools today.

SECTION ONE: EDUCATION POLICY IN ENGLAND 1944-2005

As Finlayson points out, political theories used by governments as the basis for formulating policy 'are also always social theories' (Finlayson 2003b, 104). They make assumptions about how the world is, how it is changing and the direction in which societies should proceed. As such, these theories provide essential clues as to the nature of 'system rationality' in a given context (i.e. the logic on which state and

economic institutions are run). This section outlines key aspects of educational politics in England from 1944 to the present-day, and links the policy reforms of Thatcher and Blair to the social theories which underlie them. Firstly, I set the scene for a discussion of current educational politics by outlining key aspects of post-war policy. In this respect I move chronologically through the 1944 Act, which outlined the beginnings of education as a public service attached to the welfare state, to the development of comprehensive ideals, and finally, the transition to market-led strategies in the 1980s and early 1990s. From here, I outline the position of New Labour with respect to educational reform. I summarise the key policies it has produced from 1997-2005 and contextualise them in terms of Blair's wider agenda for the 'modernisation' of public services.

Post-war education 1944-1997: from welfare to markets

Much has been written about the history of the British education system, the educational policies of various governments, and the details of the many Education Acts (see Tropp 1957 for a historical analysis, whilst Tomlinson 2001 and Whitty 2002 provide useful contemporary accounts of post-war education). In this section, the demands of brevity mean that I cannot do justice to the historical debates or complexities involved. Instead, I aim for an outline of key events for purposes of contextualisation.

The 1944 Education Act was a central piece of legislation in the establishment of the post-war welfare state. It erected a tripartite education system in England, governed by the Local Education Authorities (LEAs). It also made provision for free school milk, clothing and transport. The system was based upon the social democratic principle of primary and secondary education for all (up to the

age of fifteen). However, at eleven, pupils were to be examined and categorised into grammar schools, technical, and modern schools through the 'eleven plus' examination. Grammar schools were seen as the 'academic' route for the bright and able, the secondary moderns catered for the less academically minded, whilst the technical schools orientated work towards a vocational curriculum for the 'practical' child. Those writing about the history of teacher unionism stress the spirit of cooperation and harmony in which the 1944 act was passed (Barber 1992). Teacher unions and the government, for example, worked closely together in compiling the content of the act, and teachers' professional judgment was seen as crucial in its shaping. These were times, portrayed in the literature, as the 'golden age' of teacher unionism, representing a genuine and fruitful partnership between organised teachers and government officials (Barber 1992). By the 1960s, however, questions were being raised over how democratic the grammar school system really was, with links being made between social class and results at the eleven plus (Floud, et al. 1956). Rather than levelling the playing field, critics on the left argued that the tripartite system actually reproduced social class divisions. By the 1960s the Labour Government had taken the problems with the existing system to the heart of its policy and proposed the abolition of grammar schools in favour of a system of comprehensive secondary education for all.

By the time Thatcher's Conservative Government took power in 1979 the landscape of education in England was set for inevitable change. Debates around standards, failing schools and the changing demands of a modern economy formed the backdrop for a break with comprehensive ideals. The influence of New Right philosophy on Conservative policy became clear throughout the 1980s, with a wealth of 'neo-liberal' inspired economic policies (Hodgson and Spurs 1999). Essentially,

New Right political philosophy drew upon theories of 'public choice' (Dunleavy and O'Leary 1987; Petracca 1991; Ward 1995). Public choice theories approached citizens as individual rational actors, who made decisions based upon (largely economic) profitability. The assumptions of this social theory suggested that 'rational' individuals would only thrive in the context of a free market, where competition and choice would stimulate innovation, prosperity and economic growth. The spirit of the entrepreneur was therefore to be fostered above the spirit of social services championed in the early stages of the welfare state. If anything, the welfare state was viewed as a hindrance to the operation of the market and an example of the exigencies of state interference (Hayek 1960). Instead, Conservative policy sought to 'roll back the state', privatise public services, lower spending and taxation, and weaken the power of trade unions to obstruct these policies. The legacy of their success in this respect has been well-recorded in accounts of the Miners' Strike (1984-6) and the Teacher Strikes (1984-7). The end of the teacher strikes, however, marked the opportunity for the Conservative Government to pass their most enduring statement on education through the 1988 Education Act. The significance of the 1988 act in reshaping the education system in England on the basis of a very particular kind of logic should not be underestimated. It casts its spectre over reform to this day, and accounts for most of the activity of Major's Conservative Government in the early 1990s.

Essentially, the 1988 Education Act sought to apply the philosophy of New Right, neo-liberal economics to the field of education. This involved creating in education a 'quasi-market' in which schools would compete for pupils and be subject to the power of parental choice (Whitty 2002, 11). The logic was one of consumer demand, arguing that competition and choice would lead to rising standards in an

'improve or lose environment'. At the same time, schools were encouraged to increasingly select their pupils on the basis of ability, a policy expanded by Major in the early 1990s. In order to supply the basis for this type of system, the act made provision for Local Management of Schools (LMS) and open enrollment, meaning that the money available per pupil went directly to the school chosen by parents rather than being centrally allocated to LEAs (Tomlinson 2001). For example, individual schools were to be given more freedom over budgets and school management under the policy of 'grant maintained schools' (GM); schools which effectively voted to 'opt out' of the state sector and local authority control to receive their funds directly from the government (this GM policy was expanded in the 1993 Education Act). Diversity of schooling was also seen as an important part of parental choice, with the establishment of City Technology Colleges (CTCs) and schools specialising in arts, languages, and technology subjects (and involving a private sponsor). The opportunity was also given for pupils from poorer backgrounds to attend private schools through the assisted places scheme. Furthermore, choice was said to be stimulated by privatisation and hence competition, seeing many aspects of educational provision (such as school catering, cleaning and facilities management) opened up to the private sector through the policy of compulsory competitive tendering (Bridges and McLaughlin 1994).

It has been widely noted in the literature that the 1988 Education Act involved a mixture of these market inspired policies and the 'neo-conservative' element of the Thatcher Government (Merson 2000; Tomlinson 2001). Neo-conservatism championed principles of tradition, authority and national identity. These principles were pursued in terms of the National Curriculum, prescribing core and foundation subjects (including religious education), which would be tested at

various intervals throughout schooling. 'Standard Attainment Tests' (SATs) at 7, 11 and 14 would be the method finally adopted (with much hostility) in schools by the early 1990s, alongside the GCSE examinations at 16. In compliance with informed parental choice, the results of these examinations were to be published nationally, as happened in the form of league-tables in 1992. Equally, by 1993 the teaching profession was to be subject to regular inspections from the new Ofsted state inspectorate. Far from the spirit of cooperation between the government and teacher unions seen in 1944 (Barber 1992), the 1988 education act reflected a wholly different attitude towards the teaching profession. In line with public choice theories of human behaviour, public servants and trade unions were approached suspiciously as self-interested obstacles to change and the introduction of market forces. The view of teachers as 'experts' in their field was replaced by one of teachers as a self-interested occupation which had to be controlled, regulated, and watched in their daily tasks (Tomlinson 2001, 61).

New Labour 1997-2005: markets and partnerships

After eighteen years of Conservative rule, the advent of New Labour in 1997 promised hope for the future for many educationalists and teacher unionists in England. Tony Blair's election promise of 'education, education, education' also suggested the central role that education would play within the New Labour programme for change. Education was given this central role because of the links made between investment in 'human capital' and prosperity and growth in a global 'knowledge-based' economy (Giddens 1998). Despite the surface similarities between the New Right and Labour's education policies, there was in fact an important shift in the political philosophy underlying Blairism. It adopted the

approach theorised by Gidden's as the 'third way', signifying a position somewhere between the divergent principles of social democracy and the free market (Giddens 1998; 2000). This position rested upon the assumption that the world had changed in highly significant ways, largely due to the globalisation of capital and communications, and that social, economic and political spheres needed to change radically in order to work successfully for modern (or 'high' modern) times (Giddens 1998; Finlayson 2003b). Giddens states:

> I shall take it 'third way' refers to a framework of thinking and policy making that seeks to adapt social democracy to a world which has changed fundamentally over the past two or three decades. It is a third way in the sense that it is an attempt to transcend both old-style social democracy and neo-liberalism (Giddens 1998, 26).

The practical core of the theory suggests that the government should not be held back by dogmatic attachment to one or the other principle, but instead should do 'what works' in order to meet the needs of modern Britain (Cabinet Office March 1999). In most cases this has translated into the notion of 'partnerships' (as opposed to 'central control or laissez-faire') (Blair, 24 October 2005), where the state, voluntary and private sectors combine in order to provide public services, including education. Flynn states, however:

> While compulsion to compete has apparently been dropped and the language of 'partnerships' and 'trust' has been introduced, the policy remains the same: if the private sector can provide a service better and/or cheaper then that option should be followed (Flynn 1999, 595).

Blairism also continued to place emphasis on the 'users' of services, (i.e. members of the public) as consumers in a marketplace. This is juxtaposed however with a view of consumers not as solely competitive individuals, but as 'citizens' or 'stakeholders'

who are entitled to a say in how the services they use are run. Involving citizens at the level of 'managed' 'consultation' about change is seen as a way 'democratising' public institutions (Giddens 1998; Pratchett 1999). The social theory underlying New Labour, then, provides a subtle but important shift in logic from the 'individual consumer' to the 'consumer-citizen' (Finlayson 2003b). Importantly however the 'consumer-citizen' conception remains overlaid with rational actor assumptions, as individuals are seen as motivated by calculations of profitability, i.e. choosing the most efficient means available for attaining their self-interested goals.

Despite the shifts in underlying political philosophy, New Labour's education policies from 1997-2005 have remained strikingly consistent with the Conservative rhetoric of choice, diversity, and standards, and have not marked a return to comprehensive ideals (Merson 2000; Whitty 2002, 11). One of their first moves was to increase control over the National Curriculum, particularly at primary level, where compulsory literacy and numeracy hours were defined as part of a national strategy to improve basic skills. By 2002 they had also added 'Citizenship' studies to the national agenda. From 1997 Local Management of Schools (LMS) was retained as a key policy for increasing school autonomy and local control over budgets. Specialist schools, and grant-maintained schools (newly termed 'foundation' schools), were expanded and added to with a range of other types of school, including voluntary aided, trust, and faith schools (DfEE July 1997). The idea behind diversity of school rested on parental choice and participation, with each school encouraged to develop its own particular ethos and specialist curriculum to cater for a range of demands. What (consumer-citizen) parents want, argued New Labour, is not the only available local comprehensive for their child, but a *choice* of good local schools, and furthermore, the opportunity to participate in the key decisions of their school

(through structures like 'Parent Councils' and the opportunity to set up new schools) (DfES 2005, 4). These assumptions form the rationale for Labour's desire 'that the system as a whole is increasingly driven by parents and by choice' (DfES 2005, 1).

In line with social democratic sentiments however, New Labour also made an effort to pursue strategies of improvement with regards to inner city schools in areas of high deprivation and failing standards. The first policy in this respect was that of 'Education Action Zones' (EAZs) in 1998. EAZs were clusters of schools which would benefit in terms of resources and school building work from government and private sector investment. Although the policy was met with suspicion and criticism from those who saw in it the potential for privatisation and commercialisation along the US model[36] (Gerwirtz 1999), EAZs have also been interpreted as a genuine attempt to increase resources where they are most needed. The success of the policy in terms of improving quality and standards remains, however, inconclusive (Whitty 2002, 24-5).

By 2000, the policy of EAZs was superseded by that of 'City Academies' (renamed simply 'Academies' in 2002 to mark their expansion to all types of area). Academies are described as 'independent state schools', which take up to 20 per cent of their funding from a private sponsor and the rest from the state. Importantly, this sponsor can then take a role in independently leading and managing the school, along with the head teacher, parents, and governors. The power for private companies to intervene in the provision of education was secured by the 2002 Education Act (24 July 2002). Currently, the kinds of companies involved include Capita, Nord Anglia, and Cambridge Education Associates. Examples of Academy sponsors are Roger de

[36] In the US private companies have been involved with school provision in a highly commercialised fashion. For example, the Edison project runs fifty schools for profit in the US (Flynn 1999, 595).

Haan, Chief Executive of Saga Holidays (Ramsgate Academy), Amey Plc, construction and management firm (Unity City Academy, Middlesborough), Sir Peter Vardy, Reg Vardy Car dealership (Kings Academy, Middlesborough), Bristol City FC, University of WOE, and Bristol Business West (The City Academy, Bristol), Manchester Science Park and the United Learning Trust (Manchester Academy), Liverpool University and Granada Learning (North Liverpool City Academy). The United Learning Trust (Church Schools Company) has the largest slice of sponsorship and proposes to sponsor ten Academies (NUT 2004a, 5).

The policy of Academies started out, like EAZs, as a strategy to improve failing inner city schools, many of which were refurbished to high specification through PFI/PPP[37] and specialise in subjects ranging from business, enterprise, sport, and technology, to mathematics, science, media, and ICT (in line with their private sponsor). Although the most recent government White Paper (DfES October 2005) lies just outside of the period of my fieldwork, it is a pivotal indicator of Blair's vision for the future of British education as an expanded system of Academy-style schools. Commenting on the paper, Blair states that, 'we want every school to be able to quickly and easily become a self-governing independent state school' (Blair, 24 October 2005), and envisages that 200 Academies will be open by 2010. Even private schools are being encouraged to opt for Academy status, effectively retaining their control functions and autonomy from LEAs, whilst moving back in to the state-funded sector (Miliband 2002).

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[37] PFI (private finance initiative) involves the government leasing buildings and facilities from private companies rather than borrowing the capital themselves to directly invest. The company remains the owner of the assets (which is theirs to revert for profit) and because it receives rent from the government at secure rates it is able to make a risk-free profit. Private/Public Partnership is another name for such a scheme, and PFI and PPP are often used interchangeably (Flynn 1999, 587).

Despite similarities with Conservative policies the privatisation of education is happening under New Labour in a new and distinctive fashion, reflecting a subtle shift in the logic of the social theory which underlies it. Through PFI/PPP private sponsors are given a lead role in schools who 'manage' themselves, whilst the LEA moves from 'provider' to 'commissioner' (DfES 2005, 7). Successful schools will be left to their own devices to become 'self-sustaining' centres of excellence and examples of 'best practice', whilst central powers to intervene will be strengthened and reserved for 'failing' schools. These measures, if expanded across the state education system, will reach far beyond the GM model initially proposed by the Conservatives in 1988, and mark an even more radical break with comprehensive ideals.

New Labour and the modernisation of public services

In order to understand the underlying logic of policies pursued by New Labour in the field of education, it is necessary to comprehend their approach to the reform of public services in general. New Labour accepts much of the neo-liberal critique of the welfare state, viewing traditional public sector institutions as inefficient, non cost-effective and trailing behind the requirements of a modern, global economy. Giddens, for instance, proposes that, 'social democrats must respond to the criticism that, lacking market discipline, state institutions become lazy and the services they deliver shoddy' (Giddens 1998, 74-5). It is also accepted that the market can play a key role in bringing state institutions up to date and up to scratch for modern Britain, alongside developments in technology, the use of ICT, and online services. It is not only privatisation, choice and competition which are central in this respect, but the model of practice adopted by business. Sharing business 'best practice' in terms of

the management and running of institutions is seen as key to reforming the public sector, including those services traditionally associated with the welfare state (like schools, hospitals and emergency services), and indeed, the machinery of government itself (Cabinet Office March 1999). Reflecting its roots in the theory of the consumer-citizen, the *Modernising Government* white paper states:

> People are exercising choice and demanding higher-quality services. In the private sector, service standards and service delivery have improved as a result. You can shop from home, arrange mortgages without leaving your armchair and make holiday arrangements with one telephone call. You want the same from public services and the white paper sets out how this will happen (Cabinet Office 1999).

Private business, it is argued, is output based, cost-effective, and efficient in its use of resources because it has to survive in a competitive environment. Adopting such a model for state institutions, whilst also opening them up to private business involvement through PFI/PPP, is hoped to achieve the same results: value for money, economic efficiency, improved delivery, and a reduction in overall state expenditure (a key aim of New Labour). This strategy has been analysed by some under the banner of 'New Public Management' or the 'Managerial State' (Clarke and Newman 1997), but it also lies at the heart of Blair's agenda for 'modernisation'.

'Modernisation' assumes a strange hybrid of meanings under New Labour. On the one hand, the concept is an old one (Flynn 1999, 584), and originates from debates in the *New Left Review* (Finlayson 2003a, 69) where it pointed to the potential of the public to drive forward a process something akin to 'lifeworld' rationalisation, where grounded knowledge would unlock the potential for progress. In Blair's words, 'the people are the real modernisers' (Blair quoted in Finlayson 2003a, 74). Modernisation, in these terms, is merely a strategy which taps into the

pre-existing potential in society for improvement and change in line with the demands of global development.

Giddens on the other hand, discusses modernisation in terms of modernising social democracy for a changed world; however, he also refers to it, in line with Finlayson, as an important agenda or 'strategy' for Blair's Government (Giddens 1998, 67-8; Finlayson 2003a, 67). Modernisation therefore becomes explicit as a 'guiding thread' shaping New Labour's form of governance. As Finlayson argues, 'New Labour practices not only the modernisation of governance but a kind of governance through modernisation' (Finlayson 2003a, 69). In this sense, it is a strategy in line with the political stance Brown and Lauder call 'the Left Modernisers' (Brown and Lauder 1996), a position developed as an alternative to the New Right which stresses the connections between investment in knowledge and learning, and economic prosperity (Merson 2000, 157).

No public institution is to escape the force of New Labour's 'modernising agenda'. In this context, modernisation has tended to refer to the application of private business practices and management techniques to public services (Clarke and Newman 1997). The 'modernisation' of the Fire Service, for example, became a phrase which entered debates around low pay to form the context of strike action by the FBU in 2002-3. Here, there was a clash between the government's notion of 'modernisation from above', which involved the introduction of business-style 'efficiency' and cost-cutting, and what FBU sources called their vision for 'the true modernisation of the Fire Service', involving an influx of resources and a strengthening of social service principles (Edwards 2003). This suggests that whatever the origin of the principle of modernisation, when adopted as a strategy of governance in order to introduce techniques of private business into public services it

has the potential to form a major source of controversy between New Labour and the public sector.

Education has not escaped the dynamic of modernisation. In fact it is considered by Blair as a key target. A 1998 consultation paper, *Teachers Meeting the challenge of change* (DfEE 1998), outlined the government's modernisation agenda in terms of the teaching profession (see Merson 2000; Tomlinson 2001, 106-110). It was suggested that the social service model of education was out-dated and inefficient in relation to the needs of modern Britain. Alongside the changes in the structure of the education system, therefore, the teacher workforce should also be 'remodelled' in line with requirements of flexibility, high standards and cost-effectiveness. This remodelling agenda was discussed by teachers in interview:

> The other big thing we've been campaigning on is to do with the remodelling and modernisation, which is going on in all public services, from the Fire Service to the National Health Service (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary).

The proposals for remodelling the teacher workforce include the application of human resource management (HRM) techniques within schools (something first introduced with LMS); measures such as performance-related pay, appraisal, and reward systems (Ironside and Seifert 1995). The principle of a universal pay scale for teachers was viewed in this respect as inhibiting progress and improvement, and thresholds were put in place in order to financially reward teachers who performed to a higher standard and delivered the necessary results. Proposals were also made for fast track career paths in order to push forward motivated, ambitious and capable teachers into management positions in schools (DfEE 1998). The emphasis was upon ousting the incompetent teacher, discounting the mediocre, or those unwilling to change, and rewarding instead the most able, the most motivated, and, above all,

those who *deliver*. 'Modernise or die' was not simply an observation of the present state of affairs for Britain's social, political and economic infrastructure; it was a message to be delivered loud and clear by the government to public sector institutions.

Summary

This section has outlined key aspects of educational politics from 1944 to 2005. It has accounted for the fundamental shifts in the way in which education has been conceived of by Labour and Conservative Governments; from a cornerstone of the welfare state, to a 'quasi-market' driven by choice and standards, and finally, to a 'modernised' service at the heart of a knowledge economy, working in partnership with governments, parents, and the private sector. Attempt has been made to link key education policies, consultation papers and acts of legislature to the social theories which underlie them in order to tease out the particular logic on which they rest. From Thatcher to Blair, education policy has proffered a specific conception of the agent, overlaid in both cases by rational actor and public choice assumptions, but shifting subtly from what Finlayson calls the 'individual-consumer' to the 'consumer-citizen' (Finlayson 2003b). Essentially, they assume that action takes place by *individuals* on the basis of a calculation of means and ends, and to that extent is *'instrumentally' rational*. The logic of government action itself follows similar principles. Under Thatcher we saw the compulsion of the market in state actions, adhering to the logic of supply and demand through competition and choice in education. Under New Labour we see the desire to extend not only market logic, but 'technical' knowledge, into ever wider areas, including education.

'Modernisation', as a strategy of governance, sums this up in the present context of New Labour, seeking to restructure areas of public service on the principles of private business; a logic of (economically defined) efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and performance management, which is in large part driven by ICT. Here the language itself is 'technicised' (Clarke and Newman 1997, 158-9); its one of 'inputs and outputs' and 'system incentives' (Finlayson 2003a). Private business is 'output' (i.e. performance, delivery) based, because it thrives in a competitive environment. Public services have for too long been 'input' (i.e. resources) based, because they have not been compelled to compete, and therefore many have failed to achieve the standards 'good enough' (in Blair's estimation) for modern Britain. The underlying point of 'modernisation', as a strategy of governance, is to change this situation as it is perceived and to do so based upon the logic of rational incentives, built-in to the system itself, to create output-orientated, reward motivated, high quality public services and public servants. If, and how, these government policies can be understood as 'juridification' and 'commodification' - processes central to the colonisation thesis - is the subject of the next section.

SECTION TWO: PROCESSES OF JURIDIFICATION AND COMMODIFICATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Drawing upon the work of Claus Offe, chapter one established the distinct position of public sector workplaces. In the public sector, interactions inhabit terrain somewhere *between* the principles of system integration (functional/technical rationality) and principles of social integration (communicative rationality) (Offe 1985). These principles exist in constant tension with one-another, forming two competing logics. For example, public services are workplaces with certain systemic needs and characteristics like any other industry, like the need to balance the books.

However, they also have a specific ethos, rooted in a moral obligation to work in the interests of the public good. Public services are responsible for key lifeworld functions (such as education, healthcare, and emergency help), and as such, actions within them must be organised communicatively. The workplace in the public sector therefore itself constitutes a 'lifeworld', reproducing vital symbolic resources for everyday life. Due to the nature of its tasks, system media of money and power cannot unproblematically replace action organised through linguistic communication within public sector workplaces. There can be no better example in this respect than education, which involves the transmission of knowledge, culture and identities as part of the daily task of teaching. Despite forming an area of the state, public services like education, 'belong' to the lifeworld, and need to be organised primarily on the basis of the logic of the lifeworld (communicative rationality). Furthermore, in their daily tasks teachers are immersed in, and depend upon, this 'lifeworld at work'. They must draw upon and reproduce lifeworld resources in order to deliver education as a public service.

The competition therefore between the logic of the system and the logic of the lifeworld is an ever-present tension in the public sector. Established as a pillar of the welfare state, the public sector has always involved a degree of system rationality, despite assuming responsibility for lifeworld functions. Through government policy, state-legal interactions have played a key part in shaping the struggle between system and lifeworld in the public sector from the start. At times, government intervention has been perceived as essential to ensuring freedom and equality (such as the 1944 Act, and the comprehensive policy of the 1960s). At other times it has been interpreted in line with a *'colonisation'* of areas belonging to the lifeworld.

As discussed in chapter one, Habermas talks about 'colonisation' in terms of two key processes: firstly, 'juridification', which denotes an extension or intensification of state-legal/bureaucratic interventions in areas of communicative action; secondly, the increasing 'commodification' of areas of everyday life based on communicative interaction (Habermas 1987). This means that market-based transactions increasingly override communicative and discursive practices in organising courses of action. There are many reasons to suggest that the changes in education policy outlined in section one, particularly from 1988 onwards, have made the struggle between the logic of the system and the logic of lifeworld more acute in public services. It is my suggestion that the marketisation and modernisation of education, which accompanied Thatcherite and Blairite education policies respectively, can be understood as processes of juridification and commodification. This requires some elaboration.

Since the 1980s, the idea that education is being increasingly 'commodified' is perhaps straightforward enough to grasp. The way in which the 1988 Education Act in particular involved a 'marketisation' of education has been well-documented in existing educational literature (Apple and Whitty 1999; Halliday 1990; Hodgson and Spurs 1999; Ironside and Seifert 1995; Tomlinson 2001; Whitty 2002). Furthermore, teachers on occasion used the language of 'marketisation' to describe their experience of educational change in interview:

> One of the major shifts came in 1988 with the introduction of the education reform act by the Conservative Government. Many people like myself saw that it was a *marketisation* of education...those pieces of legislation had a profound effect on the education service as we know it and the way in which the unions had to respond to that (interview 4, NUT Regional Officer).

In essence, since the 1980s there has been a net of commodified relationships spread across the state education system, particularly in terms of the relationship between parent and school, and teacher and student. Through theories of public choice, parents have been redefined as 'consumers' acting in an educational marketplace, and New Labour's emphasis on diversity of schools demands that they continue to relate to education as predominately a consumer choice (Whitty 2002, 79-93). The relationship between student and teacher is also one commodified by the emphasis on achievement as results. Exam results for teachers are commodities not only because they form published information used as the basis of parental choice of school, but because the results take on the appearance of 'things' to be exchanged for rewards within the system of performance management and pay.

Habermas is clear that such processes of commodification have colonising effects. The exchanges between system and lifeworld are expressed in four key roles for Habermas: worker, citizen, client and consumer. Colonisation tends to lead to an inflation of the roles of consumer and client over those of citizen and worker in advanced capitalist societies (Habermas 1987, 350-1). This clearly applies in the context of education since the 1980s, where relating to the state through the consumer role has become the predominant mode. Even when the role of the consumer is tempered with a renewed concern for citizenship, as in the case of New Labour's programme for democratic renewal, the dominance of consumption shines through. Citizens are still, moreover, individuals, who have a right to a voice because they are the 'users' (i.e. consumers) of public services. Citizenship of this sort is a consumerist-version of political participation indeed, and bears much in common with market research consultation exercises (for example, citizen's juries, parent councils) (Pratchett 1999).

The process of juridification is also, on the surface, visibly associated with changes in the education field since the 1980s. The legal extension of state powers in terms of a neo-conservative inspired National Curriculum, and other elements of the 1988 Act, like Ofsted, represented for some an intolerable political 'take-over' of education in a manner consistent with juridification (Apple and Whitty 1999). Although New Labour have retained, and in some ways strengthened these central powers, any kind of process akin to juridification in the present context must be seen as taking on a much more subtle form.

Almost in line with the critique of the welfare state that Habermas launches through the colonisation thesis, New Labour accepts in principle that schools should not be overly interfered with by legal and bureaucratic measures prescribed by the state. We have seen in section one Blair's vision for self-sustaining, independently run and controlled schools, with central powers reserved only for those who fail to achieve the necessary standards required in modern Britain. If we are to up-date Habermas's colonisation thesis for the post-social democratic, 'post-welfare' state (Clarke and Newman 1997), we must take one major point on board: political and economic colonisation are related, and crucially (and perhaps with more than a touch of irony), economic colonisation is forwarded by both Thatcher and Blair in different ways, as the answer to criticisms surrounding too much state-bureaucratic interference in the lifeworld (Crossley 1996, 123). Thatcher sought explicitly to remove the state from the provision of education and leave it up to the forces of the market by introducing choice, competition and privatisation. Even though many have pointed to the contradiction underlying Thatcherism which, at the same time as preaching a minimal state increased central powers, it is indicative that marketisation, something akin to economic colonisation, was suggested as a remedy

for political interference in peoples' everyday lives. New Labour adopts something of this mentality whilst not removing the state completely from educational provision. Instead they open it up to partnership with private and voluntary sectors and share business 'best practice'. Rather than state protected employment, public services are to be 'managed' and run by the same kind of individualised employment law and technical-rational logic of private business.

PPP/PFI and managerialism are the two linchpins of New Labour's modernisation strategy, and point to juridification and commodification in very specific terms in the present British context. Firstly, juridification processes are divorced from the state to the extent that individualised employment law infiltrates relations in public services just as in private businesses through HRM. The use of appraisals, evaluation and surveillance involved in HRM does, however, mean that the state retains close control, supervision and power (without having to manage schools directly). When schools 'fail' by the standards set through performance management, state power over schools becomes obvious (through things like special measures), but legitimate (on the basis of something like 'quality control', the expectation of any consumer). Juridification, under New Labour, can be understood as managerialism, plus centralised power held in reserve.

The nature of commodification in the present context has also shifted. It cannot be understood as a straightforward marketisation and privatisation of schools, as under Thatcher. The policy of academies and PPP/PFI means that private money will come into the education system, but through the modernisation agenda, commodification happens primarily in terms of the adoption of private business techniques in schools; out-put obsessed performance management, results-based pay, the prioritising of technical knowledge and ICT solutions. 'Marketisation' therefore

refers to the adoption of private business-style management in the public sector, where public services are encouraged to behave as if they operate on market terms. Under New Labour, then, processes of juridification and commodification meet in the strategy of modernisation.

Changes in the education field since the 1988 Education Act onwards therefore suggest a shift in the way that the public sector is conceived of by government, and ultimately, how it relates to the state. These changes are summarised by Ironside and Seifert (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 122-3). They argue that social services connected with the welfare state, including education, traditionally involved a 'protected' form of employment. Public servants were guaranteed certain conditions by the state: an agreed price for labour (akin to what Habermas calls a 'political price' negotiated with the state by trade unions) (Habermas 1976, 38), uniform contracts of work (pay for position), and importantly, a 'licensed autonomy' over working practices (Whitty 2002, 66). In this respect, teachers were expert professionals and left to make judgements about their everyday work, as reflected in the role given to teacher unions and educational experts in the developing the 1944 Education Act.

Whitty argues that this notion of public service employment was broken with when the Conservative Government opened up education to market forces, and continues with New Labour's modernisation agenda (Whitty 2002). Furthermore, Whitty argues that this reformulation of the nature of public sector employment involves a shift from 'licensed autonomy' over working practices to what he calls 'regulated autonomy' (Whitty 2002, 66). Rather than being seen as experts who should be left to make judgements about their everyday tasks, the government

increasingly seeks to regulate and control the content and productivity of teachers' working day. This shift was highlighted by some teachers in interview:

> When I started teaching in 1973 I must have worked sixty odd hours a week, but the difference was that in those days people were *a lot more self-directed.* Now there probably was a need for a National Curriculum...but what's happened is that it has moved too far in that direction...the other thing of course is that we didn't have Ofsted, we didn't have target-setting and so on (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary).

This move towards 'regulated autonomy' (Whitty 2002, 66) comes because the 'third way' argues that modern Britain requires public services to be run and managed upon the logic of a technical-rational discourse characteristic of the system, and moreover, of the global capitalist market. The logic of the system thus predominates over the logic of the lifeworld in current education policy. To this extent, modernisation represents a specific form of the economic and political colonisation of schools in the present British context.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has recounted the key changes in education policy in England 1944-2005. It has related these changes to the social theories which underlie them in order to tease out the particular form of 'system logic' which predominates. Since 1988, this logic has been one rooted firmly in the assumptions of rational action theory and public choice, aiding an interpretation of political reality which demands policies aimed at the marketisation of evermore areas of life. Under Thatcher, this marketisation happened in a way fairly straightforwardly connected with the process of commodification. Under New Labour, however, it is but one component within a wider strategy of *modernisation.*

I have argued here that modernisation is crucial to our understanding of colonisation in the present British context because it represents a merger of processes of commodification and juridification which is quite distinct. Both the intensification of state-legal relationships (conducted through the individualised employment law relating to performance management) and of market principles (of choice, output, and cost-efficiency), for example, refer to the introduction of private business techniques into public service institutions driven by government-defined modernisation. Furthermore, modernisation creates a link between economic and political colonisation which is crucial for political legitimacy. If teachers and schools fulfil the requirements of a modern business then they will be rewarded with a degree of autonomy from state-legal interference, if not, then the state becomes authorised to use the centralised powers it holds reserve in order to increase regulation and control over them. How exactly processes of juridification and commodification of this character affect the lifeworld of teachers at work is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE COLONISATION OF TEACHERS' 'LIFEWORLD AT WORK': AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Chapter four discussed the ways in which the bureaucratisation and marketisation of education, propelled by government policy since the 1980s, can be understood through the Habermasian concepts of juridification and commodification. Looking to the interview accounts of teachers further illustrated, on occasion, that these shifts in the nature of education have been experienced at the level of the classroom, and have fundamentally affected the vocational character of teaching in the last two decades.

This chapter continues to explore the responses of teachers involved in the research. Section one looks specifically at the problems and concerns teachers express about their day-to-day job, drawing upon both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview accounts. Section two investigates more closely the nature of concerns articulated by teachers, arguing that they can be accurately understood as problems which arise at the level of social integration. Essentially, the issues expressed by teachers revolve around the reshaping of culture, society and personality within schools, i.e. the three structural components Habermas captures with the concept of 'lifeworld' (Habermas 1984; 1987). Finally, section three looks at teachers' opinions on the source and character of key concerns, examining discourses around conflict and struggle. I argue that their narratives are suggestive of 'boundary conflicts' within schools ('boundary conflicts' being those orientated towards a critique of the growth of the system into the lifeworld) (Habermas 1996b, 363). As a consequence, teachers' accounts are further indicative of a process which

can be usefully understood as a 'colonisation of the lifeworld' in the field of education in 2004-5.

SECTION ONE

In this section I explore the key concerns that teachers involved in the research expressed about their jobs. The data I draw upon comes in two forms. Firstly, I analyse the quantified responses of 1252 teachers who are members of the NUT. These teachers participated in a survey conducted by the LRD in June 2004 as part of the NUT's investigation into membership participation. The sample composition and other details of this survey were discussed at length in chapter three. For the purposes of this section, I explored responses to question forty-four, which asked members to state what they thought was the 'most crucial' issue in teaching for the NUT to deal with. Interviewees were provided with a list of sixteen pre-coded answers and given the opportunity to forward an alternative response.

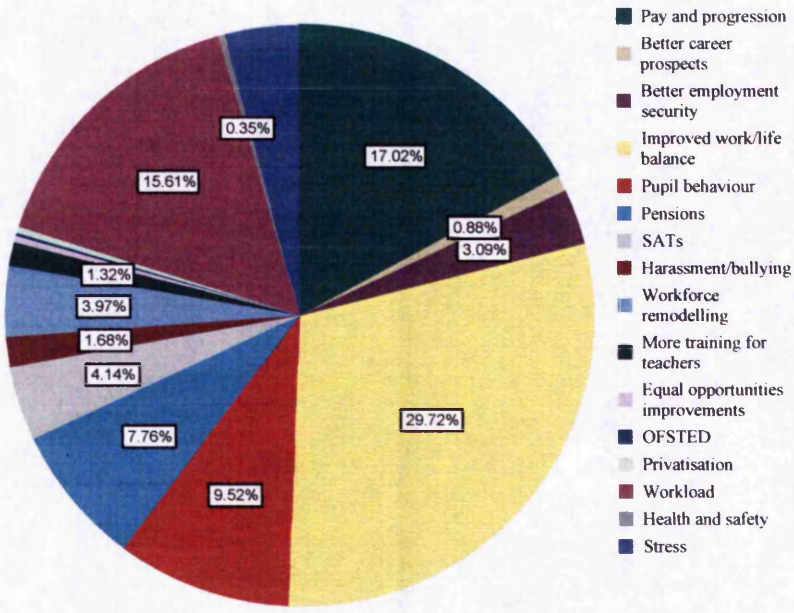
Secondly, I draw upon qualitative data from forty-five semi-structured interviews conducted with NUT members. Again, the details of this sample were discussed in chapter three. Despite variations arising from the semi-structured format, all interviewees were asked to highlight their main concerns at work, and the issues and grievances that they have felt most angry and passionate about during their time as teachers. Their accounts regarding these issues are examined here and used in conjunction with the survey data. Bringing together these different types of data is beneficial in gaining both an overall impression and an in-depth understanding of the issues important to teachers in 2004-5. Survey data provides a useful general (and national) picture of key concerns and can be used for purposes of cross-referencing with interviews, whilst interviews provide a tool to probe (in a

more detailed and accessible way) the subjective meanings attached by teachers to specific problems at work.

Key concerns at work

Figure 5.1 below shows the workplace issues which were considered by teachers to be the 'most crucial' and in need of union action (n=1252). Respondents were asked to tick only one box which reflected their key concern. The issues ranged from traditional union matters of pay, conditions, hours of work, and job security, to wider educational issues around pupil behaviour, SATs, Ofsted, privatisation and equal opportunities.

Figure 5.1
Most crucial issue at work for teachers in the NUT



Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

In a clear majority, just under one third of teachers (29.7 per cent) felt that the 'most crucial' issue at work was finding an improved 'work/life balance', a concern connected with that of 'workload' which was considered to be the 'most crucial'

issue for around 15 per cent of teachers (15.6 per cent). The second largest proportion of teachers (17.02 per cent) regarded issues of 'pay and progression' to be the 'most crucial', whilst 'pupil behaviour' (9.52 per cent) and 'pensions' (7.76 per cent) were also considered the 'most crucial' issue in significant proportions. Next were concerns around 'SATs' (4.14 per cent), 'stress' (4.06 Per cent) and 'workforce remodelling' (3.97 per cent). 'Career prospects', 'job security', 'bullying', 'training', 'equal opportunities', 'privatisation' and 'health and safety' also featured as the 'most crucial' concern for some teachers, although each attracted less than 5 per cent of the overall sample.

The teachers who participated in interviews discussed a similar range of key concerns. For the vast majority of interviewees, there were several issues within the workplace which concerned them greatly (with the exception of interviewee 28, who presented teaching as free from any major issues[38]). One interviewee for instance stated that:

> There's a lot of discontent in teaching. There's discontent about the level of salaries, there's discontent about performance pay, there's huge discontent about SATs, and there's huge hatred of Ofsted (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary).

In terms of workload (the 'most crucial' issue highlighted by survey data); this was ranked joint second alongside performance management and pay issues for the teachers interviewed. For example, eleven out of the forty-five said that their *main* concern was workload or work/life balance, and a further three cited paperwork and

[38] Interviewee 28 argued that, 'I'm actually beginning to believe that teaching is a good profession, people are now well-resourced and increasingly now well-paid...and I don't think that teachers are disgruntled about those kinds of issues of conditions of service and pay as they were ten, maybe fifteen years ago' (NUT Member).

bureaucracy. Various articulations of the burdens of workload, however, infiltrated all bar one interview account (again interview 28). Some talked of 'paperwork overload' (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer), being 'overwhelmed by pieces of paper' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary), or the desire 'to take away the paperwork and just let us teach' (interview 35, NUT Member). Others concentrated on the sheer volume of work involved in the occupation and the 'constant stress of making teachers do more and more' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary):

> Ever since I've been teaching we've always felt that there's just too much to do all the time...and the longer I've been in the profession the more the pressure has grown (interview 14, primary school teacher and NUT Member, aged 53).
>
> There's just so much stuff that we have to do that isn't about teaching kids. I teach history and there's so much stuff that I have to do that's not about teaching history...there's so much paperwork, there's so much admin (interview 42, secondary school teacher and NUT Member, aged 24).
>
> It's the amount of out of school stuff, the amount of non-classroom stuff that impacts upon you and you have to be involved with it (interview 39, secondary school teacher and NUT Member, aged 23).

Other key concerns expressed in interviews concurred with those highlighted in the survey. Four interviewees stated that their main concern was 'pupil behaviour', (including issues around inclusion[39]), whilst three flagged up 'the move to the privatisation of education' (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary), or the 'drip, drip of privatisation' (interview 20, NUT Division Secretary) as the key issue, particularly in areas of the country where Academy schools had already been established:

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[39] 'Inclusion' is the policy of including all types of pupils within mainstream schools rather than catering for specific needs in specialist schools. The most controversial aspect of the policy discussed by those interviewed revolved around including children with severe behavioral problems within mainstream schools because of the pressures this creates for teachers (interview 21, NUT School Representative) and also, for the educational experience of the pupil (interview 37, NUT Member).

> We just don't think that it's the right way to go. The LEAs should be the providers of schools. It's very disturbing when you see things like City Academies and really its one of the things that's at the root of all the problems that we have in the education system (interview 20, NUT Division Secretary, South West).

In the context of a high profile national campaign against increasing the retirement age of public sector workers from sixty to sixty-five, 'pensions' was cited as a concern by the majority of those interviewed, whilst 'stress', 'harassment' by senior management, and 'a bullying ethos in education' (interview 6, NUT National Executive Member), particularly by head teachers, were mentioned on several occasions. Concerns which also featured, albeit in a minority of cases, were 'equal opportunities' (interviews 12 and 33), 'class sizes' (interview 13) and 'league tables' (interviews 19 and 34). There were two issues however which ranked joint first in relation to the key concerns of interviewees and the issues that they felt most passionate and angry about. The first was 'workforce remodelling'; the second was 'National Curriculum testing' (SATs).

Although less than five per cent of the survey sample stated 'workforce remodelling' as their 'most crucial' issue, it came joint top as the most popular response from interviewees, with one third of teachers suggesting that it was their main concern. As one teacher commented, 'the remodelling of the profession I feel really, really strongly and very, very angry about' (interview 6, NUT National Executive Member). This disparity between survey and interview data may be due to the fact that many of the interviews were completed after June 2004 when the survey was conducted, and issues around remodelling gained a higher national profile as 2004 progressed. It may also be because remodelling was connected in teachers'

accounts with a wide range of other issues, such as performance management and pay, which appeared as separate categories on the survey questionnaire.

Workforce remodelling refers to New Labour's strategy to 'modernise' the teaching profession (just like other public sector services, as discussed in the previous chapter). Outlined in the 1998 Green Paper (DfEE 1998), remodelling involves several different initiatives aimed to transform teaching into a 'twenty-first century profession' (DfEE 2001, 16), and to address problems of recruitment, retention and bureaucracy. In respect of the latter, it includes strategies to reduce teacher workload by limiting their range of administrative duties. Known as the 'workload agreement', a list was drawn up stipulating to employers the kind of tasks that teachers should not undertake. These included wall-displays, inputting student data, and following up pupil absences, alongside a number of other tasks seen to distract teachers from the classroom. The practicability of this agreement was a source of concern for some interviewees:

> It's about the things that we're not supposed to do anymore, like we're not supposed to put up a display, but like you're not going to put up a display! Who's going to do it otherwise? And we're not supposed to input data into a computer, but our whole assessment policy at school is that you input levels on a computer...it's your job when the assessment is due, so what can you do? (interview 42, secondary school teacher and NUT Member).

The purpose behind the workload agreement, however - that of lowering teacher workload - meant that it was, in part, welcomed by teachers. One secondary school teacher stated that, 'the work reform is generally welcomed, but it's going to have consequences that people haven't envisaged', which included the use of 'support workers rather than teachers' (interview 43, NUT Member). Even though the workload agreement is 'patchy in lots of different schools' (interview 30, NUT

School Representative) in terms of its consequences, and in some places had made no impact (interview 9, NUT School Representative, North Somerset), it was the potential for unqualified teachers to take whole classes which was the concern expressed most often by interviewees. Some had already noted the use of 'cover supervisors' in schools (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary, South West), while others argued, 'that's just the beginning, once you've established that I think we're on a slippery slope' (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary). This impression of teachers' key concerns was substantiated by an NUT Regional Secretary:

> The biggest issue now, I think, is the remodelling of the profession and discussions that are going on in different Local Education Authorities, particularly looking at the role of unqualified people in terms of teaching (interview 3, NUT Regional Secretary).

The rationale behind the use of classroom assistants to take whole classes is to relieve teachers of cover duty for absent colleagues. One interviewee however saw this aspect of remodelling as the government's solution to the recruitment crisis in teaching. Her account sums up the feeling, conveyed in several interviews, of a devaluing of teachers' professional status:

> They're voting with their feet after five years...so the government's answer to that is rather than looking at teaching and trying to solve the problem, is to say that any canary can come and teach in the classroom... so where are we going to get our highly educated workforce from if anybody going in to the teaching profession can go in whether they're qualified or not? I think it's an insult; it's an insult to the profession (Interviewee 7, NUT Member).

Another aspect of remodelling which was of concern to interviewees was performance management and pay. It was with much hostility and anger that many of the teachers interviewed talked of systems of performance-related pay and threshold

payments which have been used in English schools extensively since the Green Paper proposals (Richardson 1999). Eleven of the teachers interviewed stated that performance management issues were their main concern at work, or that 'performance-related pay' was the issue that they have felt most passionate and angry about. One interviewee commented that, 'there was really a very, very strong feeling against performance-related pay' (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary), whilst an NUT local representative argued that 'performance management' was one of 'the main issues that I find that most teachers are interested in' (interview 17, NUT Division Secretary). Another teacher was not alone in talking of performance pay as the trigger that politicised her in the workplace:

> Performance-related pay, I think that was the first thing - that teachers salaries were somehow going to be linked to the performance of pupils and things like that, which I just thought was absolutely outrageous (interview 30, NUT Local Vice-President, aged 31).

The rationale behind performance-related pay is to increase productivity and standards by implementing financially-based structures of motivation within teaching (for the school as a whole as well as the individual). On an individual basis, teachers are seen as instrumental-rational actors motivated by the monetary rewards of threshold payments, often linked to more demanding contracts of work (Merson 2000, 161). In this vein come more recent attempts to re-structure responsibility points within schools[40] (interview 30, NUT School Representative).

Alongside remodelling, National Curriculum testing (SATs) was the joint top concern for the teachers interviewed. Again, one third of interviewees discussed it as

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[40] i.e. the 'Recruitment Incentives Scheme' to review management allowances (also discussed by interview 26, NUT Division Secretary), and the introduction of 'fast track teachers' (interview 31, NUT School Representative).

their main concern at work, or as the issue that they have felt most passionate and angry about. It was no surprise that concerns over SATs were fresh in the minds of some interviewees considering the timing of interviews. Interviews commenced in January 2004, shortly after NUT members had been balloted to boycott SATs. Whilst the majority of those who voted did so in favour of a boycott, the turnout was not sufficient for it to take place (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary). Many teacher-activists saw this as a major disappointment:

> We raised the issue massively...and really, really hoped that we would win the campaign. There were lots of reasons why people didn't vote, but I think that we feel very much let down by the membership because we had worked so hard. And we still believe that the majority of teachers don't agree with SATs (interview 8, NUT Local Association Secretary).

The main concerns about SATs related to the workload and paperwork they produced, and moreover, to their educational value. One interviewee called the tests, 'clearly educationally unsound' (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary), whilst another put it rather more strongly stating, 'I think it amounts to child abuse what they do to seven year olds and eleven year olds, forcing them through exams' (interview 9, NUT School Representative). Interviewee 18 argued that 'all the educational evidence suggests that testing kids to the extent that we do in this country does have a negative effect on children' (interview 18, NUT School Representative). Even though concerns over SATs did cut across teaching sectors, the problems were more acute for those who taught in primary rather than secondary schools. One secondary school teacher for instance commented that, 'I support my colleagues in their fight against SATs but it's not necessarily something in secondary education that we are physically involved in' (interview 21, secondary school teacher and NUT School Representative).

Differences in key concerns by age and sex

When controlling for age in the survey sample the results were very similar. For teachers aged both '30 and under' and '31 and over' the greatest proportion of respondents said that 'work/life balance' was their 'most crucial' issue, followed by 'pay and progression', 'workload', and 'pupil behaviour' respectively. Around twice the proportion of teachers (7.3 per cent) aged '30 and under' did however say that 'SATs' was their 'most crucial' concern, compared to teachers aged '31 and over' (3.56 per cent). 'Workforce remodelling', on the other hand, was the 'most crucial' issue for around twice the proportion of teachers aged '31 and over' (4.18 per cent), compared to those aged '30 and under' (2.81 per cent). This result coincides with some interview accounts that argued that the modernisation of the profession, like any fundamental change in working conditions, would be an issue of greater concern for older teachers who had experienced education changing over time. A young secondary school teacher commented that:

> As an older teacher you must look at what your job has become and just think 'what's happening?' Whereas for me as a young teacher there's always been a lot of paperwork and there's always been a lot of other stuff to do, I've never known any different (Interview 42, NUT Member, aged 24).

Similarly, significantly more teachers aged '31 and over' said that 'pensions' was their 'most crucial' issue, (8.79 per cent compared to just 2.25 per cent of teachers aged '30 and under'). As mentioned previously, the concern over pensions arises in the context of a national multi-union campaign against New Labour's proposal to increase the retirement age of public sector workers, including teachers, from sixty to sixty-five in order to overcome the pension's deficit. This was one of the most high profile NUT campaigns launched during the period that interviews were conducted in

2004-5, and the issue of pensions featured heavily in the concerns expressed by interviewees:

> Pensions is huge at the moment. That's a big one because I'm half way through my career and would be looking possibly ...to be stepping down at fifty-five. With the current changes that are proposed I wouldn't be able to do that so that's unfair I think on someone who's actually given a lot of their time to the profession (Interview 34, NUT School Representative/ Local President, aged 42).

Whilst the young teachers interviewed expressed some awareness of pensions, the suggestion from the survey data that young teachers are less concerned with pension issues was substantiated by interviewees. Despite being an issue that will affect all age groups, a secondary school teacher and NUT Local Vice-President stated that 'pensions isn't going to get the new young members along to meetings because its pensions, it's just not' (interview 30, aged 31). Whilst she articulated her own concerns about pensions, another secondary school teacher shared this impression of her young colleagues:

> Because it's the longest off for us I think the government have been banking on us not to do anything because we think 'why should we worry yet, it's only a pension and we're in our twenties'. I don't think they do care as much as older staff do (interview 33, NUT Local Committee Member, aged 23).

Possible reasons as to why young teachers may be less concerned than older teachers were forwarded by a School Representative:

> They've created this culture amongst people coming in to teaching that you only taught for five years and then you went and did something else...I interview students for PGCE courses and they still see it as something they're going to do for a few years, the next five years. So in those circumstances it's quite difficult to get younger staff to understand the

> issues around pensions. I know at school we had a staff meeting...about what the implications were, especially for younger staff, and encouraged them to think about the long term future...but I don't think any of them were bothered in the end (interview 18, NUT School Representative, aged 52).

The sample of interviewees contained eight teachers aged 30 and under, and none of them stated pensions as their main concern, although two did consider the issue to be of importance. Six stated that issues of workload and work/life balance were their key concern. Of the remainder, one stated performance-related pay (interview 1), the other, equal opportunities, racism and homophobia in schools (interview 33).

Controlling for sex in the survey sample also revealed some notable differences in the issues that men and women considered 'most crucial' in teaching. 'Pensions' for example attracted double the proportion of male respondents compared to female. The greatest proportion of male teachers, however, regarded 'pay and progression' to be their 'most crucial' issue, with 'work/life balance' attracting the second largest proportion of responses. For women, 'pay and progression' came behind issues of 'work/life balance', and 'workload', whilst 'workload' was fourth highest for men behind 'pupil behaviour' and 'pensions'. The interviews, however, did not substantiate these trends any further, revealing no significant differences in the key concerns of male and female teachers.

Summary

This section has drawn upon both quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews to outline the key concerns that teachers have about their jobs in 2004-5. Despite noting some differences in emphasis between survey and interview data, it is clear that teachers articulate a wide range of concerns from traditional issues of pay and conditions to issues around equal opportunities, privatisation, and bullying. Of these

concerns, issues of workload stand out as central. Interview accounts help to stress how workload is not a distinct category of problems, but is intimately connected to the volume of paperwork, bureaucracy, and National Curriculum testing (SATs) teachers must carry out, and ultimately, is connected to their ability to strike an adequate work/life balance. Significantly, the data also points to the importance of current political and educational issues (like pensions and public sector modernisation) to teachers in their everyday jobs.

SECTION TWO

This section investigates more closely the nature of teachers' concerns at work. In order to do this I look more specifically at *what kind* of issues the issues raised in section one are, i.e. in what ways they can be classified or grouped together as particular sorts of problems for teachers. I argue that teachers' concerns can be categorised in three ways: 1) issues to do with the way in which the *culture* of education is changing; 2) issues to do with changes in teachers' *professional identity*, and; 3) issues to do with the changing nature of *professional relationships*. I stress that these three groups of issues resonate with the three structural components of what Habermas refers to as the 'lifeworld': culture (transmitted knowledge, values, traditions); personality (identity, skills, capacities, motives); and society (solidarities amongst groups) (Habermas 1987, 135-8).

Issues to do with the culture of education

To argue that concerns over the increase in teacher workload and bureaucracy are fundamentally connected to the 1988 Education Act and the introduction of measures like the National Curriculum, Standard Attainment Tests (SATs), league tables, and

Ofsted is uncontroversial and has been widely discussed in educational literature over the past decade (Ironside and Sefert 1995, 177-8; Tomlinson 2001, 106-71). So has the observation that these changes have resulted in a fundamental change in the climate, or 'culture', of state education (Ironside and Seifert 1995; Whitty 2002). What had once been treated as a 'public service' with the traditions and values connected to serving the public good, has gradually been eroded and reformulated along the lines of a marketised, competitive, and regulated environment (as discussed in chapter four).

During interviews, teachers shared their perspective on what it was like to work in this kind of environment. Many conveyed their experiences in terms of being immersed in a 'culture of testing, testing, testing' (interview 19, secondary school teacher). The overriding principle of 'teaching to the test' (interview 31, primary school teacher) accounted for 'obsessions with target-setting' (interview 21, secondary school teacher), the volume of paperwork and administration involved in teaching, and heavy workload. The idea that the primacy of 'results' produces changes at the level of *cultural* practices within schools is apt considering the terms teachers used to discuss these issues. A primary school head teacher, for example, talked about how the '*climate* in which we work in primary schools' is determined by 'tests, target-setting, league tables and Ofsted', which 'do an enormous amount of harm to primary school education' (interview 8). Another interviewee considered more explicitly how testing had become 'embedded' within her school, operating below the level of conscious application so that you 'can't question it' (interview 31). She argued that testing had become a 'way of being' and a way of 'talking' (i.e. a distinct culture) in the workplace:

> Teaching to the test has taken on a life of its own. It's a way of teaching, *it's a way of being*, of constantly talking about unaided writing and teaching to the test. *It's embedded.* And if your performance management and your career and your school and everything depend on it, then it's inevitable. *It's been made so that you can't question it* (Interviewee 31, primary school teacher and NUT School Representative).

The reference to performance management and pay here adds an important dimension. Linking teachers' pay and appraisal to the test results of pupils (in addition to league tables) reinforces the culture of testing and gives teachers little room to challenge their practices. As such 'Local Management of Schools' (LMS) and the HRM techniques involved in New Labour's remodelling, support the day-to-day reproduction of a culture of testing within schools.

It is this culture of 'teaching to the test', which accounts not only for workload and paperwork concerns, but for teachers frustrations around SATs. SATs are deemed 'educationally unsound' (interview 11, secondary assistant head teacher) for example because they:

> Change the education that we've provided for those children because they're not getting a very balanced curriculum when we've got to teach to tests to gets results from them (interview 10, supply teacher and NUT Division Secretary).

Concerns around workload, bureaucracy, SATs and Ofsted are, therefore, predominately issues related to the changing culture of education post-1988; with the public service tradition and values of professional freedom giving way to a results-based culture of target setting, testing and inspection.

Teachers concerns about the privatisation of education also took a cultural turn in interviews. Since the 1988 Education Act, questions have been raised about the validity of fostering a 'quasi-market' culture in education (Whitty 2002, 11). It

was feared by some educationalists, for example, that values of competition and consumerism expressed in the post-1988 system, would shape the kind of knowledge transmitted in the classroom. Indicatively, Whitty's research pointed towards a 'hidden curriculum' of 'marketised relations' within schools in the 1990s, where market values were transmitted even without overt commercial manipulation of the curriculum (Whitty 2002, 97). The kind of concerns that teachers expressed regarding Academies and the use of PFI/PPP take on a similar complexion, although worries about the potential for more overt manipulation resurface. As discussed in chapter four, Academy schools involve a private sponsor who funds up to twenty per cent of the school whilst the rest comes from the government. In return for funding, the private sponsor adopts a lead role in running the school and elects a 'specialist status' in line with its expertise. As such, the interests of the sponsor shape the particular culture of the school, something encouraged by Blair in the pursuit of diversity and choice for parents (DfES 2005). NUT sources state for example that The Kings Academy in Middlesborough (sponsored by Christian philanthropist, Sir Peter Vardy) teaches 'biblical creationism' and 'favours Christian teachers' (NUT 2004a, 6), whilst the Business Academy, Bexley, reserves every Friday for business and enterprise studies and has a stock exchange and trading floor (NUT 2004a, 10). Essentially, for critics of privatisation, the involvement of private business has the potential to commercialise the kind of knowledge transmitted in schools and to replace traditions of public service with those of profit-orientated business. These issues, which essentially come down to a struggle over the culture and values of schools, were the main concerns for those teachers interviewed who saw privatisation as a key problem:

> I've seen children get these planners, they're provided free in North Somerset, and on the planners was a lot of advertising for McDonalds and Coca Cola and Nike trainers... And that's just the thin edge of privatisation. The thick edge of privatisation is when we've seen whole school education authorities handed over to private companies like Capita and Nord Anglia whose whole aim is to run education and to run it to make loads of profit. Although we're fighting these individual campaigns we see it as part of a bigger project to defend state education and keep it under state control and not to make it for profit (Interviewee 19, secondary teacher and NUT Division Secretary).

In a similar sense, workforce remodelling (i.e. modernisation) also came across as a cultural issue for teachers. This is because remodelling aims to bring the culture of a private sector workplace into the public sector. Recent government documents for example make no secret of the fact that what is aimed for in the policy of modernisation is a change in the *culture* of educational services; again in terms of an erosion of the tradition of public service which is perceived to be inefficient and unproductive. Commenting on the 1998 Green paper, Merson states that the aim of remodelling the teacher workforce lies in:

> Making its *culture*, structure, rewards and conditions congruent with other professions in a modern economy (156)...the assumption is that teachers are not working hard enough, their work is not focused, they are not keeping up (158)...like many modernisation proposals, their justification lies in the interpretation of past practices being dismissed as part of a *cultural aberration* (159) (Merson 2000, 156-9, my italics).

The impression on the part of government, that teachers are 'not working hard enough', was one which was picked up on in interviews. One teacher challenged, for example, the 'emphasis put on catching teachers out...on teachers slacking and not doing their jobs properly' (interview 1, secondary school teacher). For the government, ridding education of these cultural and motivational 'problems'

necessitates 'modernising' the practices of teachers so that their workplaces operate more like private businesses. As discussed in chapter four, the argument here is that measures like performance management and pay, local management and independence of schools, and diversity, choice and competition, will shift education from being an input (resource based) service, to an output (standards and results based) service, gaining efficiency improvements along the way (Finlayson 2003a). Gone is the tradition in which all employees are paid the same rate for the same job (seen to encourage laziness and complacency), gone are payments for responsibility rather than performance (seen to discourage the talented and ambitious), and in come threshold and reward payments, higher pay for those who deliver on results, and fast-track contracts for the ambitious (DfEE 1998). Again, those responsible for these initiatives stress how it is change *at the level of culture* which is desired; a change which seeks to erode and reformulate the public sector tradition:

> The main reason why the system has rewarded experience and responsibility but not performance is *cultural*. Heads and teachers have been more reluctant than comparable groups to distinguish the performance of some teachers from others (DfEE 2001, 32, quoted in Merson 2000, 159, my italics).

Issues around professional identity

Fostering the culture of private business in education also raises a distinct set of issues around teachers' professional identity: their motives, skills, qualifications and capacities. As one interviewee noted, private business takes a very different approach to its labour force compared with public service. The emphasis is upon cheap and flexible labour:

> Private industry will only go into the public sector if the labour in that sector is cheap and flexible and easily malleable. So that's the nature of the offensive against

> education - to cheapen labour, to make it more flexible and to control it (Interviewee 16, NUT Division Secretary).

It was argued by interviewee 16 that the aim of making public sector labour cheap and flexible was also at the root of the 'pensions' issue. Moreover, however, it relates to the concern that remodelling will permit unqualified teaching assistants to take whole classes. Many teachers argued that this move would devalue their professional status and cheapen labour in the education sector. For some it amounted to a process of 'deskilling':

> If you look around, a lot of industrial disputes now revolve around this issue of deskilling and trying to get people to work for cheaper than they have in the past and it's exactly the same within teaching. I mean classroom assistants...I know in some schools they're employing what they call 'cover supervisors'...they're paid £12,000 a year whereas a teacher is paid £22,000. And you think, well that's just the thin end of the wedge (interviewee 18, NUT School Representative).
>
> What they're saying is that education is changing massively and you don't actually need a skilled teacher in a classroom anymore because the nature of technology and communication means that knowledge can be accessed from all sorts of areas. So all you need is someone to facilitate that, it could be anyone. It goes way back to the Luddite position...deskilling the craft of the worker (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary).

These changes in the professional capacities of teachers concur with educational literature which argues that over the last two decades teachers have moved from being creative, autonomous, 'professionals' to 'technicians' delivering a prescribed curriculum (Tomlinson 2001, 61). The 'competence' and 'standards' based training of the recently established government-led 'Teacher Training Agency' (TTA) is seen to reinforce this changing image of teacher professionalism (Whitty 2002, 66). Even the workload agreement, welcomed in its aim to reduce workload and bureaucracy,

seems to increasingly narrow teachers' tasks. This has been seen by some critics as undermining teachers' ability to develop important pastoral skills and parts of the job that lead to enjoyment and satisfaction (Merson 2000, 161). This narrowing of 'professional' tasks accounts for the concerns that some of the teachers interviewed had about the workload agreement:

> I feel that they are almost pushing it too hard so that you feel guilty when you do extra...things like displays and extra time spent on that. Well I enjoy doing my displays, that for me is a nice part of teaching and if they told me 'no, that affects your working hours' then I wouldn't like that (interview 35, middle school teacher and NUT Member).

Concerns about remodelling, classroom assistants and the workload agreement are therefore issues connected with changes in the professional identity of teachers. These changes consist in a narrowing of professional capacities, a devaluing of professional status, and a deskilling of professional roles. It is no surprise, then, that these kinds of themes have occupied educational literature on the teaching profession for well over the past decade (Ironside and Seifert 1995; Tomlinson 2001; Whitty 2002).

Issues relating to the changing nature of professional relationships

Issues around the reshaping of professional identity are also raised by the 'rational actor' subtext of workforce remodelling. This subtext constructs the teacher-professional as a utility-maximising individual motivated by financial incentives, and importantly to note, in competition with other colleagues for these rewards. This exerts new pressure on teachers to 'have to do as well as my colleague who is teaching' (interview 21, secondary school teacher). It was noted by some interviewees that this kind of environment also pitches 'one school against another'

in the pursuit of pupils and resources (interview 19, secondary school teacher) and creates 'competition amongst schools' (interview 21, secondary school teacher).

The system of incentive and reward is supported, as in the private sector, by HRM techniques like performance management. The way in which this system is rooted at school-level (for example, it is your senior manager who decides whether to put you through the threshold), also initiates changes in the relationship between teachers and managers, introducing an important power differential (Ironside and Seifert 1995). This power dynamic was described by one teacher, who talked of 'the senior management team' having a separate 'agenda' which involved them:

> Having all the information that they don't want to share, and having the power to make decisions they don't want to share, and having the desire to make decisions which are better for the employers (interview 7, NUT Member).

Whilst the teachers interviewed did not explicitly connect remodelling with struggles between staff and senior managers, they did often relate their concerns over harassment and bullying to the power that the managers in school had over them (interviews 21, 7, 9). This led in some circumstances to what teachers described as an atmosphere of 'fear' and hostility within schools (interview 21, secondary school teacher).

Relationships between schools, and between staff, therefore are reformulated in important ways by New Labour's approach to education; for example, by continuing the competition first introduced by league tables and LMS, by setting teachers against one another in the pursuit of locally administered rewards, and by setting teachers against senior managers. Grouped together, what these moves really represent is an *individualisation* of the professional role of teachers (Blackmore 1990). The potential result of this situation has been discussed in educational

literature in two main ways: firstly, in terms of eroding traditions of 'collegiality' between teachers and schools, which was characteristic of the public sector tradition (Tomlinson 2001, 108); secondly, in terms of reshaping teacher professionalism away from the 'old collectivist' towards the 'new entrepreneur' (Mac an Ghaill 1992). What is significant about the latter image of teacher professionalism is that rather than professional solidarity, it involves what Merson aptly calls 'competitive individualism' (Merson 2000, 158-9), which lends an entirely different complexion to professional relationships and actually erodes traditional group ties. This 'new' form of professional identity was embraced by interviewee 28 who was currently on a management fast-track. He argued that changes initiated under remodelling would enhance teacher professionalism for the twenty first century. Berating his union's opposition to the workload agreement, he stated; 'I see the workload agreement as something we should be pushing for and something that can make teachers' lives easier' (interview 28, secondary school teacher and NUT Member). On the whole, however, the teachers interviewed talked of the latest changes in education as devaluing teachers' professionalism and creating problems for professional relationships at work.

Summary

This section has explored the nature of teachers' key concerns and issues at work in 2004-5. It has argued that these issues are of three interrelated types: 1) issues to do with changes in educational *culture* (the type of traditions, values and knowledge transmitted in education); 2) issues to do with changes in teachers' *professional identity* (the skills, capacities, motives and qualifications of teachers) and; 3) issues to do with changes in *professional relationships* (the nature of solidarities between

schools and teachers). These three strands resonate with the three structural components of what Habermas refers to as the 'lifeworld' (i.e. culture, personality, and society) (Habermas 1987, 135-8). This section has shown how each of these aspects of the socio-cultural lifeworld – the 'culture' of education, the professional identity ('personality') of teachers, and nature of professional solidarities ('society'), have been eroded and reformulated since 1988, generating concerns which arise specifically at the level of social integration in teachers' workplaces. Teachers' workplace concerns therefore continue to resonate with the issues that Habermas related to the 'juridification of schools' back in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Vol. 2, 1987, 371-2). Here he states:

> Socialisation in schools is broken up into a mosaic of...administrative acts...This has to endanger the pedagogical freedom and initiative of the teacher. The compulsion toward litigation-proof certainty of grades and the over-regulation of the curriculum lead to such phenomena as depersonalisation, inhibition of innovation, breakdown of responsibility, immobility and so forth (Habermas 1987, 371-2).

Whether the problems expressed by teachers in interview can, however, be usefully and validly understood in terms of a process of 'colonisation' is discussed in the last section.

SECTION THREE

This section explores in more detail the interview accounts of teachers, looking at their opinions on the source of key concerns and examining the nature of discourses around conflict and struggle. I argue that both 'what they say' on these subjects, and 'the ways in which they say it', are suggestive of 'boundary conflicts' within schools. These kinds of conflicts surround the growth of the 'system' (i.e. the state and the

economy) into the 'lifeworld' (the school/workplace); something akin to the system 'overstepping' its mark and being subjected to moral critique by those affected. Pulling the arguments of the chapter together, it is argued that teachers' accounts of the nature of conflict and the source of key concerns are indicative of a process which can be usefully understood as a colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work'.

The source of key issues

Section two demonstrated that the key concerns expressed by teachers about their jobs sprung from issues of a particular type; issues which arise at the level of social integration because they come about when existing forms of culture (educational culture), personality (professional identity) and society (professional solidarities) within schools are broken down over a period of time (specifically, since 1988) and become gradually reformulated with problematic consequences.

During interviews, teachers argued overwhelmingly that the source of these concerns was government policy. The majority of teachers for example supported the idea that 'most of the issues are government caused' (interview 13, NUT Member), with 'just loads and loads of government legislation and new initiatives that overload people' (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary). It is my contention that the ways in which teachers talked in interviews about conflict and struggle with the government were suggestive of 'boundary conflicts' within schools (i.e. conflicts regarding where the line should be drawn between system and lifeworld) (Habermas 1996b, 363). For example, teachers talked in particular about the way in which government actions increasingly imposed upon their workplace through constant political interference, or as interviewee 36 put it, 'things coming down from above' (interview 36, NUT Member). There was a general feeling that 'the main problem is initiative overload'

(interview 27, NUT Division Secretary), with new strategies attempting to change the way in which teachers work and to reorganise their workplace on a regular basis. Teachers talked not only of the changes brought in by government policy, but moreover of the constant nature of change and the 'relentless number of initiatives that come out of government' (interview 6, NUT National Executive Member).

> I think government policies must drive it, more than that in a way is the constant change in government policies so that every year people seem to have to reinvent what they're doing (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary).
>
> The government want to change all that is going on, they want to change the curriculum on a regular basis so they never seem to let the teachers settle into some kind of routine (interview 10, NUT Division Secretary).

This environment of 'constant change' was seen by some not only as leading to an increase in workload and paperwork, but as undermining a teacher's ability to implement any particular strategy:

> Key stage strategy at the moment seems to have created a huge amount of work and I just know that in two or three years time it's going to be superseded by something else, and that all the work that we've done for this will go out the window...five or six years ago there was a huge push for this curriculum initiative in science departments...I spent time training staff and filling out more paperwork and now it has just sort of slowly fizzled out and disappeared, like they all seem to do (interview 36, middle school teacher and NUT Member).

The feeling that the government constantly oversteps its mark and interferes with the process of teaching was reflected in the terms that teachers used to discuss their relationship with the government. They talked of feeling 'battered' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary), of 'constantly feeling like you've got to fight off all these different attacks' (interview 30, NUT School Representative), of teachers 'having all

these things loaded on them...thrown at them' (interview 27, NUT Division Secretary), of the fact that 'the dictates that come from government wear people down' (interview 6, NUT National Executive Member) and that 'it would just be nice to be left alone for a few years...to just get on with it' (interview 36, NUT Member). The articulation of 'boundary conflicts', however, came on many different levels. The idea that the system was overstepping its mark into the lifeworld, for example, was reflected in both overtly politicised accounts of conflict and in the more diffuse 'gut feelings' about why conflict existed.

Discourses around conflict and struggle

In terms of politicised discourses, a number of interviewees put the constant interference of the government down to a political and economic agenda which was being imposed upon education. It was this 'overspill' of actions orientated to economic and political ends (i.e. actions mediated by money and power) which was responsible, in their view, for causing the kind of problems for teachers which were discussed in sections one and two. Some teachers talked for example about how education was being used by the government to further its political aims and hold on to power. One interviewee stated that, 'it's just naive for people to think that education isn't a political vehicle, that's what it's there for, it's there for governments to do with what they wish' (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary). Other interviewees talked of the way in which education policies were devoid of principles (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary), or seemed to change with the Education Secretary in office:

> It just seems to be one strategy after another and none of them seems to be really followed through and it just seems to

> depend on who is the Education Secretary at the time (interview 36, middle school teacher and NUT Member).

Other interviewees stressed how they felt that the reasons for government interference were 'all about economics' (interview 34, NUT School Representative). One interviewee who employed an overtly politicised discourse of conflict, talked about a government 'offensive against education' which was about 'shifting resources out of the public sector into the private sector' and making 'labour cheap and flexible' (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary). Others talked in terms of a more straightforward agenda of cost-cutting in the public sector, arguing that 'they want staff teaching in schools for cheap' (interview 30, NUT School Representative). This was seen to lead to strategies which intensify the work of teachers and create problems around workload and inspection. Interviewee 1, for example, argued that, 'the government aren't prepared to put any money in to sort things out; it's much cheaper for them to work teachers harder and get more out of them for less money' (Interview 1, NUT Member). This viewpoint was shared by interviewee 9, who saw the government as trying to bypass investment in education by reorganising the way in which schools operate:

> The way that they *(the government)* are raising standards is by making teachers work harder, not by investing money, which is the most obvious thing to do. And because they are making teachers work harder they also have to police that, so that means that Ofsted has become a lot stricter, it means managers have become stricter and there's one initiative after another (interviewee 9, secondary school teacher and NUT School Representative).

Many interviewees, however, did not employ these overtly politicised discourses of the conflict between teachers and the government. This is not to say that the ways in which they articulated conflict were not equally as suggestive of 'boundary

conflicts'. In this respect, the majority of interviewees articulated a kind of 'clash of logic' between teachers and the government, or a 'lack of understanding about how education works' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary), which really lent animation to the idea of system/lifeworld conflicts. In some ways, it was these accounts rather than the overtly politicised ones, which brought to life system/lifeworld conflicts and expressed them in an everyday language which seemed to capture their essence in the present educational context.

Several interviewees suggested, for example, that the government based their actions upon a different kind of logic to that employed by teachers. One interviewee commented that she first became politically active in the union when the Thatcher Government took away school milk because this action 'set the tone that education stopped being about the whole child' (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary). Instead, the government's view of education seemed to some to become related to a wholly different 'philosophy' which was odds with their own:

> The philosophy *(of the government)* is that you need to have data, it's all about data. You need to have data so that you can check up and put the emphasis on catching teachers out...and data so parents can check where to send their kids and league tables and so on...The alternative philosophy is putting emphasis far more on education and the experience that students have from school rather than to be concentrating all the time on SATs results and CATs results and statistics and exams. To actually concentrate on the joy of education, the sense of achievement students can have, the knowledge they can have, and the positive experience that can come out of being at school, rather than it all being about whether they have met their targets and whether they understand the mark scheme (interview 1, secondary school teacher and NUT Member).

This account makes explicit not only a divergence in philosophy, but a divergence in the type of knowledge prioritised by the government compared to teachers. This was

a running theme throughout the interviews where teachers expressed hostility and anger over the way in which the government were 'hell bent on target setting' (interview 2) and prioritised statistical, systematised knowledge over the broader, more 'practical knowledge' (Wainwright 2003, 18-21), held by teacher professionals. One interviewee commented for example that 'we've had to give more and more results and they have to be inputted into some kind of system' and that 'it's become that the only way to monitor and check is to look at statistics' (interview 21, NUT School Representative). He was also very clear about that fact that he is 'not sure it's the right way for me personally, and for a lot of people I work with' (interview 21, NUT School Representative).

Another interviewee argued that increasingly knowledge about education becomes produced 'via league tables and percentage tables which don't tell you the whole picture' (Interviewee 34, NUT School Representative). Furthermore, it transmits to pupils a partial and obscured image of achievement in which they 'think I'm a level four in maths, and you think, no actually, you're a human being' (interview 37, NUT Member). Interviewee 2 discussed the 'inappropriateness' of equating statistical knowledge with 'proof' in educational contexts:

> Children who have got profound and multiple learning difficulties - then there's no way that some of those children could reach the targets that the government wanted. But the government somehow thinks that if it can number-crunch, if it can target-set, then that proves something and it doesn't actually prove anything (Interviewee 2, secondary school teacher and NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member).

The approach to education that teachers discuss in relation to the government is therefore rooted essentially in a 'technical' form of knowledge (or a 'technical rationality') which prioritises a 'results-based' measure of productivity and controls

the process of production through various 'statistics-based' calculations. Applying this technical approach was equated by some teachers to the 'political theories and political ideology that are dominating the day' (interview 37, NUT Member). Some interviewees expressed their desire to challenge this kind of logic or 'philosophy' through involvement in the NUT. Furthermore, discourses around struggle were essentially moral. They felt as teachers that they had to 'monitor the impact that the policies from the government have on children' (interview 22, NUT National Executive Member), and put forward alternative ways of doing things which are '*right* for young people' (interview 37, NUT Member) and which are 'what I see as the *right* education policies' (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary). The moral dimension of critique was discussed explicitly in one interview, where the teacher argued that her union activism stemmed from her 'moral and philosophical outlook':

> I have quite a deep moral and philosophical outlook on life and I will judge issues by my moral-philosophical attitudes and if I feel something is wrong I will always want to get involved with doing something about it (interview 6, special needs teacher and NUT National Executive Member).

Interviewee 37 also argued that her motivation for being politically active was rooted in a kind of moral defence of teachers' outlook on education against the obscurities generated by political interference:

> It's about trying to remove education in some respects from the political court and actually say that 'no, there are some things which we know about how human beings learn, how they behave with one another, the kind of things that work in helping young people get it right', rather than just being at the whim of whoever seems to be trying to win a vote (interview 37, teacher in a pupil referral unit and NUT Member).

Summary

This section has been crucial in drawing together the various arguments of the chapter. Interview accounts have been used to establish that the majority of teachers saw government policy as the source of their key concerns, and moreover, the constant interference of government actions in their workplace. I have argued that the type of conflict they engage in with the government is suggestive of 'boundary conflicts', i.e. conflicts over where the line should be drawn between system and lifeworld. Teachers articulated 'boundary conflicts' on many levels. On the one hand, through overtly politicised and moralised discourses highlighting the imposition of actions orientated to political and economic ends (i.e. actions mediated by money and power); on the other hand, through discourses highlighting a 'clash of logic' between teachers and the government. In this respect, teachers articulated a much more 'communicatively' rational approach to education; an approach concerned with the ethics of teaching, of taking account of the 'whole child', and of using broad measures to assess the achievement of 'human beings'. This approach was discussed in contrast to the selective and 'technical' rationality demonstrated by government policy, which tended to mould educational strategies to political-economic ends, orientate actions to input-output calculations, and instil narrow, statistical measures of achievement.

CONCLUSION

Chapter four discussed the ways in which the bureaucratisation and marketisation of education since the late 1980s could be understood as a process of colonisation. What was missing from this was an account of how this process related to problems and issues experienced by teachers in their daily jobs. This chapter has sought to fill

this gap by outlining and analysing the key concerns of teachers involved in the research. It has been argued using quantitative survey data and in-depth qualitative interviews, that teachers have a wide-range of concerns regarding their jobs in state education 2004-5. Many of these concerns surround the level of bureaucracy, paperwork and general workload related to the kind of educational system put in place post-1988; a system of targets, testing and inspection. Recent political issues around pensions and workforce remodelling (modernisation), were, however also high on the agenda for teachers.

When explored in more detail, section two put forward the argument that the concerns of teachers were of a particular type, and revolved around the ways in which aspects of the 'lifeworld' within schools, relating to educational culture, professional identity, and professional solidarities, were being broken down and reformulated post-1988. As such, they were issues which arose at the level of social integration in teachers' workplaces. Section three went on to demonstrate that these problems, or disruptions, in social integration were seen by teachers to be caused mainly by government policy and the way in which government actions constantly overstepped their mark and interfered with the process of teaching. These accounts were suggestive therefore of 'boundary conflicts' between the system (state and economy) and the lifeworld (school/workplace). Some interviewees discussed these 'boundary conflicts' in overtly politicised discourses which highlighted the imposition of political and economic agendas; others talked more in terms of a 'clash of logic' between teachers and the government, which accurately articulated the different forms of rationality characteristic of system and lifeworld. In some ways it was these discourses, highlighting diverging philosophical approaches and differences in forms of knowledge, which really brought to life the idea of 'boundary

conflicts' in the present educational context by expressing them in an everyday language. Colonisation, however, is not just the existence of this 'clash of logic'. It is a process which erodes existing lifeworld structures of culture, personality and society in a way which creates problems for social integration and draws forth moral critique. This chapter has established the existence of a process of exactly this sort, rooted firmly in the data provided by teachers themselves.

CHAPTER SIX

COLONISATION AND TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION: ASSESSING TEACHER RESPONSE

INTRODUCTION

Colonisation has been explored so far in terms of a series of strains introduced into teachers' workplaces by various government education policies since 1988. This chapter explores how teachers as trade union members have responded to these strains and grievances. In order to assess the reaction of teachers in the NUT to the process that I have characterised as the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work', the analysis in this chapter centres on deducing current levels of mobilisation within the NUT. I draw again upon data from the 2004 LRD survey 'NUT Membership Participation', as well as qualitative interviews with NUT members.

The chapter consists of three sections. Section one presents what I term the 'participation paradox' facing the NUT in 2004-5. It also situates analysis within a wider context of assumptions, reflecting upon the normative and historical nature of issues around participation and clarifying in exactly what terms it is valid to talk about a 'problem' with mobilisation. Section two combines statistical and qualitative analyses on the extent of membership participation in the NUT, classifying participation into four categories: i. attendance at meetings; ii. active engagement with union information/communications; iii. participation in union voting activities; and, iv. involvement in official roles/campaigning. Section three explores patterns of mobilisation by looking at the relationship between, i. sex and participation; ii. age/ generation and participation; and iii. sex, age and participation. I conclude by summarising the main findings.

SECTION ONE: THE PARTICIPATION PARADOX

The high number of grievances and concerns expressed by teachers raises the expectation of a high level of union mobilisation in 2004-5. Indeed, Habermas's NSM theory leads to this kind of connection between the 'strains' produced by a process of colonisation and activism in social movements (Habermas 1981). Certainly levels of union membership amongst teachers concur with these expectations, with teachers belonging to unions 'more both absolutely and relatively than any other single profession, occupation or work group in the UK' (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 161). Union membership amongst teachers is divided between the three[41] main unions for classroom teachers (as discussed in chapter two): the *Association of Teachers and Lecturers* (ATL), the *National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers* (NASUWT), and the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT), which has been my focus. Each has claimed growing membership in recent years. The NUT for example has continued to increase its membership since the early 1990s, despite a dip in numbers throughout the 1980s. This dip is the likely after-effect of the teacher strikes of 1984-7 and the anti-trade union legislation that followed (Barber 1992, 64) (Figure 6.1).

[41] A fourth teacher union called the *Professional Association of Teachers* (PAT) also exists, but views itself more as a professional society and has a 'no strike' mandate.

Figure 6.1
Total number of paid-up NUT members, at four yearly intervals from 1979

Year	Number of members contributing to the NUT General Fund
1979	260,727
1983	226,227
1987	195,126
1991	178,112
1995	192,009
1999	228,438
2003	267,671

Source of statistics: *NUT Annual Returns to the Certification Officer*[42], Certification Office: London.

This growth in membership was mentioned on a number of occasions in interviews with NUT members. The general feeling was that whilst recruitment is 'extremely competitive' (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer), the NUT were 'very successful at bringing new members in' (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary). One Regional Officer stated for instance that, 'it's an increasing membership, which has increased over a number of years and that is quite unusual in the trade union movement as a whole' (interview 4). Indeed, the NUT's growing membership does seemingly go against the well-documented decline in trade union density[43] since 1979 (Brook 2002; Disney, et al. 1998). Although, the latest research indicates that rates of membership are beginning to stabilise, and a slight increase in employee union density of 0.1 per cent was recorded between autumn 2002 and 2003 (Palmer, et al.

[42] Note, Annual Returns state the 'membership total' for a trade union, however, CO figures are thought to suffer from a degree of inflation (Disney, et al. 1998, 3). I have therefore used the figure relating to 'number of members contributing to the general fund' instead. This figure includes only those paying membership subscriptions and therefore gives a more accurate picture, as well as being closer to figures published elsewhere, such as the Annual TUC Returns.

[43] Trade union density is the proportion of all people in employment who are members of trade unions.

2003)[44]. The sustained growth of the NUT is partly because as a public sector, white-collar union it has been less affected by changes relating to the decline of manufacturing industries and issues around union recognition in the private sector (Disney, et al. 1998; Lawrence 1994). In the UK for example, less than one in five private sector employees are union members, compared with nearly three in five public sector employees (Palmer, et al. 2004, 1). This is not to say however that the political context of the 1980s failed to have a profound affect on teacher unionism (Barber 1992; Seifert 1987), creating a more hostile environment through measures like the removal of national negotiating rights over pay[45] (issues that were discussed historically in chapter two). Teacher unions have therefore also been subject to restrictions and have managed to recover numbers in the last fifteen years in spite of this.

It has been suggested in educational literature that the high level of union membership amongst teachers reflects the high level of concerns and grievances teachers have experienced at work since 1988. This would certainly concur with the myriad of concerns expressed by teachers in the previous chapter. Ironside and Seifert, for example, argue that high levels can be put down to the great 'potential for conflict' within schools, especially since the introduction of LMS and HRM in the early 1990s, which reformulated the relationship between staff and senior managers as one ridden with clashes of interest and therefore made industrial relations an

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[44] Palmer, et al. report for the Department of Trade and Industry on trade union membership 2003. In this report they claim that the rate of union membership remained unchanged between 2002 and 2003 at 26.6 per cent of all people in employment, whilst employee trade union density increased from 29.2 per cent in 2002 to 29.3 per cent in 2003. This increase was put down to a growth in the number of public sector employees (Palmer, et al. 2003, 1).

[45] Following the teacher strikes of 1984-7, the Conservative Government introduced the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act (2 March 1987). This Act legislated out of existence the Burnham Committees, on which the NUT had been represented in national pay negotiations since 1918 (Seifert 1987, 250).

essential component of teachers' workplaces (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 161-2). As a result, interviewees talked of a situation in which 'teachers are one of the more unionised professions' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary) and 'there would be very few people in a school who aren't union members' (interview 13, NUT Member). Teachers tended to talk overwhelming about how union membership was essential in their sector of employment, offering legal protection and support which they would be 'silly' and 'foolish' (interview 42, NUT Member) not to have in the current climate. This climate was viewed as one in which teachers are particularly 'vulnerable' workers (interview 38, NUT Member), not only because of the power and role of senior school management (interview 21, NUT School Representative), but because of what was termed the 'compensation culture' (interview 39, NUT Member) or the 'culture of blame' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary) in education. Responsibility over children opens up a legal nexus of possible accusations that teachers feel under threat from at all times; from pupils, from parents, and from managers.

Whatever their level of union activism, all of the teachers interviewed admitted therefore that, 'for my own safety I had to join a union' (interview 32, NUT Member). Furthermore, one young teacher thought that it was 'compulsory' for teachers to join a union due to the emphasis placed upon workplace 'insurance' during her PGCE[46] course. She stated that, 'we all discussed it and said that we had to join a union' (interview 44, aged 25). This was a view compounded by a Division Secretary who argued that, 'a lot of our members think that you have to be in a union if you're a teacher because if you get an accusation you need the insurance of being in a union' (interview 20). The necessity of legal protection was seen by interviewees

[46] PGCE stands for 'Postgraduate Certificate of Education' and is a one year course leading to 'qualified teacher status' in the UK.

to account for the particularly high levels of union membership amongst teachers compared to other sectors of workers; as one interviewee suggested, 'I don't think every profession would need that same insurance policy in quite the same way' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary). The high conflict potential within schools (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 161-2), and the need for protection in the workplace, therefore combines to account for high levels of union membership amongst classroom teachers.

The prevailing issue affecting other sectors - that of declining trade union membership - is therefore clearly not the focus for the NUT. In recent years, however, the NUT have expressed a 'problem' with mobilising their membership around workplace grievances, with the majority of members not participating actively in union affairs. Several interviewees highlighted these issues around membership participation:

> Recruitment is good. We've increased our membership year upon year and I think it's up five per cent again this year, so recruitment is good. It's just getting those people to translate from joining to becoming more active (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary).

> I think in a lot of organisations and political parties you find the same thing – that membership turnout is very low, that people are members but they're not actively involved (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member)

> It's an increasing membership...In terms of participation rates it's quite poor...the membership is effectively not participating in democracy and those members are therefore not expressing a view (interview 4, NUT Regional Officer).

The 'problem' for the NUT therefore amounts to something of a 'participation paradox': whilst levels of union membership continue to grow so does the problem

of membership non-participation. As one interviewee put it, 'the membership has increased but clearly the level of activity is not increasing' (interview 43, NUT Member). Statements on the 'problem' of political participation in any context are, however, connected to a wider set of assumptions that need to be made explicit.

Firstly, the issue of membership non-participation or 'membership apathy' as it is sometimes referred to in the literature (Franzway 2000; Lipset 1954; Roy 1968), is not a new one, either for trade unions or academic reflection. Indeed, many have been keen to point out that mass non-participation in union affairs is the *norm* in trade unions. In 1954 S.M Lipset made the following observation, which is often quoted in research seeking to address the 'problem' of membership participation (see Lawrence 1994, 13; Roy 1968, 47):

> Even in trade unions and professional associations which affect the individual's occupational role vitally, such membership apathy is the usual state of affairs in the absence of severe organisational crisis (Lipset 1954, quoted in Roy 1968, 47 in footnote).

This view is often shared by those looking at political participation more widely. Dahl, for example, argues that considering the costs of participation in political groups and parties, the puzzling question is not why people *do not* participate, but, on the contrary, why people *do* (Dahl 1961) (see also Olson 1965). These academic observations have not, however, prevented concerns being raised over membership participation. In February 2004, the NUT formed a 'Union Democracy Working Party' (UDWP) to discuss new ways of increasing members' participation. This measure followed the 'Union Democracy' resolution agreed by Conference in 2003, which stated that:

> Conference believes that it is important for the future of the Union that more members become involved in its activities

> and its decision-making...Conference urges the National Executive to address democracy issues at each level of union organisation, national, regional, local and at school levels and to consider ways in which the staff of the Union contribute to membership participation within the Union (NUT 2003b)

The UDWP reported back to Conference in 2005 with its recommendations and stressed the critical importance of membership participation for the future existence of the union. The 'problem' of non-participation was, therefore, both immediate and central to the NUT in 2004-5.

Concerns of this nature were not, however, 'new' for the union at this time. Roy's (1968) study of participation in the NUT reveals anxiety over the issue back in the 1950s and 1960s. Using historical records from Local Association minute books, he concluded that there had been a 'steady decline' in attendance at NUT meetings and events from the 1870s to the 1960s, signalling a fall in active involvement. Roy also cites the 1955 General Secretary address to NUT Annual Conference:

> When I became General Secretary of the NUT, I was determined that so far as national duties would allow, my colleagues and I would make ourselves accessible. Like our officers and executive members, we would go to the members. But even when we visit local and county associations we cannot get in touch with members unless they are prepared to come to meetings. What is the effect of this apathy? First, members are cut off from their representatives and do not know what is being done on their behalf. Secondly, inactive members have no part in influencing, guiding or controlling the policy of the union...Thirdly, lethargy in the membership results in officials and representatives being chosen from only a part of the membership (NUT General Secretary 1955, quoted in Roy 1968, 46).

Similarly, in Manzer's examination of NUT membership participation in 1970, he estimated that 75 per cent of members consistently failed to attend general meetings of the NUT Local Associations (Manzer 1970, 31). The issue of membership

participation can be traced back further than this, however, to the editorial opening of *The Schoolmaster*[47] in 1872:

> There must be no apathy. Every member must actively fulfil his or her share of the duties which membership involves. (Editorial: 'Setting out the vision of the NUT', *The Schoolmaster*, March 30 1872, 137).

If the non-participation of members in trade unions is the norm, as Lipset suggested, the NUT clearly set out against it and sought instead to instil an expectation of active involvement. This expectation essentially stems from the democratic tradition of the NUT, which has been recorded in the history books as a union priding itself on democratic organisation (Manzer 1970, 49). This same pride was found amongst interviewees, one teacher stating that the NUT was 'the most democratic union, the union where membership can shape policy at Conference' (interview 9, NUT School Representative).

The NUT Annual Conference is at the forefront of the democratic organisational structure because it is where locally elected representatives meet to debate and decide upon national union policy. In order to uphold this democratic structure however, members have to exhibit some level of active involvement on a local level by attending meetings, debating motions, and voting for their local and national representatives. Additionally, some members are required to take on positions of leadership and responsibility at each of these levels, from School Representative (the 'shop steward' equivalent), to Division/Local Association Committee roles, and National Executive duties (figure 6.2).

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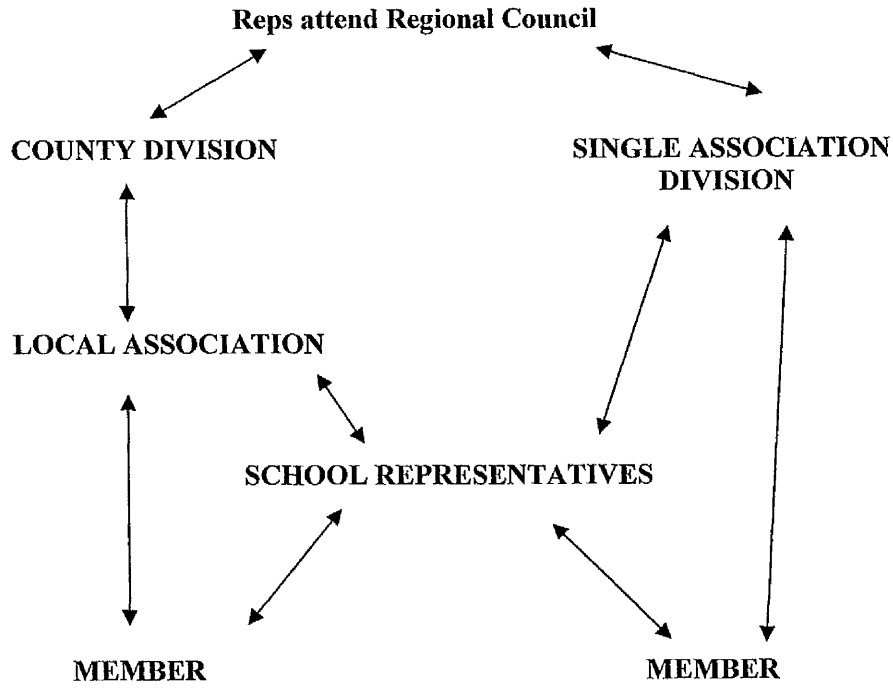
[47] *The Schoolmaster* was the NUT magazine, which began in 1872 with the inception of the National Union of Elementary Teachers. It is now called *The Teacher*.

Figure 6.2
LOCAL UNION STRUCTURE



Source: UDWP Document 26/1/04, Annex 1, London: NUT Hamilton House

The consequence of the NUT's democratic tradition was summed up by a Regional Officer, who stated that, 'the basis of what we do is democratic accountability to the membership, which legitimises what we do' (interview 4). Furthermore, a National Executive member discussed ways in which the union could function without members having to attend meetings and take on official roles, but still conceded that the absence of these activities was a problem for the NUT because 'one fundamental bit is the democracy of the union in terms of accountability, and that is quite weak. I have to say that to be honest about it' (interview 22). Subsequently, it was argued that 'union membership should be a participatory activity' (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary). Membership non-participation is therefore 'problematic' in a

particular sense for the NUT: it is a 'problem' in so far as it signals trouble with the workings of union democracy. Again, this was highlighted by the then General Secretary back in his address to Conference in 1955:

> The machinery of the union is thoroughly democratic. It enables every member to express opinions and to influence policy. But if members do not attend meetings, discussions and the resolutions which emerge are not truly representative (NUT General Secretary 1955, quoted in Roy 1968, 46).

To a large extent therefore expectations of how far a member *should* participate in the union determines whether membership non-participation is to be regarded as a 'problem' for the union, or whether it is to be approached as Lipset's accepted 'norm' (Lipset 1954). In this respect, the NUT's democratic tradition translates into an expectation of participation that leads to a 'problem' when this ideal is not made reality (as reflected in studies like Manzer 1970 and Roy 1968). This observation converges with the literature on participation in the political science field more generally. Parry et al, for instance, argue that any study of participation is also, in one way or another, a study of democracy. Further, they suggest that democratic ideals influence a researcher's interpretation of exhibited levels of citizen participation (Parry, et al. 1992).

Similarly, the democratic tradition of the NUT shapes expectations of what form membership participation should take, which influences definitions of what counts as 'participation' and subsequently determines assessments of decline/crisis/apathy. Traditionally, like the 1955 General Secretary quoted before, the literature employs 'attendance at meetings' as the definitive measure of membership participation, alongside the normative expectation that a high turnout reflects a positive picture of membership engagement, and a low turnout signals

potential problems for union democracy. This is the case for example in Roy's (1968) study of NUT 'membership apathy'. The extent to which an account of members' union activities in this respect can shed light upon their engagement with union affairs, is, however, questionable, and the view has shifted in recent times with an acute awareness of other modes of engagement. Interviews with union officials for example revealed that the NUT are encouraged by high levels of membership participation in continuous professional development courses (CPD), and training events, and are looking to establish more 'online' forms of 'virtual' participation (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary).

The point being made here is that discussions around the 'problem' of participation are often linked to a set of wider assumptions which are highly normative in nature. The identification of a 'problem' with participation depends essentially upon expectations of participation levels and what forms of participation are taken as the basis of definition. As a consequence, it is necessary to be clear about the terms in which it is valid to talk about a 'problem' of participation in the NUT. To be clear, this 'problem' is discussed here in the context of the democratic tradition of the NUT, and is measured in terms of the broad types of membership activities which would contribute towards it. These include what Snape and Redman call 'union citizenship behaviours' (UCB) (Snape and Redman 2004, 862), such as active engagement with union issues and discussions through literature or communications (i.e. participating in a 'critical public'), attending meetings and debating policy, voting in union elections, campaigning, and taking on official roles. It is participation in these terms which will be analysed more closely in the next two sections of the chapter.

Summary

This section has argued that the existence of strains and grievances in teachers' workplaces raises the expectation of high levels of mobilisation amongst teachers; an expectation which is further generated by Habermas's theory of the relationship between 'colonisation' and activism in NSMs (Habermas 1981; 1987). To some extent, this expectation is fulfilled by high and steadily growing levels of union membership amongst teachers, reflecting what has been referred to as the 'conflict potential' within schools since 1988 (Ironside and Seifert 1995, 161-2) and the vulnerable position of teachers in the workplace. The existence of grievances and high union membership has not however translated into high levels of union activity on the part of teachers. The issue of membership non-participation was, for example, considered a key 'problem' for the NUT in 2004-5. Mobilisation in the teaching sector therefore constitutes what has been termed here a 'participation paradox': membership numbers continue to grow, but so does the 'problem' of non-participation. This section has also taken care to acknowledge the often normative assumptions involved in deducing 'problems' with levels of political participation, making clear the terms in which the NUT's current 'problem' has been cast. Section two turns to a more exact examination of levels of mobilisation in these terms, drawing upon survey data and qualitative interviews.

SECTION TWO: THE EXTENT OF MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

This section uses survey and interview data to explore more closely the extent of mobilisation within the NUT. For these purposes, and in accordance with the terms stated in the previous section, membership participation was classified into the following categories, which group specific variables from the survey questionnaire:

i. *Attendance at meetings*. This looked at the frequency of attendance at general meetings of the Local Association/Division.

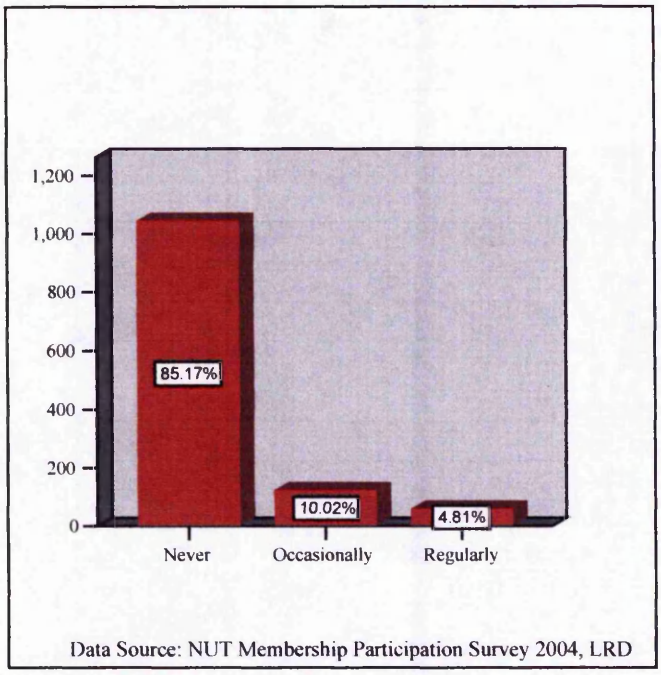
ii. *Active engagement with union information/communications*. This included reading the union's magazine '*The Teacher*', reading the union notice board at school and visiting the union website. It also looked at actively sought communications with School Representatives and the NUT office. This category was important for indicating general levels of engagement with the union and participation in a 'critical public'. It is not about what information is received or available, but what is actively read and sought out.

iii. *Voting*. This looked at union voting on several different levels, from the local to the national and in industrial action ballots.

iv. *Official roles/campaigning*. This looked at official forms of participation in the union, from the taking of roles like 'School Representative', to being a delegate at Annual Conference and other representative duties. It also included whether members had been involved in union campaigning.

i. Attendance at meetings

Figure 6.3: Graph showing frequency of attendance at general meetings



The graph in figure 6.3 above shows that the vast majority of NUT members in the sample (85 per cent) never attend general meetings. 10 per cent occasionally attend, and around half this figure again regularly attends. Similarly low levels of attendance at meetings were discussed by interviewees. When asked about levels of participation in their area, interviewees commonly responded by saying that 'generally participation within the union is poor' (interview 18, NUT School Representative, North West), or as one teacher put it, 'poor, unless you can get any worse than poor' (interview 27, Division Secretary, North West). Whilst 'big issue', or school-based meetings, could attract large numbers, general meetings were regarded as 'very poorly attended' (interview 15, NUT Local Committee Member, North West) and average turnout 'disappointing low' (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary, North West). The feeling was that either a very small proportion of

members would come to general meetings or, in some cases, none at all. This was a finding that cut across regions:

> At Division level they're appalling. We've got about six or seven hundred members in North Somerset and we struggle to get six or seven to the meeting (interview 9, NUT School Representative/ Assistant Division Secretary, South West).
>
> Out of a membership of about six hundred we'll be lucky if we get fifteen members and that's not out of the ordinary, that's by and large replicated across Greater Manchester, it's replicated across the country (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary/ National Executive Member, North West).

The point often made about general meetings regarded the 'quorum'; the number of members who have to be in attendance for decisions to be made at a local level. Interviewees in many areas talked about the shortfall in this respect and how it undermined union democracy:

> We have general meetings, three times a year. There's been one where nobody turned up...We've not had an annual general meeting quorate since 1999 (interview 27, NUT Division Secretary, North West).
>
> Our quorate for a general meeting is thirty so the meeting doesn't actually take place (interview 17, NUT Division Secretary, North West).
>
> We have about fifteen hundred members in Wiltshire...sometimes we're barely quorate at meetings, so we get say twelve. It's below one per cent, so the level of participation is very poor, it's worrying (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary, South West)

Furthermore, many interviewees perceived the levels of attendance at meetings to have declined in recent years. Some argued that 'attendance at meetings has gone down' (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer), or said that 'I think it must have got worse' (interview 18, NUT School Representative). Another talked about how 'when

I first came into the union it was normal to have two or three hundred at a meeting, but that was a long time ago' (interview 20, NUT Division Secretary). Several interviewees linked this to wider cultural shifts, suggesting that in the twenty-first century (compared to the 1960s-1980s), 'what people do much less is routinely attend meetings' (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary).

Amongst those interviewees who described themselves as 'ordinary members' there was some evidence of attendance at school-based meetings, but very few had ever attended a general meeting, and no-one regularly attended. One School Representative, who herself rarely attended general meetings, said of the teachers in her school 'they are totally inert, they wouldn't dream of attending a union meeting' (interview 31). The majority of the teachers interviewed stated that they were too 'busy' to attend meetings (interviews 28, 53, 29, 32, 36, 39, 44, 45), or did not want to go to another meeting in the evening (interviews 41, 31, 28). As a consequence, NUT activists in all areas articulated the kind of situation discussed by one Local Association Secretary when asked to describe local levels of participation:

> From nil, absolutely zilch, they pay membership...and then ring you when they've got a disaster – through to those people who do come to meetings but don't want to take an active role – through to the hardcore, which is about eight of us...which is pathetic out of a membership of about six hundred. And that number of eight has gone down from about thirty (interview 8, NUT Local Association Secretary, North West).

The perception of low levels of participation in terms of attendance at meetings was often coupled with the feeling that 'no matter what you do you don't get large numbers to meetings' (interview 7, NUT Member). As such, 'attendance at meetings tends to be almost non-existent or poor, and if you get into double figures with

people you don't recognise then you feel good in most places' (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer).

ii. Active engagement with union information/communications

The table in figure 6.4 shows the frequency of involvement in union activities relating to information and communications for NUT members in the survey sample.

Figure 6.4
Table showing the percentage of NUT members engaged in union activities relating to information/communications, by frequency of involvement

Activity	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Total
Have contact with the NUT Representative	32.5	36.1	31.4	100 (1009)
Contact the NUT office	53.3	43.7	3.0	100 (1215)
Read the NUT noticeboard	7.9	57.1	34.9	100 (1096)
Read the *Teacher*	4.0	38.7	57.3	100 (1226)
Read other information from the NUT	5.1	59.3	35.7	100 (1220)
Visit the NUT website	66.5	31.4	2.1	100 (1226)

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The table in figure 6.4 shows a high level of engagement with sources of union information on the part of members in the survey sample. *The Teacher* was the most popular reading material, with over half (57.3 per cent) saying that they frequently read it. This finding was also reflected in interviews, with all members stating that they often 'flick through' *The Teacher* (interview 28), although some admitted that 'I don't read it though' (interview 29, also 41 and 42), or said that they did not have 'the time to really read it' (interview 39).

The NUT website was an exception to these high levels of engagement, with just over two thirds of the survey sample saying that they never visit the website, and

just 2.1 per cent recording frequent use. There were mixed reactions to the NUT website from interviewees, with none of the ordinary members regularly using the site and some School Representatives dubious about its value as 'it just gives you information, it doesn't give you practical ideas of what you could do with that information' (interview 30). Many members did however express a desire for more web-based communication as 'I would probably be more ready and able to access that' (interview 28), or because 'I would rather use the internet than read because...the internet is more user-friendly' (interview 29), although others talked about how they were 'not a web-person' (interview 35). Some union officials also talked about the success of their local websites, one stating that, 'I'm getting an average of about four hundred visits...people who come in and get information from the website' (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary), another called their webpage 'a major recruiting tool...a focus for all of us to communicate' (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary). Overall, members suggested that web-based options were desirable but should not replace material through the post, one interviewee stating, for example, that 'if the stuff stopped arriving I think maybe I'd feel that I'd been forgotten' (interview 40, NUT Member).

In terms of actively seeking communication with the union, two thirds of the survey sample had occasional or frequent contact with the NUT representative at their school, but over half had never contacted the NUT office (53.3 per cent). This finding was substantiated by an NUT School Representative and Local Committee Member:

> I don't think that they have any contact at all. They very, very rarely contact regional office. The only time they tend to contact full-time officials is if their car gets scratched in the car park and you can just phone up and sort your insurance out, it's those types of mundane things (interview 18, NUT School Representative).

Overall, interviewees expressed a feeling of 'distance' from union officials and national structures (especially local activists who felt distant from the national union), although most ordinary members talked of being 'content to know who my School Representative is and who I'd contact if I had a problem' (interview 35). For two of the members interviewed there was not an NUT representative at their school, and these members unsurprisingly experienced the greatest lack of interpersonal communication with the union (interviews 38, 40). One young teacher however did have a School Representative but had 'never spoken' to her and commented that, 'I wish there was more of a face to the NUT at the school I'm at. I wish there was more contact with you as a union member' (interview 39, aged 23).

iii. Voting

The table in figure 6.5 shows how frequently members in the survey sample voted in union elections at various levels, from local to national scale ballots.

Figure 6.5
Table showing the percentage of NUT members engaged in union-related voting activities, by frequency of involvement

Activity	Never	Sometimes	Always	Total
Vote in Local/Division elections	22.6	46.9	30.4	100 (1225)
Vote for National Executive Members	20.9	41.7	37.4	100 (1223)
Vote in General Secretary/Deputy elections	20.1	37.2	42.7	100 (1219)
Vote in industrial action ballots	27.5	27.2	45.2	100 (1209)

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The table in figure 6.5 shows a fairly high level of participation in union voting activities considering that around four fifths of the survey sample say that they sometimes or always vote in elections for the National Executive and General

Secretary/Deputy. Overall the data seems to suggest that the greater the scale of the election, the greater the proportion of members who vote in it (i.e. local elections have a lower turnout than national elections). This was not necessarily seen as the case by interviewees, especially those local officers who were gearing up their members in 2004 for the election of a new NUT General Secretary. One Division Secretary for example argued that, 'they're not interested in who is being voted onto the National Executive, who is going to be the next General Secretary, and that's worrying because they should be' (interview 11).

The table in figure 6.5 also suggests that the level of turnout for union elections will swing heavily on the decisions of the 'sometimes' voters. The most predictable level of turnout to be deduced from the survey data is below fifty per cent in all ballots and below one third in local elections (because, for example, it cannot be said whether the sometimes voters 'mostly' or 'rarely' vote). Recent union elections and evidence from interviews suggest that these 'sometimes voters' are perhaps rare voters. One Division Secretary talked of the problem of voter 'apathy' in his constituency:

> I mailed every one of our thousand members with all the information on all the candidates asking who they would like us to nominate *(for General Secretary).* At the moment I've got less than a hundred votes, which is less than ten per cent, which is poor…I think they're apathetic about that (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary).

Additionally, the turnout for the 2004 SATs ballot was so low that it meant that even though the majority who voted did so in favour of it, the boycott could not be upheld by union rules and thus collapsed. This was discussed on a number of occasions by union activists:

> We have to fulfill what we call 'substantiation rules', which means that fifty per cent of the constituency that are balloted must vote... before that action can take place, and two thirds of all those voting must vote in favour. Now the problem is that because participation rates are not wonderfully high, we didn't get fifty per cent of the constituency voting...it was something like ninety per cent in favour, but not enough actual votes cast (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary).

In all ballots, however, (apart from industrial action ballots), a higher proportion of members in the survey sample said that they 'sometimes' vote compared to 'never' vote, suggesting some level of engagement with union voting nationwide (as opposed to the voter apathy indicated by some interviewees). The low level of participation in union elections at all levels was highlighted however as a key issue by interviewees, who again saw it as creating 'problems' for union democracy:

> In theory they're meant to be elected but nobody ever votes, and nobody ever nominates anybody to stand against them (interview 10, NUT Division Secretary, North West).

> I think the problem has existed with us for a long time and I think it will still be there...we get the minimum participation rates in terms of the elections we have, often many of the people nominated are unopposed so there are no elections. There are no elections for a vast number of our executive members (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member, South West).

iv. Official roles/campaigning

The table in figure 6.6 shows the percentage of members in the survey sample who hold or have held official union positions or have been involved in campaigning.

Figure 6.6
Table showing official forms of union participation, by percentage of NUT members involved

Role	%
Currently an NUT School Representative	10.7
Have been a School Representative	23.1
Have held a position at Local Association/Division level	6.0
Have been a delegate at Annual Conference	4.1
Have taken another representative role within the NUT	4.5
Have taken part in organising a campaign within the NUT	11.4

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The table in figure 6.6 shows that only a minority of NUT members in the survey sample have taken on official union roles. Just over 10 per cent were currently School Representatives[48], but more than twice this figure (23.1 per cent) have been a School Representative, making it (by far) the role most engaged in. This was also reflected in the interview sample, where three of the 'ordinary members' interviewed had been School Representative in the past (interviews 1, 14, 43), and several others suggested that it was a role they may take on in the future, especially for instance, if there was nobody in the school prepared to do it (interviews 13, 28, 32, 29, 42). Two of the interviewees however did work in schools with no School Representative, and did not wish to take on the role themselves.

In contrast to these levels, only six per cent of the survey sample had ever held a position at Local Association/Division level, and even less than this have taken on other representative roles or been delegates to Annual Conference (around 4 per cent). The lack of members prepared to take on official roles was one of the most talked about 'problems' for the union in interviews with activists:

> The problem that we have is that it's getting harder and harder to generate sufficient lay officers driving local branches and to take the key role at local level...often there

[48] This means that there is a fairly large proportion of School Representatives in the sample, perhaps because as more active members they are more motivated to respond to union surveys.

> isn't really much of a local committee in some of the areas and we've got far fewer key activists (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer).

> I know that other people are running things with twos and threes and they're making major decisions...and I don't think its right to do that. It's a very hard drive; it's a long road to actually getting people involved (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary).

Significantly, some interviewees suggested that the NUT's organisational structure at a local level was changing in response to the low levels of participation in local associations, introducing 'Single Association Divisions'. One interviewee for example commented that, 'I think they pack up these separate associations because they can't find the people to staff them' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary), whilst another stated, 'now what's happened, because of difficulty recruiting activists, to put it bluntly, is we've merged all those five associations into one big association' (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary).

Survey data suggest, however, that slightly higher proportions of members have been involved in organising union campaigns, although the level still remains capped at just over 10 per cent (11.4 per cent). This finding was substantiated by interviewees, many of whom argued that members were 'always disappointing on any campaign' (interview 17, NUT Division Secretary). There was however a strong indication from many interviewees that members were 'generally supportive' of union campaigns, although not necessarily active in terms of organising, and would often sign petitions, or send back protest 'postcards' sent to them by the union. Indeed, some of the members interviewed had participated in these kinds of activities (interview 39, 41), whilst others described themselves as 'supportive' but not 'active' (interviews 35, 14, 40).

Summary

An analysis of the data from the 2004 LRD survey shows that NUT members were most engaged in union activities relating to information and communication, with a high level of occasional or frequent involvement. In particular, a high proportion (57 per cent) of NUT members kept abreast of union affairs by frequently reading *The Teacher,* and the proportion of members who never actively engaged with union information/communications was very low. To this extent, it could be argued that members constitute an engaged and 'critical public'. The exception here, however, is the NUT website, which two thirds of members said they never use. These statistical findings were generally supported by interviews with members, although some did admit to not actually reading the material that was sent to them.

Second to this category of involvement was members' participation in union voting activities, with survey data showing a high proportion of 'sometimes' or 'always' voters, a proportion which rose as the scale of election increased. Data were difficult to interpret here, however, because we could not deduce whether the sometimes voters 'mostly' or 'rarely' voted. Indications from interviews and union elections in 2004 suggested that their involvement may be rare.

Finally, members in the survey sample were least active when it came to taking on official roles/campaigning and going to general meetings. 10 per cent of the sample were currently School Representatives (and double this had been in the past), but figures for involvement in other representative roles, especially at local level and at Annual Conference, were much lower. Additionally, 85 per cent of members said that they never attended general meetings. Data portray official participation in the NUT as something that only a small minority of members ever undertakes. This finding was clearly substantiated by interviewees, who talked of

'poor' levels of local participation, especially in terms of attending meetings and taking on roles. Indeed, the lack of local activists was seen as a factor in the changing organisational structures of Local Associations.

The combination of survey and interview data therefore suggests that the NUT in 2004-5 finds it difficult to mobilise members to take an active part in the union. The majority of NUT members appear to engage with union information/communications (and be generally supportive of union campaigns), and therefore represent something of a (largely literary based) 'critical public'. Active participation beyond this point, from attending general meetings, to voting, campaigning and taking on union roles, is, however, low. As one interviewee put it:

> Active involvement for me...is to be a part of the debate and discussion about the direction you should take, and I think there's a huge gap there (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary).

SECTION THREE: PATTERNS OF MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

Remaining with an undifferentiated survey sample can create misleading results about the nature of membership participation and the extent of mobilisation amongst different groups of members. Consequently, this section explores relationships between participation and sex/age/generation, and draws out the most significant patterns within the NUT.

i. Sex

With respect to the national picture, women are now catching up with men in terms of trade union density. In 2003, men's union density was only 0.1 per cent higher than that of women (Palmer, et al. 2004, 5). An analysis of the survey data relating to sex and NUT participation suggests however key differences in the involvement of

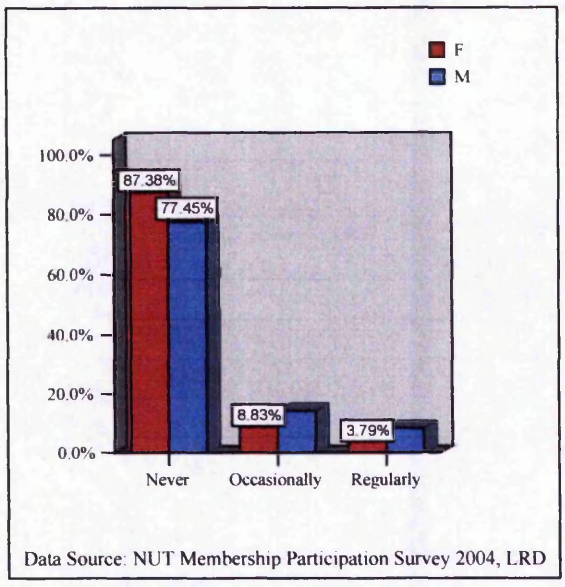
male and female members. Overall, it can be said that women participate less than men in union affairs, an observation also made by some interviewees:

> For me it's interesting because we haven't actually sorted the women's issue, but it's not the big issue. In a sense the union thinks that it has dealt with the women thing...but... it's not something that's really tackled. I've said it before now, what is it that's saying that women aren't Division Secretaries, why aren't they? Where are we? What's happening? (interview 2, female NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member).

The statement that female members participate less in union activities has to be qualified however by looking in more detail at the different categories of participation identified in section one. This reveals that inequalities of involvement are more pronounced in certain areas.

Firstly, the pattern of greater male involvement is reflected in responses to how often members attend general meetings (figure 6.7). Although the vast majority of members never attend, around 10 per cent more women never attend compared to men. A greater proportion of men also said that they occasionally or regularly attended.

Figure 6.7: Graph showing frequency of attendance at general meetings, by sex



In terms of active engagement with union information/communications, there were few significant differences between male and female members. With respect to voting, a greater proportion of women said that they never voted in union elections, except at a local level where there was little difference (around 22 per cent of both sexes). Of those who do vote, the majority of women make up the 'sometimes' voters, whereas the majority of men say that they always vote.

Statistically speaking, however, there were much stronger associations between gender and participation in official union positions. The Cramers-v result for the relationship between sex and being a School Representative was 0.222, for taking on another representative role was 0.320 and for organising a campaign was 0.335. The strongest relationship, however, was between sex and holding a position at Local Association/Division level (0.348). The table in figure 6.8 shows the participation of members in official union roles/campaigning, by sex.

Figure 6.8
Table showing official forms of union participation, by percentage of male and female members involved

Role	% Men	% Women
Currently an NUT School Representative	18.3	8.6
Have been a School Representative	33.5	20.3
Have held a position at Local Association/Division level	12.9	4.0
Have been a delegate at Annual Conference	9.0	2.7
Have taken another representative role within the NUT	8.6	3.3
Have taken part in organising a campaign within the NUT	20.9	8.8

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The table in figure 6.8 shows that around 10 per cent more men are School Representatives in the sample compared to women. Approximately one fifth of female members have been a School Representative compared to a third of men. As indicated by the Cramers-v results, there is a noticeable disparity between men and women with regards to official roles at Local Association level, with three times more men than women having held a position. Only 4 per cent of women in the sample have ever held a position at Local Association/Division level, and even less have taken on another representative role or been a delegate to Annual Conference. These facts should also be put in context: 76 per cent of the NUT's membership is female. This indicates a major inequality in terms of the participation of women and an even greater proportionate under-representation. Even when it comes to activities like organising campaigns, the sample suggests that more than twice as many men than women are involved. The most important indication to take from the data here is that even though the majority of members do not participate in official union positions, female members are disproportionately absent from those who do. The issue of mobilisation therefore has a clear gender dimension.

ii. Age, generation and participation

Trends relating to age and union membership are also reflected in the latest national statistics. In 2003 trade union density for UK 16-24 year olds was 5.6 per cent, compared to 45.3 per cent for those aged 35-49 (Palmer, et al. 2004). Whilst past studies have pointed towards a correlation between age and union membership (with older workers more likely to be unionised than younger workers) (Conlon and Gallagher 1987), more recent research claims that this correlation is influenced by changes in the nature of the labour market entered into by younger generations of workers, rather than by age as a characteristic of the worker alone (Disney, et al. 1998). Disney, et al. thus make an important differentiation between age and cohort (or generation) (Disney, at al. 1998, 9-10). Here, I look first at patterns of mobilisation between age groups, before concentrating on the youngest generation of teachers.

Overall the chi-squared tests suggest that we can say with confidence that in the survey sample there is a real relationship between age group and participation, which cannot be put down to chance. Generally speaking, it can be said that in all areas participation in the union increases as age group increases (although this was less apparent in relation to engagement with union information/communications). This trend is reflected in the frequency of attendance at general meetings (figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9: Graph showing frequency of attendance at general meetings, by age group

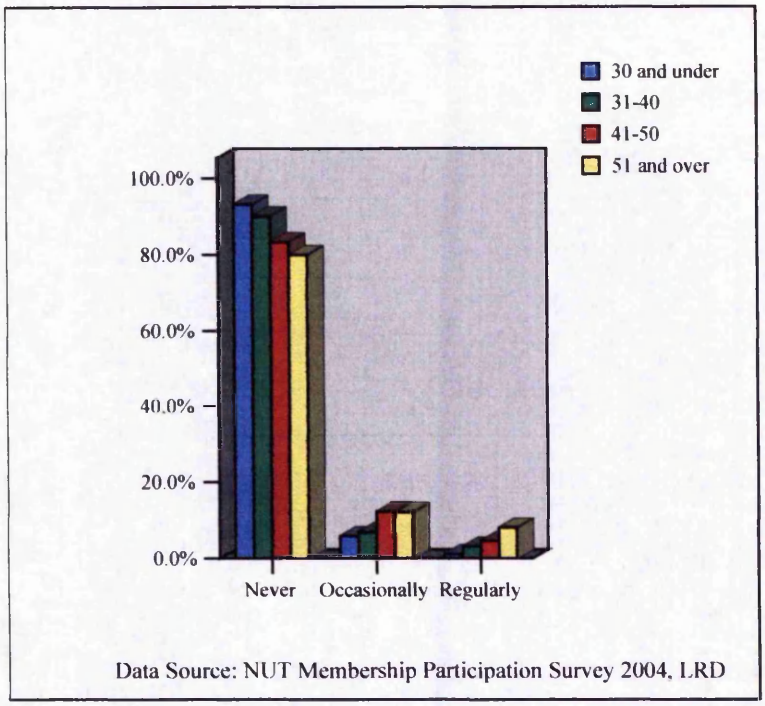


Figure 6.9 shows that the percentage of members attending general meetings increases as age group increases. For example, 1.1 per cent of members aged '30 and under' regularly attend general meetings, compared to 8 per cent of members aged '51 and over'. Having established this kind of relationship between age group and participation I concentrated on the differences between the youngest generation of members (those aged '30 and under') and the rest of the sample. This enabled an analysis to be made of the relationship between young teachers and union involvement, an issue on the current agenda of the NUT and the TUC:

> The image that a youthful workforce has of unions needs to be questioned: the television shows mainly old men, younger people… need a higher profile. The importance of encouraging…young workers to become active in unions is massive, as within the next ten years it is estimated that almost half of current trade union officials will be of retirement age (Unions21 2001).

An analysis of data from the survey suggested that NUT members aged '30 and under' were substantially less involved in all areas of union participation compared to members aged '31 and over'. This trend was less prominent in relation to engagement with union information, which was high for all groups. Data did suggest however that those members aged '31 and over' have more frequent engagement with union sources. Young people were also less active in terms of seeking communication with the union: 73 per cent of those aged '30 and under' had never contacted the NUT office and approximately one third had never had contact with their NUT School Representative.

There is no evidence from the survey data to suggest that young teachers are more engaged with web-based technology for union purposes, with two thirds of members aged '30 and under' never using the NUT website (figures very similar to those for members aged '31 and over'). This finding was partially challenged by interview data however. Whilst none of the young teachers interviewed regularly used the NUT website, one had joined online (interview 41, aged 23), and all exhibited high levels of interest in more online communications. They talked about the desire for email alerts from the union as it would be 'easy enough when you're checking your email to just read something' (interview 32, aged 23), and so 'if they could send you updates via email it might be a way of keeping members in touch more' (interview 41, aged 23). The idea of an interactive online message board for members was also raised by one young teacher, who argued that, 'people use the web much more now to communicate so that would be more beneficial' (interview 42, aged 23).

Voting activities remain consistent with the general trend regarding age group and participation, with a greater proportion of members aged '30 and under' reporting that they never vote (figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10
Table showing the percentage of NUT members aged '30 and under' or aged '31 and over' who are disengaged from union-related voting activities

Activity	% aged 30 and under	% aged 31 and over
Never vote in Local/Division elections	31.6 (59)	20.9 (217)
Never vote for National Executive members	34.4 (64)	18.3 (190)
Never vote in General Secretary/Deputy elections	33.5 (63)	17.6 (181)
Never vote in industrial action ballots	46 (87)	24 (245)

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

Around 93 per cent of those aged '30 and under' in the survey sample said that they never attend general meetings. Only 4.2 per cent are currently a School Representative (and 4.7 per cent have been at some point). Participation in official union positions for members aged 30 and under compared to members aged '31 and over', is shown in figure 6.11.

Figure 6.11
Table showing official forms of union participation, by percentage of NUT members involved who are aged '30 and under' or '31 and over'

Role	% aged 30 and under	% aged 31 and over
Currently an NUT School Representative	4.2 (8)	11.9 (126)
Have been a School Representative	4.7 (9)	26.6 (281)
Have held a position at Local Association/Division level	0	7.1 (75)
Have been a delegate at Annual Conference	0	4.8 (51)
Have taken another representative role within the NUT	1 (2)	4.1 (54)
Have taken part in organising a campaign within the NUT	2.1 (4)	13.2 (139)

Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

The table in figure 6.11 points to a large disparity in the participation of members aged '30 and under' and '31 and over' in official union positions. Young teachers in the survey sample were much less involved, and in significant areas (like local association/division committees and annual conference) they were not represented at all. This was a major issue for the union officials interviewed, the majority of whom would be retiring in the next.five to ten years:

> The knock-on effect of the age of our committee is of concern to us... I'm going to pack up after the AGM because I've been doing it for ten years now and that's enough, and I think we've got somebody who will do it, but he's not that much younger than me. Looking into the future, another ten years time, where are the next lot going to come from? (interview 24, retired teacher and NUT Division Secretary, aged 57).

iii. Age, sex and participation

Considering the inequalities of participation outlined in part *i.* it was important to control for sex in the exploration of young teachers' participation. The sample of members aged '30 and under' was already reduced to 15.3 per cent of cases, and creating further sub-groups does lead to some problems regarding sample size. For example, 85 per cent of those aged '30 and under' in the sample were female (around 10 per cent more than we would expect to find if figures were proportionate to NUT membership overall). Thus the survey could provide only a small sample of male members aged '30 and under' (28 men compared to 163 women).

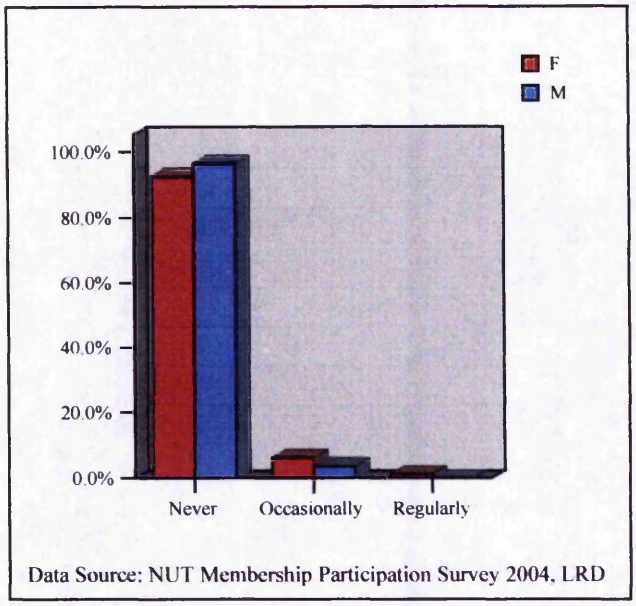
Despite these limitations, it was important to execute the analysis of young teachers' participation by sex, although the results are to be read with a degree of caution and any trends identified require corroboration from other sources (Brown and Fieldhouse 2002)[49].

The analysis revealed some interesting results, the most important of which is that the relationship between sex and participation identified in the survey sample overall does not necessarily exist for members aged '30 and under'. Whilst there is substantial evidence of greater union involvement for men aged '31 and over' compared to their female counterparts, this is not the case for young members. Even more importantly, if anything, the relationship between sex and participation is reversed for young members, with a small, but significantly greater, proportion of women aged '30 and under' being involved compared to men in this age group.

In terms of attendance at meetings, for example, in the '31 and over' age group almost a quarter of men attend general meetings occasionally or regularly compared to 13.7 per cent of women. Although young people exhibited lower levels of attendance overall compared to those aged '31 and over' (as suggested by part *ii.*), it is the young women, not the men, who attend the most (figure 6.12).

[49] It is generally considered that 30 is the minimum sample size for central limit theorem and thus caution should be exercised when drawing statistical conclusions based on less that this figure (Brown and Fieldhouse 2002). However, the results of chi-squared tests do suggest real statistical relationships between age, sex and participation in the sample.

Figure 6.12: Graph showing frequency of attendance at general meetings for members aged 30 and under, by sex



The graph in figure 6.12 shows that no men aged '30 and under' in the sample regularly attend general meetings. 7.4 per cent of women in this age group occasionally attend compared to 3.6 per cent of men. Data therefore suggest that the group which has the lowest attendance at general meetings is men aged '30 and under'.

This pattern continues when participation in official union positions was analysed. Again, the '31 and over' category showed substantially greater involvement in official positions compared with the '30 and under' category, with the older men exhibiting far higher levels than the older women. When young teachers' participation was analysed in detail, however, it was the women not the men who were most active. For example, 4.9 per cent of women aged '30 and under' are School Representatives, whilst no men in this age group are, 1.2 per cent of young women have taken on another representative role in the union, whilst no young men have, and 2.5. per cent of young women have taken part in organising a

campaign, whilst no young men have. To an extent, this was corroborated in interviews, with one local officer in the North West talking about young women in the area 'who are interested in actually becoming involved within the union' (interview 18, NUT School Representative).

The greatest pool of official position holders is therefore men aged '31 and over'. This is followed by women aged '31 and over'. But contrary to the expectations generated in part *i*, women aged '30 and under' are not the smallest pool, their male counterparts are. The impact of sex on participation in official positions is therefore to some extent reversing in the youngest generation of NUT members in the survey sample. It must be stressed again that this indication is just that; an indication. Due to the small sample size of young men it requires corroboration from other sources before it can be generalised.

Summary

Exploring the relationship between sex and participation in the NUT revealed important patterns in the mobilisation of members, which were obscured in the analysis of the data overall. For example, women are less likely to attend general meetings and vote in union elections. By far the strongest statistical association in the sample overall, however, was between sex and participation in official union positions. Here, women were much less involved than men, a situation which leads to a profound under-representation of women proportionate to the membership overall (76 per cent of which are female).

One of the most interesting findings of the analysis was that the relationship between sex and participation does not necessarily exist in the same way for members aged '30 and under'. For young teachers in the sample the relationship was,

if anything, reversed. Despite an indication of real statistical relationships, this trend cannot, however, be generalised without further corroboration due to the small size of the subgroup 'men aged 30 and under'.

Even so, the engagement of young teachers in union affairs seems, on the basis of this data, to be a more pressing issue than the relationship between sex and participation, which it suggests could be changing in those members aged '30 and under'. This was substantiated by interviewees, who largely presented the issue of mobilising young teachers as *the* critical problem for the NUT in 2004-5. The majority referred, for example, to what one teacher called the 'age differential' in the active membership (interview 24, aged 57). Many Local Secretaries talked about their concerns over this differential, with one in the North West stressing how young people and not women's participation was the key issue; 'we're actively trying to encourage younger people to become more active in the union at the moment...the emphasis is not on women' (interview 17, aged 50). This was supported by a Division Secretary in the South West, who argued that, 'we've been trying ...to get younger people into the union because that is one of the crucial things' (interview 19, aged 44). A National Executive Member and Division Secretary summed up the common perception of the 'problem' with mobilising young members:

> We seem to have lost a generation...We need to get that generation back. That's why we are going to concentrate on young people, because they need to take over from me and from other people as well if the union is going to be, not dormant, but active locally, and represent members at a local level (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member, aged 57).

Again, it should be reiterated that the survey dataset and the interview sample did not allow for an analysis of ethnicity and participation due to the sample sizes involved, and so patterns of mobilisation in this respect could not be addressed in this thesis.

CONCLUSION

The previous chapter established a high incidence of 'strains' within teachers workplaces, reflected in the high number of concerns and grievances expressed by teachers. It was argued that these strains could be characterised in terms of the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work' because they were seen to originate from government actions which 'overstepped their mark' and enforced a kind of 'system' logic upon teachers workplaces. This 'system' logic attempted to shape education in ways which produced several problems at the level of social integration for teachers in schools.

The purpose of this chapter was to assess the response to this process from teachers as trade unionists, using data which looked specifically at teachers who were members of the NUT. It has been suggested that mobilisation amongst teachers constitutes something of a 'participation paradox': the NUT's membership numbers continue to grow, but so does the 'problem' of active participation. Care was taken to clarify the particular terms in which this 'problem' was cast considering the historical and normative nature of issues around political participation in any context. Contrary to the expectations generated by the democratic tradition of the NUT, (and indeed the expectations generated by Habermas's theory of 'colonisation' and activism in NSMs), survey and interview data suggested that levels of participation within the union were, generally speaking, low.

Data for example did indicate high levels of engagement with union information and communications, suggesting that teachers formed a (largely literary based) 'critical public'. There was evidence however of a distinct 'problem' with mobilising members to act around their concerns at work; whether by attending meetings to discuss and debate issues, taking important decisions by voting, or taking on official roles within the union and organising campaigns. Furthermore, the data revealed specific patterns in the participation of members by sex, age, and generation, pointing to additional 'problems' with the mobilisation of women and young teachers. By combining survey and interview data, it has been argued that issues around mobilising young members to be active within the union were the most critical for the NUT in 2004-5. The final two chapters of the thesis explore (in the context of the colonisation of schools) the reasons behind these low levels of activism on the part of teacher trade unionists, and young teachers in particular.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE GAP BETWEEN CONCERNS AND ACTIONS: EXPLORING ARGUMENTS AROUND NON-PARTICIPATION IN THE NUT

INTRODUCTION

Chapter six has raised an important dilemma: if teachers have grievances and concerns surrounding education and their workplace in 2004-5, why are more teachers not actively involved in the NUT? Why is the level of mobilisation around issues low? The same puzzle was contemplated in interviews. Many interviewees struggled with the question of why teachers, who on the surface appear to share a whole range of workplace concerns and belong overwhelmingly to teacher unions, do not actively participate in the NUT. One School Representative for example stated that 'people are concerned, but it's getting people to be concerned *and act'* (interview 34).

This was a problem widely perceived by NUT officials; with Division Secretaries arguing that, 'you can have people angry about something but to actually produce some action, some activity, is difficult' (interview 16), and that 'discontent hasn't been as yet transmitted into any kind of effective action' (interview 5). Furthermore, members referred to how 'we moan all the time' but concerns are rarely 'channelled' into action (interview 42) and that 'people worry… but they don't do anything about it' (interview 33).

Three broad types of argument were put forward by interviewees to account for this gap between teachers' concerns and actions. This chapter outlines and assesses these arguments and draw upon survey data where appropriate. The chapter comprises of three sections. Section one explores the relationship between political identity, affective union commitment, and activism in the interview sample, and

assesses the argument that only a minority of members possess the necessary motivation to participate in the union because activists are 'political' people encouraged by their beliefs, their 'pro-union attitudes', and their desire to 'belong' to a group of like-minded teachers. Section two explores the argument that what teachers lack are not sources of *motivation* to become active, but the *resources* essential for union participation. These resources include the *time* to be actively involved, bearing in mind teachers' work commitments. Finally, section three explores the argument that members do not actively participate because they view their membership as no more than an 'insurance policy'. Consequently, the 'instrumental' relationship between union and member is a depoliticised and individualised one, which fosters expectations of non-involvement.

SECTION ONE: POLITICAL IDENTITY AND UNION ACTIVISM

The first argument to be deduced from interviews surrounds the connection between political identity, beliefs, and union activism. It was suggested on numerous occasions that members who actively participate in the union have a strong political, often Socialist identity, alongside what existing literature calls 'general pro-union attitudes' (Bamberger, et al. 1999; Snape, et al. 2000, 214). It was this 'ideological' commitment which was seen to account for active participation. What follows from this reasoning is the assumption that trade union activism will always be something of a 'minority sport' (interview 43), or a 'hobby' as one interviewee put it, for politically motivated people (interviewee 7):

> It's an expression of the group that they belong in...it's like golf, or going to church, or going to flower arranging classes...it's about having hobbies, people being into things...it's the same with politics and trade unionism, you

> don't get people in the trade union movement who don't have a parallel political life (interview 7, NUT Member).

This argument suggests that because the majority of members do not hold strong political beliefs, or identify with the trade union movement, they lack the motivation to participate in debates and discussions at meetings, or to vote and take on official union roles. Moreover, some interviewees argued that 'political' people participate in union activities not only because they are especially motivated to do so, but because they desire to belong to a group of 'like-minded' teachers who share in their beliefs (interview 37, NUT Member). One interviewee stated that, 'I suppose you seek out friends don't you, with like views' (interview 31, NUT School Representative), whilst another talked about how her local union association consisted of teachers that she already knew from other political involvements in left politics and the RESPECT Party[50]:

> I kind of knew them anyway, I knew them beforehand...I've got lots of contacts and so these people I... see outside of the union context as well (interview 30, NUT Local Vice-President).

Ordinary members shared in the perception that union participation was essentially for 'political types' of people (interviews 41, 14, 28, 29, 32, 35, 39, 43). One young teacher stated for instance that if you are 'not really very political then you might not want to be involved' (interview 41, NUT Member, aged 23).

Literature on trade union participation substantiates this argument to an extent. Sverke and Sjoberg argue that whilst joining a union is somewhat of a 'rational' choice which calculates the individual benefits of membership, becoming active in the union requires a further ideological commitment; what is widely termed

[50] RESPECT is a left wing alternative to New Labour in the UK, led by George Galloway who was elected as an MP for the Party in the 2005 General Election.

an 'affective' (rather than 'instrumental') commitment (Sverke and Sjoberg 1995). Snape and Redman characterise this 'affective commitment' as a 'covenantal' relationship between union and member, in which the member identifies with the union as a wider 'social movement'; a 'sword of justice' (Flanders 1975), and as a result, is more inclined to participate (Snape and Redman 2004, 857).

Indeed, existing literature on union participation cites this 'affective commitment' as a key factor in the activism of union members (Fuller and Hester 1998; Sverke and Sjorberg 1995; Bamberger 1999; Snape and Redman 2004). Snape, Redman and Chan argue that 'affective commitment' to the union is seen as stemming from several sources; from prior 'union socialisation', to 'Marxist work beliefs' (Fullagar and Barling 1989), and 'general pro-union attitudes' (Bamberger 1999) (Snape, et al. 2000, 214). Furthermore, in a 2004 survey-based study of NUT members, Snape and Redman found that 'general pro-union attitudes' and a perceived 'covenantal relationship' between union and member, were directly related to a high level of involvement in what they called 'activist citizen union behaviors' in the NUT (i.e. the most demanding forms of participation, like taking on official roles) (Snape and Redman 2004, 855)[51]. These arguments around commitment and union participation suggest moreover that members' beliefs and attitudes towards the union directly relate to their actual level of participation in the union (Snape, et al. 2000)[52].

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[51] This survey-based study consisted of a sample of 391 members of the NUT drawn from two divisions, and used multi-factor analysis to explore the connection between three different types of relationship between union and member, and levels of 'union citizenship behaviours' (UCB) (Snape and Redman 2004).

[52] This viewpoint is contained within the 'reasoned action theory' (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975), which Snape, et al. argue is widely accepted in studies on union participation (Snape, et al. 2000, 216).

Certainly interviewees saw NUT activists as people motivated by values and commitments relating, in particular, to Socialist political beliefs. As one interviewee stated, 'for people who are political animals, we see it in political terms, we see our trade unionism really as a part of Socialism' (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary). This sentiment was articulated by others:

> The whole point of being a Socialist is the belief that if you act together...that unity is strength. That's the whole point of being in it *(the union),* is trying to encourage people to see that they can change things (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary).

In fact, the majority of interviewees who held official union positions expressed a strong political identity, and often had a family background in politics and trade union activism (interviews 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 19, 20, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 30, 33, 37, 21). One Division Secretary talked for example about the development of his political beliefs and his realisation that, 'the only way we were going to bring about change for ordinary working people was by working through left wing politics and/or the trade union movement' (interview 23). Another described himself as a 'Marxist Revolutionary' and 'Socialist', stating that 'my history from youth to today, my background, is shaped by people who have fought for working people' (interview 16). Furthermore, interviewees in official positions often expressed a 'philosophical commitment to active trade unionism' (interview 4, NUT Regional Officer), and the majority were active in other areas of political life. Many for example were past and present members of the Labour Party (interviews 21, 2, 8, 11, 45, 22, 3, 34, 6, 4, 26, 27, 17, 12), members of the RESPECT Party (interviews 9, 19, 33, 30), or the Socialist Workers' Party (interviews 16, 9, 19, 20, 5). Others were former local councillors (interview 26, 22), School Governors (interview 3), and people who had

been active in UK social movements like CND[53] (interview 26), Feminism (interview 26, 37) Anti-Vietnam War (interview 23), Stop the Iraq War (interview 8, 19, 6, 5, 26, 30, 25, 12), anti-BNP[54] (interviews 5), and local campaigns around helping asylum seeker children (interview 20, 5).

Political identity and affective commitment amongst ordinary members

Significantly, however, a number of members who described themselves as 'inactive' in the union had also been involved in wider political activities; introducing a much more complex relationship between political identity and union involvement than the argument at first indicated. Interview data in this respect does not support the suggestion that non-participators are 'apolitical' people when it comes to beliefs, opinions, past actions, or indeed, self-image. Out of those interviewed who did not regard themselves as 'active' in the NUT were teachers who had been involved in the past in movements like CND and anti-apartheid (interview 31), Campaign for Free Education[55] (interviews 41, 42), and extreme left-wing organisations (interviews 1, 13). Interviewee 31 was an interesting case in this respect: a School Representative in the primary sector, she did not get involved beyond 'opening the post' and stated that 'I regard myself as inactive'. She had however been heavily involved in anti-apartheid demonstrations in South Africa, CND marches and Greenham Common[56], and made it clear that 'I believe in the trade union movement' (interview 31).

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[53] Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament established in 1958 and still in existence today.
[54] BNP stands for the right wing 'British National Party'.
[55] Established to fight the introduction of university tuition fees and top fees in English universities.
[56] A group of women protesting at the existence of nuclear missiles at Greenham Common RAF airbase set up a peace camp 1981-2000.

Other ordinary members exhibited similar contradictions between their beliefs and actions. One interviewee whose parents had been 'Communists' and heavily involved in left politics, social movements and trade unions during her childhood, was not active herself and stated 'I'm just not going to get involved with the union' (interview 40). She talked about not wanting a union position, having no inclination to go to meetings and debate issues, and how she did not vote in union elections. She was nevertheless passionately committed to wider democratic politics and stated that, 'I always, always vote *(in government elections)* and couldn't live with myself if I didn't' (interview 40). Significantly, she was also ideologically committed to trade unionism and exhibited pro-union attitudes, arguing that:

> I wouldn't dream of not being a member of the union...The more power that working people have got behind them and the better their organisation...has to be a good thing (interview 40, NUT Member).

Similarly another member, who stated that 'I will probably stay not very involved', adopted the philosophy that, 'on your own you don't have much of a say but if you're part of a union then I think there's a much better chance of getting things done' (interview 41).

Here the argument that a member's beliefs and attitudes directly relate to their union actions cannot be sustained. For these interviewees non-participation in the union cannot be put down to a lack of motivation or commitment from political beliefs and pro-union attitudes. As one interviewee put it, 'there's nothing to say that you can't have principles unless you're politically active' (interview 21, NUT School Representative). Indeed, for some of these members the question of why they were not active, considering their political beliefs, was one that they could not answer. Interviewee 36 for example did not have a union role and did not attend meetings,

but stated that 'I have quite a strong belief in being part of a trade union' and described himself as a 'Socialist' who was 'occasionally' politically active in life. When explaining his non-participation he made the comment that 'apathy is dreadful isn't it?' and so I asked him if he really did consider himself to be apathetic towards the union. His reply made an interesting distinction between his beliefs and his actions:

> Not in terms of my beliefs, not in terms of what I think we should be doing...I don't know why it is I haven't become involved in the union...I can't answer that question (interview 36, NUT Member).

Despite the motivation and inclination to participate in the union, therefore, members like interviewee 36 remained 'potential' rather than 'actual' activists. Others, who also exhibited a strong political and ideological commitment to trade unionism had been active in the union in the past (interviews 1, 7, 43), and did not rule out future participation. Whilst beliefs and commitment do not necessarily relate directly to present actions, therefore, they do seem to relate in some cases to past or projected actions. This point verifies the significance of theories of 'shifting involvements', which argue that driven by various 'disappointments' people go through phases of participating in public life and then concentrating once again on their private lives (Hirschman 1982).

Shifting involvements

There are a number of reasons why participation in trade unions is particularly likely to produce the kinds of disappointments with public action that Hirschman refers to (Hirschman 1982). Many studies, and indeed many interviewees, have stressed the demanding nature of union activism. Franzway, for instance, terms the trade union a

'greedy institution' in terms of the levels of commitment, workload and emotional labour it demands of its participants (Franzway 2000). This was certainly reflected by interviewees in official positions. When Division Secretaries were asked for instance about the 'one thing' that put them off active involvement many responded by saying that:

> It's intrusive into my private life and the only way I get a holiday is when I go away. My phone never stops ringing – weekends, Sunday mornings, and my family have paid a price for that (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary).

The amount of time involved in taking on an official position within the union, and the risks of 'over-commitment' associated with it, mean that such work is ripe with disappointments. These do not just surround the vast amounts of workload involved in getting anything done (a point made by all the NUT officials interviewed), but also the realisation that public life is often littered with the deceptions, manipulations and annoyances of private relationships. Hirschman states:

> Action in the public interest is thought of as being infused with idealism, with dedication to a cause, if not with sacrifice for the common good. How surprising it is then to discover, soon enough, that political activity often involves one in a very different set of activities: the making of strange alliances, the concealment of one's real objectives, and the betrayal of yesterday's friends – all of this of course for the sake of the 'goal' (Hirschman 1982, 100).

Indeed, factional in-fighting was something that 'put off' members in official positions (interviews 10, 6, 15). Even in cases, therefore, where the member has an ideological commitment to union participation, the disappointments associated with union work may be a factor in 'shifting involvements' elsewhere and driving them to concentrate on the personal pursuits of their private lives.

Other aspects of the interview data also suggested that beliefs and commitment were not enough to 'shift involvement' into the union. In one instance, an interviewee saw his own beliefs as at odds with the prevailing activist culture of the union, and subsequently argued that he was not the 'type of person' who would participate in the NUT. He stated that 'I have political views...but *I'm not the kind* that's politically active' because he saw himself as a 'moderate', whilst NUT activists were, in his words, 'extreme'. His beliefs, however, mean that 'I... still get worked up about things, still emotionally involved in things' and 'always feel slightly like I'm not doing enough' (interview 14, NUT Member).

Alternative motivations for participation

Interview data pointed to a similarly complex relationship between political identity, union commitment, and those in official union roles. It was clear for example that not every interviewee who held a union position was politically motivated or shared a sense of 'belonging' with other union activists. At times, it was quite the contrary, with interviewees making clear statements against this association. Interviewee 15 for example, was a Local Committee Member, but emphasised that 'I wouldn't say that I was a union minded person at all really' and put her activism down to her belief that, 'if you belong to a union, *or any other club*, you should...work to its needs'. As a result, she claimed that she was 'political' only to the extent that 'everybody is political, if you breathe you are political' and admitted that 'the politics gets in the way sometimes for me...it's a little too political' (interview 15). Furthermore, other interviewees with official union positions exhibited commitment to trade unionism, but had no parallel political life (interview 11, Division Secretary). One Division Secretary, talked for example about how he was 'not really a joiner of

political parties' (interview 17), and a School Representative argued that her union position was not a form of 'political activity', but rather the role of 'counsellor' to staff within her school (interview 45).

In a similar vein, one Division Secretary stated that 'I tend to stay apolitical...I've never been politically inclined' (interview 10), but had found herself in the role of Secretary because, as many suggested, 'there was no-one else to do it... they asked me and I didn't say no' (interview 10). The prevalence of this 'way in' to activism amongst interviewees points to the importance of wider networks and connections amongst teachers, which in some cases bypass other sources of motivation and bring in members who would not normally have volunteered. Consequently, some interviewees talked about how the current situation regarding union roles was one where 'it is who will do it and it's not as politicised as it was' (interview 43, NUT Member).

The importance of networks and personal relationships amongst teachers was verified by the LRD survey data. NUT members were asked for example to tick all relevant reasons why they did not attend union meetings from the list supplied on the questionnaire. 37 per cent of women and 46 per cent of men aged '30 and under' said that the fact that 'nobody asks me' was a reason for their non-attendance. In addition, just over one fifth of women (25 per cent) and men (22 per cent) aged '31 and over' said that the fact that 'nobody asks me' was a reason for non-attendance. Similar results were found when looking at the factors that members said would encourage them to attend union meetings, with 60 per cent of women and 54 per cent of men aged '30 and under' saying that they would be more likely to attend meetings 'if I knew someone else who was going'. The proportions were less, but still significant for the '31 and over' age group, with 37 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men

saying that 'knowing someone else who was going' was a factor which would encourage them to attend union meetings.

Summary

Despite its initial resonance with aspects of the interview data, the argument that union activism is *directly determined* by motivations drawn from political beliefs and pro-union attitudes cannot be entirely sustained. Interviews do substantiate the argument that political beliefs and 'affective union commitment' play a significant role in motivating members to take an active part in the NUT, with the majority of official position holders referring to parallel political lives, strong political identities and beliefs, and family backgrounds in the trade union movement. Equally, such beliefs were related to past and projected actions, with some interviewees representing 'potential activists', and others having been active in the past before 'shifting involvements' elsewhere.

However, in some cases, members shared political beliefs and pro-union attitudes, and saw themselves as 'political' people, but still did not have the inclination to participate in the union. Furthermore, not all union position holders had a 'political identity' to speak of; they were not 'Socialists', or members of the Labour Party, or 'trade union minded', but found themselves actively involved for an entirely different set of reasons. In fact, the number of contradictions in interviews between members' political beliefs, their union attitudes, and their actions, belies the straightforward equation of political identity and affective commitment with union activism.

SECTION TWO: RESOURCES AND PARTICIPATION

The gap between teachers' workplace concerns and union actions cannot therefore be entirely accounted for by the argument that only 'political' types of people, or those with an 'affective' commitment to the union, will actively participate in the NUT. Indeed, rather than a direct correlation between beliefs, attitudes, and actual participation (as assumed in much of the existing literature), section one drew attention to a further gap in some cases between a members' identity, beliefs, and actions. In this context, it is necessary to explore the second argument to be deduced from interviews. This argument suggests that what teachers lack are not sources of *motivation*, but the *resources* essential for union participation. These resources predominantly include the *time* to be actively involved considering teachers' work commitments.

Constraints on union participation

The relationship between resources and mobilisation is one which has been well established in literature around social movements (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy and Zald 1977). In union participation literature however the idea that, despite their beliefs, individuals may experience constraints upon their actions has not been widely acknowledged. Instead, research remains tied to a broadly social-psychological framework of assumptions in which 'attitudes' are the focus. Although Snape and Redman use an attitudinal approach in their 2004 survey-based study of the NUT, Snape, Redman and Chan had previously highlighted this gap in the union participation literature as one in need of attention (Snape, et al. 2000, 225). They argued that the 'reasoned action theory' widely adopted in the field:

> Takes no account of the possibility that members may face constraints in participation...individuals are constrained from participating by lack of time...and by other factors...there is a need to incorporate the perceived barriers to participation (Snape, et al. 2000, 225).

This need was verified by interview data, with constraints relating to workload and time cited as key reasons for non-participation by all interviewees. Interviewees in official positions referred for example to 'exhaustion, overwork' (interview 2), and 'time and work constraints' (interview 22), which lead to 'an element where people are just knackered' (interview 30, also 37), whilst members accounted for their lack of action by stating that, 'work and time are big things for definite' (interview 29) and that, 'it's time more than anything else' (interview 32). In fact, a lack of time was the most talked about issue when interviewees were asked to explain why teachers were not more active in the union:

> Time I would imagine...especially during term time...the time when the union needs you to be most active... to be honest, it is time (interview 36, NUT Member).

> It's a conspiracy to make people so busy that they will be too busy to become involved in these activities...a classic case of you control them by making them work extremely hard (interview 34, NUT School Representative).

Significantly, interviewees argued that it was lack of time rather than lack of concern or interest that led to non-participation, concluding that, on the whole, teachers are 'tired but they're not apathetic' (interview 17, NUT Division Secretary):

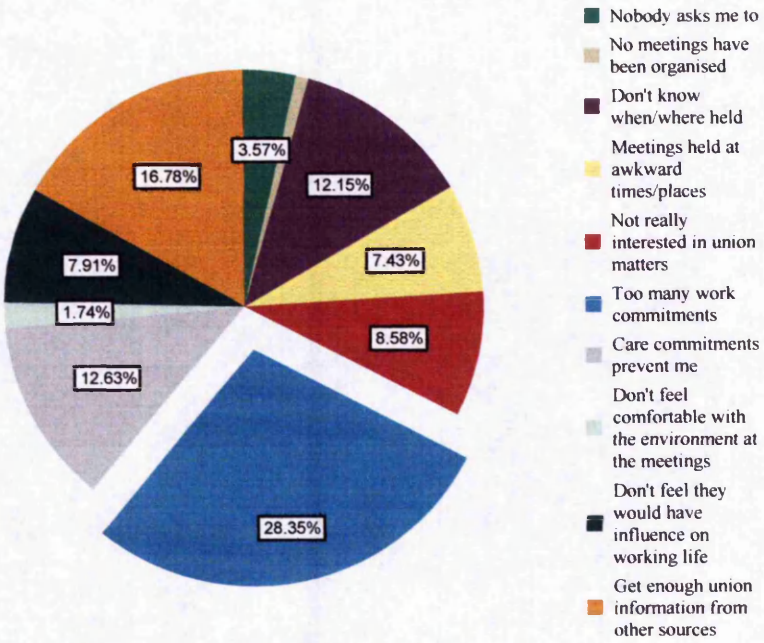
> I don't think they are apathetic, I mean the concerns they have are real enough. When you talk to them in work they're aware of many of the issues and concerned about the issues, but I think that they find it hard to find the time to attend meetings and such and to do anything about it (interview 18, NUT School Representative).

This viewpoint was corroborated by members themselves, many of whom argued that time rather than lack of interest was the key factor in their non-participation:

> I would like to be more involved...but in practice it's something that I don't find really enough time for (interview 1, NUT Member).
>
> I'd like to go *(to union meetings)* in theory but if I'm honest it's not high on my agenda because of workload...it's just having the time, or the energy...to get more involved (interview 39, NUT Member).
>
> It's not apathy on my part; it's more the practical difficulties...the feeling that I don't have enough time (interview 45, NUT School Representative).

Certainly, the argument that teachers lack the time for union involvement, over and above a lack of interest, concurs with the data supplied by NUT members in the LRD survey. In the survey teachers were asked to state the 'most important' reason why they did not attend union meetings. The pie chart in figure 7.1 shows that the reason stated to be 'most important' by the greatest proportion of members was 'too many work commitments' (represented by the 'exploded slice').

Figure 7.1: Most important reason why NUT members do not attend union meetings



Data Source: NUT Membership Participation Survey 2004, LRD

'Too many work commitments' was ranked top even when the sample was differentiated between age-group and sex. Furthermore, members were allowed to tick all relevant reasons as well as their 'most important', and 61 per cent of men and women aged '30 and under', alongside just over 50 per cent of men and women aged '31 and over', ticked the 'too many work commitments' box. Significantly, the data shows that over three times more members stated work commitments as the most important reason for non-attendance at meetings (28.4 per cent) compared to 'not really interested in union affairs' (8.6 per cent).

Workload and participation - 'it's a time thing' (interview 41, NUT Member)

The connection between workload and union participation was discussed at length by interviewees. One Division Secretary for example put a 'decline in attendance at union meetings since the 1980s' down to the fact that, 'as you get more and more

initiatives and as people get more and more bogged down, membership attendance at meetings drops away' (interview 2). As one School Representative argued, 'if you wear people down enough they don't actually want to take part in anything' (interview 21):

> If you've had a hard day and you're on your knees because all these kids have been giving you a hard time and somebody says 'right, we're going to join hands and fight', you can see people thinking 'no, I think I'll go and have some tea somewhere', and I understand that. The best time of day is when they get in their car and drive away because you're leaving all that behind (interview 21, NUT School Representative).

Others concurred, stating that members 'don't have the time or the energy to go to meetings' (interview 26, NUT Division Secretary), and talked of a 'meetings overload' (interview 18, NUT School Representative). The feeling was that 'people don't want to go to *(union)* meetings because they are meetings-sick, they have so many meetings at school, people are tired' (interview 8, NUT Local Association Secretary). This was supported by a Regional Officer who commented that:

> The pattern of teachers' working life has changed so much, far more meetings, far more work for teachers to do in the evenings, they haven't got the time (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer).

Members also offered this kind of rationale for their non-attendance at union meetings, arguing that, 'in teaching you've always got meetings everywhere and do you really want another one? Well most people don't' (interview 40, NUT Member). In addition, a primary school teacher stated that:

> I prefer to do my job, go home, go out down the pub. I want a social life, not to be running around. I put enough hours into

> school let alone to then have to go to another meeting (interview 35, NUT Member).

Although constantly forwarded as a key reason for non-participation, some interviewees challenged the validity of citing a lack of time. Interestingly, this was the case even when the interviewee said themselves that 'time' was their key reason for non-participation, arguing that 'it sounds like a real cop out and excuse because if it's something really important then you should make the time to do it' (interview 36, NUT Member). This argument was also forwarded by interviewee 33 who said that lack of time was the main reason why she was 'not as active as I would like to be', but stated that it was a 'bad' reason because 'you make the time for the things that you feel passionately about' (interview 33, NUT Local Association Member). Interviewee 23 shared this opinion, arguing that he did not 'go with the overworked argument' for similar reasons (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary). As interviewee 44 conceded, it is not so much about a lack of spare time as 'prioritising time' (interview 44, NUT Member).

Other interviewees however linked teachers' lack of time to an inability to 'sit back' and reflect upon workplace issues, and to subsequently make them a priority for action. Interviewee 14 argued that for teachers in their daily jobs, 'it's a question of the urgent taking priority over the important':

> We're just so bogged down in what we're doing day to day we don't stand back. I don't think that it is apathy so much as needing that time to really take on board the fact of what's happening and what the implications are likely to be (interview 14, NUT Member).

Making workplace concerns a priority for action is therefore difficult, argued some interviewees, in the context of a job which keeps you 'too busy to be bothered'

(interview 15, NUT Local Association President). This view was supported by a Local Association and National Executive member:

> Members are just so worn out that they're just trying to get through from one day to the next and not even thinking about the issues to be honest...their minds are just filled with all this other stuff so they're not really considering it (interview 6, NUT Assistant Local Association Secretary/ National Executive Member).

Summary

The second argument to be deduced from interviews suggests that rather than lacking sources of motivation, teachers suffer from a lack of essential resources for union participation. In particular, interviewees argued that teachers' heavy workload means that that they lack the time to be actively involved in the union. Both NUT officials and members who described themselves as 'inactive' stressed how non-participation was the result of work and time constraints rather than a lack of concern or interest.

This argument was substantiated by survey data, which showed that 'too many work commitments' over and above 'not really interested in union affairs', was the main reason stated by teachers for non-attendance at union meetings. The issue of time was, however, talked about in different ways by interviewees, some referred to the lack of 'spare' time for participation, others emphasised the lack of time to reflect upon workplace issues and thus to make them a priority for action. Furthermore, the emphasis that interviewees placed upon time and work constraints questioned the emphasis in union participation literature upon attitudes and their direct correlation with union participation. Consequently, interview data verifies the importance of adopting a 'resources' based approach to participation in the context of the NUT.

SECTION THREE: MEMBERSHIP AS AN INSURANCE POLICY

The third argument to be deduced from interviews was that members do not participate in the NUT because they view their membership as no more than an 'insurance policy' at work. As one Division Secretary argued, 'the average member joins the union for insurance' (interview 24). As such, union membership is about the individual teacher consuming the services offered by the union, rather than participating in activities which pursue collective or political goals, and sustain the union's democratic structures.

As mentioned in chapter six, the majority of teachers belong to trade unions in part because of this need for workplace insurance. Indeed, no independent form of insurance exists for teachers in a climate where the 'compensation culture' (interview 39, NUT Member) necessitates legal protection. Subsequently, the majority of interviewees did accept that union membership was an insurance policy of sorts for teachers. One member, on discussing his reasons for joining the union, stated that, 'I think the union should be more than an insurance policy, but if I'm honest I suppose that is one of the key reasons' (interview 14).

The argument around insurance and non-participation however takes this observation a step further and suggests that for many teachers union membership is viewed as *no more* than insurance cover, and as such is divorced from collective and political forms of action. This opinion was regularly expressed by NUT officials, who argued that members join for:

> The practical benefits that trade unions today offer their members...in terms of how it impacts upon their lives it may not be much more than that...joining is a kind of insurance policy (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary).

The significance of insurance cover was also discussed by members when they were asked about their reasons for joining the NUT:

> It was for insurance purposes. It was for my own benefit really...I'd be safer, more secure (interview 44, NUT Member).
>
> I pay it simply, and only, as something should I ever need their legal advice and support, that's why I do it...when I think about my membership I pay essentially for back up support (interview 28, NUT Member).
>
> I view it as something I can use if I have to, I don't really participate much, or contribute much myself. If I was in some kind of trouble in the profession, I could go to the union for advice (Interview 39, NUT Member).

Members as 'rational actors'

The idea of an individual consumer of union services gives resurgence to theories of participation which concentrate upon the union member as a strategic rational actor, whose commitment to the union is based essentially on 'economic exchange' (Snape and Redman 2004, 855). The 'rational' member has an overtly instrumental orientation to the union and decides whether or not to participate through a calculated process of reasoning. This involves weighing up the personal costs and benefits of involvement, such as paying subscriptions in return for free legal advice, help with work problems and financial services.

'Rational actors' may use a similar cost/benefit calculation to decide upon their level of participation *within the union* once they become a member. As Olson (1965) famously argued, this poses a considerable problem for 'collective action' in organisations like trade unions, where a great deal of time and effort is expended for gains that every member ultimately enjoys. Why would an ordinary member participate in a campaign, or volunteer for a union role, for example, when they

could let someone else do it and still benefit from the outcome? Olson's answer, in short, is that they would not. It is 'rational' to refrain from participation. Instead of getting active, the rational member would 'free ride' on the back of the participation of others (Olson 1965).

This considered, members have to be coaxed into participation through special 'incentives', enjoyed only by those involved: 'freebies', service rewards, and special insurance schemes are amongst the most widespread. Getting more members involved becomes a question of how to reduce the costs and raise the benefits of participation for the individual. In their studies of participation in the NUT, Manzer (1970) and Roy (1968) adopt this kind of approach, talking about changing the times and places of meetings, organising social events and providing refreshments as ways of increasing attendance at NUT meetings. Similar strategies are suggested as ways to increase the participation of women, by for example providing childcare facilities at meetings or paying a childcare allowance[57]. Many trade unions, the NUT included, now employ these kinds of practical incentives to participate. Interviewees referred to how 'social events' (interview 20, NUT Division Secretary), 'free meals' (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary), and 'free drinks' (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary), were used to encourage members to attend union events.

Participation and service models of trade unionism

The most significant aspect of the 'instrumental' orientation towards union membership is that it shapes the relationship between union and member away from

[57] Feminist researchers argue that the issue of childcare and domestic responsibility runs deeper than its practical manifestations, however. They point to the relationship between gender and private and public spheres of activity, and the ways in which they contain ideological, cultural and social barriers to the participation of women in public life. See Siltanen and Stanworth (1984) for a comprehensive discussion of women's relationship to trade union activism.

collective action and towards service consumption. This shift in the nature of trade unions, from 'organising' institutions to 'service' providers, is discussed at length in the industrial relations literature (Bassett and Cave 1993; Heery, et al. 2003). Like 'rational actor' theory, theories around changing models of trade unionism suggest that placing the emphasis on individual services fosters expectations of membership non-involvement:

> The union appears to members as an external body, and the leadership 'manage' the union very much as a service-provider, with members as little more than passive consumers of union services (Snape, et al. 2000, 223).

This 'service' view of union membership was articulated in interviews on several occasions. A secondary school teacher for example commented that, 'I'm quite happy that...I know roughly how much a month I pay to them and roughly what kind of service I can expect from them' (interview 28, NUT Member), whilst a Regional Officer talked about how the workload for union officials had increased due to twenty-first century demands on service providers :

> My general feeling is that we still provide a very good service compared with many trade unions...but teachers' expectations have grown and grown. We're now at an age when people pretty much want 24 hour access to advice and support, that's what's happening in banking and lots of other services (interview 3, Regional Officer).

The essential characteristics of the service and organising models of trade unionism are shown in figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2: Key characteristics of the service model and organising model of trade unionism

	Service model	**Organising model**
Relationship with members	Economic exchange	Social exchange Perhaps covenantal
Assumed basis of commitment	Primarily instrumental	Value-based, underpinned by social norms and instrumentality
Assumed membership orientation	Passive consumers of union services	Active participants
Intra-union relations	Leaders 'manage' the union on behalf of members	Greater emphasis on local activism and decentralisation
Union 'services'	Interest protection, perhaps with an emphasis on individual services and benefits	Interest protection, perhaps with greater emphasis on collective representation. A possibility of broader social, community and political aims and involvement

Source: Snape, et al. 2000, 223

Literature on teacher unions in the United States talks of this shift in terms of a move towards 'business' or 'professional unionism' in the education sector (Demitchell 1998; Kerchner and Koppich 1993). Whilst it has ploughed resources into regional structures which offer legal services and conduct individual casework, the NUT has not expressed an official preference for service models, and in 2005 members of the National Executive made contact with the TUC to discuss the 'organising model' in pursuit of increasing membership involvement (interview 22, National Executive Member, in post-interview correspondence).

Interview data, however, suggested that many NUT members did perceive the union essentially as a 'service provider', and that this tended to shape members in terms of the table in figure 7.2: firstly as 'passive consumers'; and secondly as people who saw the union as working 'on their behalf'. When discussing her union representative at school, for example, one primary school teacher commented that he kept her well informed about union issues, adding however, 'that's his job though,

isn't it?' (interview 35, NUT Member). This emphasis on NUT officials *working for* members was also discussed by a former School Representative:

> Lots of people who came to the meetings wanted to put the emphasis back on to me as the union rep to do things rather than doing things collectively. I think they didn't really see themselves as the NUT but as people who paid up to be members of an organisation that would then do things for them (Interview 1, NUT Member and former School Representative) .

In this context, therefore, members (like 'rational actors'), do not participate because they *do not expect* themselves to participate. Interviewee 7 for example argued that to call members 'apathetic' if they do not participate in union affairs is to misrepresent the relationship between union and member as a political one. Instead she likened the relationship to that between a patient and doctor. When members do not go along to union meetings it is:

> Different from apathy...it would be like saying do you think that patients are apathetic about their GP? I think it's that kind of relationship... something that works for members without their participation (interview 7, NUT Member).

Essentially, as interviewee 1 put it, the orientation to the union as service provider fosters in members 'the attitude that the union should be doing things for you, rather than actually having a sense *that they are the union'* (interview 1, NUT Member and former School Representative). Other interviewees talked similarly about this lack of collective identification, and how members tended to ask, 'what has the union got to do about it? Almost as though they are not the union, they don't actually want to join in' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary). This argument was supported by a Division Secretary and National Executive member:

> I think they feel that the union is there if they need it, that somebody is there to represent them and the legal service is there...however they don't feel the need to be involved in what's being discussed at a local level (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary/ National Executive Member).

Self-expectations of non-involvement were also reflected in interviews. One young teacher stated for example that:

> Nobody wants to know that it's going to be extra work and only then they can get something out of it...I see it as I'm paying every month and I'm paying for advice in case I need it, and I don't need to get anymore involved than that (Interview 29, NUT Member, aged 24).

Recruitment and expectations of participation

There was a suggestion from some interviewees however that the nature of membership recruitment was, in part, responsible for the emphasis on insurance, and members' expectations of non-involvement. Most of the young teachers interviewed talked for example about how they had possessed little knowledge about 'what unions were for' (interview 29, 32, 42, 44), but were told as student teachers that they must join one for insurance purposes (interviews 29, 32, 39, 41, 42, 44). This view of membership was then reinforced rather than challenged at recruitment exhibitions, where, as one young teacher stated, 'we just went around the tables and got given pens and free erasers and everything else...they didn't really make clear what it was for' (interview 32, NUT Member, aged 23). This opinion was supported by other young teachers who said that union recruitment 'was like, here's a goody bag, but no-one told you what being in a union was about' (interview 39, NUT Member, aged 23), and that 'we got lots of things for free' but less was said about the union's 'whole agenda...where they are in the political sphere' (interview 42, NUT Member, aged 24). As a result, recruitment in these cases missed an opportunity to

provide members with 'union socialisation'; a factor linked to membership participation in previous studies (Fuller and Hester 1998; Sverke and Sjoberg 1995).

As such, some interviewees talked about how the NUT becomes 'like the AA or RAC'[58] (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary), and that consequently young members could not be blamed for thinking that they were signing up for an insurance policy rather than a collective action group. A School Representative made clear the consequences of this approach for levels of membership participation, arguing that non-involvement stemmed from:

> ...the way that we define the union for people...we sound like we're some kind of insurance company... 'You wouldn't drive your car without insurance would you? Why are you a teacher without a union?' And you just think, no, because then we just become a service and then why do you need to get involved? We're there to provide for you. We're not asking them to participate in that context are we? We're asking them to pay for a service that we will provide (interview 30, NUT Local Association Member).

Individualised and depoliticised membership

The interview data therefore suggests that the emphasis on NUT services, over and above its organising capacities, was seen as a major factor in shaping the relationship between union and member as one of 'passive consumption' (Snape, et al. 2000, 223), in which members 'see the union as something that does things for them, which they need to support with their money...rather than something that is a mass movement' (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary). As such, membership is essentially individualised. Viewed as an insurance policy rather than a social movement some interviewees argued that:

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[58] AA and RAC are UK based companies offering car insurance and breakdown services.

> People see it as helping them out as an individual...no-one's concerned about the bigger, wider, picture...I don't think people are aware of what the union does...it's not just about peoples' individual problems (interview 33, NUT Local Association Member).

> I think that a lot of people do use the union not for...major campaigns but for when they've got a personal issue they need to be resolved (interview 43, NUT Member).

Furthermore, some interviewees were not only keen to stress the insurance side of their membership, but to distance it from any overtly *political* form of action. One primary school teacher for example made a clear distinction between the 'insurance' side of membership, and the 'the global issues of teaching', arguing that her membership was concerned with the former 'personal, selfish reasons' (interview 35, NUT Member). She also argued that the 'global issues of teaching' (the 'political side' of the union) could be left to paid officials:

> I suppose you just join it because you're told to and, yes, I suppose they do all the political side that you haven't got to worry about, so you just leave them to get on with it (interview 35, NUT Member).

This depoliticised view of membership was picked up on by some Division Secretaries, one arguing that it was common for members in his area to approach membership in these terms and that, 'I suppose given the present climate they almost don't want the political aspect there, they see it as a negative' (interview 24). Certainly, the NUT's most recent attempts to increase membership participation concentrate on involvement 'outside the political dimension' (interview 22, NUT National Executive Member), encouraging members to get involved through continuous professional development courses (CPD). These depoliticised modes of participation are catered exactly to the individual consumer of union services and are

consistent with 'professional unionism' (Kerchner and Koppich 1993). Indeed, many interviewees expressed interest in future participation of this sort, over and above involvement in the union's democratic structures (interviews 44, 41, 35, 32, 29, 28).

Summary

It must be noted at this point that in the context of the 1980s loss of national negotiating rights over pay, and the anti-trade union laws which followed, the NUT's concentration (like many other unions) on what they *can do* for their members as individuals, and outside of the political domain, is far from an incomprehensible shift. As Williams states:

> Given the climate of hostility that the unions have experienced in the 1980s and 1990s, it is scarcely surprising that the more individualistic aspects of trade unionism should become so prominent – after all, they are easier to establish and promote than the collective facets (Williams 1997, 511).

The point, however, is that in the process of adaptation, the union influences the relationship between themselves and their members, shaping it as a consumer relationship rather than a political one. Emphasising the provision of insurance cover may be an effective strategy for recruiting teachers in particular (who have a special need for workplace insurance), but it does not necessarily foster membership activism, as those recruited were sold, and bought, a package of services, an insurance provider. In this respect, the lack of collective and political identification with the union reflected in interviews is perhaps to be expected. In fact, the view that the union is not 'us' but 'works for us' is manufactured by this process, and is not simply the product of an apathetic membership.

CONCLUSION

The chapter began by highlighting that research to this point has raised an important dilemma: if teachers have grievances and concerns surrounding education and their workplace in 2004-5, why are more teachers not actively involved in the NUT? Why is the level of mobilisation around issues low? Interview and survey data have been used here to explore the possible reasons for this gap between teachers' workplace concerns and their union actions.

Essentially, three main arguments were put forward by interviewees to account for non-participation: firstly, it was argued that those with political motivations or an 'affective' commitment to the trade union movement were the only members likely to participate, and therefore involvement is always something of a 'minority sport'; secondly, it was argued that rather than lacking sources of motivation to be active in the union, teachers lacked essential resources for participation. These resources included the 'spare' time to be active considering teachers' heavy workload, as well as the time to reflect upon concerns and prioritise them for action; thirdly, it was argued that active participation was not necessarily to be expected from members because membership is often viewed as no more than an 'insurance policy'. This orientation to the union as 'service provider' individualises and depoliticises membership by shaping the relationship between union and member as one of passive consumption (Snape, et al. 2000, 223).

Ultimately, these three arguments converge to provide two key reasons for the gap between teachers' concerns and actions. On the one hand, sections one and three suggest that teachers are concerned but do not act through the NUT because *they lack the necessary motivation* to be active in a trade union; either because they are not 'political' or 'pro-union' people, or because they view their membership as

an insurance policy and therefore do not equate it with collective and political forms of action. Somewhat ironically, therefore, the problem of motivation is a case of too much politics in the union, or too little.

On the other hand, section two suggests that teachers are concerned but do not act through the union, not because they lack motivation, or indeed political identification, but because *they lack essential resources* for participation, in particular; time. Alongside the possible interactions between factors, these reasons converge on one further point: even teachers who viewed their membership as no more than insurance cover, cited a 'lack of time' as the key reason why they intended to stay uninvolved in the NUT in the future. The need for a 'resources' approach, which can explore the 'constraints' around participation rather than assuming that beliefs and attitudes directly relate to actions, is therefore essential.

In fact, the data suggests that this is even more pressing in the context of the NUT, where pro-union attitudes and political motivations were found amongst members who did not participate; where networks and personal relationships appeared to be important resources for involvement; and where time and workload were seen by all interviewees as significant constraints upon union participation. How the two broad reasons for non-participation deduced here relate to the wider issue of colonisation in the workplace is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MOBILISATION AND LIFEWORLD RESOURCES: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COLONISATION AND TEACHERS' UNION PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

Habermas's colonisation thesis has been used thus far to highlight the source and nature of teachers' grievances in the present context; this chapter uses it to provide insight into the subsequent level of mobilisation within the NUT. The chapter therefore brings together issues around membership participation in the NUT (chapters 6-7), with the arguments made previously about the changing nature of teachers' workplaces (chapters 4-5). It is suggested that whilst the intensification of markets and bureaucracy in education, particularly since 1988, has eroded the communicative infrastructure of schools in a way which produces grievances for teachers, these grievances have not necessarily become politicised because the reorganisation of teachers' workplaces has also undermined what I call the 'lifeworld resources' essential for mobilising union resistance.

Bringing together Habermas's 'strain theory' with 'resource mobilisation' approaches, I argue here that the 'communicative action' of the lifeworld is itself a key 'resource' for union mobilisation. Communicative action is not only the medium through which mutual understanding and agreement between union members is achieved; it is also the medium through which the cultural traditions of the movement, memories of past struggle, union solidarities, and union identities are reproduced. Lifeworld resources relating to society, personality, and culture are therefore also essential resources for social movement mobilisation.

In fact, I suggest that lifeworld resources are of particular importance for union mobilisation in the teaching sector where, as chapter seven showed, there are

specific tendencies towards individualised and depoliticised union membership. These tendencies are partly accounted for by teachers' need for workplace insurance, and partly by the context of trade union activity post-1980s, in which 'service' over 'organising' models of unionism are increasingly prevalent. In this situation, face to face linguistic communication between union members becomes even more crucial if workplace grievances and union memberships are to be politicised and collectivised. I argue, however, that the discursive spaces in which this can be done are all the more scarce in the increasingly 'system' like environments of UK schools.

The chapter comprises of three sections. Section one takes a backwards glance at the arguments made in previous chapters. Section two goes on to analyse the connection between colonisation and membership participation in more depth by exploring how the colonisation of teachers' workplaces affects the availability of resources of communicative action for trade unionists. In particular, I look at how the 'functional' reorganisation of education post-1988 has limited the discursive spaces available for union members, and the consequences that this has had for active mobilisation. Section three relates this narrowing of discursive space to a disruption of communicative processes which reproduce union identity, solidarity and culture. I argue that this results in tendencies towards individualisation, disconnection, and disaffection amongst union members because resources of social solidarity, identity, and meaning have become scarce. I end by using these arguments to shed light on the problem of mobilising young teachers in the NUT.

SECTION ONE: A BACKWARDS GLANCE

Chapters four and five established that the process of change and reorganisation in UK state education since 1988 can be conceived of as a process of colonisation.

Firstly, it was argued that government education policy since 1988 represented both a commodification of education (through the introduction of market principles), and a juridification of education (through the increase in administrative interventions and bureaucracy). In the educational context of 2004-5, it was suggested that processes of commodification and juridification meet in New Labour's policy of restructuring public services through 'modernisation' (Finlayson 2003a). Modernisation involves an attempt to run schools increasingly as 'system' environments, akin to private sector workplaces, which are integrated not via the 'substantive rationality' that Offe argued must, in a large degree, characterise service sector workplaces (Offe 1985), but by the 'functional rationality' that Habermas argued belonged to the 'system' (Habermas 1987). As a result of this reorganisation, action within schools has become increasingly directed towards 'system' goals of efficiency, results, and the reduction of public expenditure. In the process, the scope for teachers to carry out educational tasks on the basis of a 'communicative' logic has been limited. Indeed, rather than the logic of the lifeworld, the logic of the market and the state has increasingly taken over the 'steering' of educational contexts.

Chapter five went on to argue that the concept of 'colonisation' helps to capture the nature of conflict built-in to this process of educational change. What research showed was that the clash between 'system imperatives and lifeworld imperatives' did indeed create 'new frictional surfaces' and conflicts in the education field (Habermas 1996b, 356). These were expressed by teachers in a myriad of concerns and grievances over workplace issues ranging from workload and paperwork, to privatisation and workforce remodelling. It was suggested that these issues essentially arose from the erosion of the communicative infrastructure of schools as education was geared more and more by system principles. This erosion

was manifested in the disruptions caused for existing forms of personality, society and culture within teachers' workplaces.

Indeed, the changes that were happening in relation to public sector culture in education, the professional identity and capacities of teachers, and the professional relationships and solidarities between teachers, were the key apexes around which union members' grievances clustered. Furthermore, teachers themselves articulated the clash between 'system' and 'lifeworld' imperatives in their accounts of educational change, either stressing the economic and political 'take-over' of education, or in more instinctive, moralised discourses, expressing the discord between their communicative logic of action, and the government's target-led, results-dominated, way of doing things.

The point that was established in chapters six and seven was that despite this process of colonisation and the myriad of grievances which it provoked for teachers, union mobilisation amongst members of the largest of the teacher unions; the *National Union of Teachers* (NUT), remained low. Indeed, despite high levels of union membership amongst teachers, it was argued that union members exhibit (in the period of 2004-5), low levels of turnout at union meetings and ballots, low levels of involvement in union campaigns, and low levels of participation in the roles which sustain the NUT's democratic structures. Furthermore, data revealed particular problems around mobilising female members and young members. These findings were at odds with the conventional interpretation of Habermas's colonisation thesis centred on NSM theory. Here, colonisation, as that 'process of erosion' (Habermas 1974, 6-7) which creates grievances at the level of social integration, is essentially a process of politicisation. For although Habermas describes colonisation as creating

'new potential for conflict *and apathy*' in the affected groups[59] (Habermas 1974, 6, my italics), the NSM thesis posits that the 'socio-psychological' problems arising from the reification of communicative contexts of life do not undermine motivation to act, but constitute those 'new frictional surfaces' (Habermas 1996b, 356) around which movements mobilise.

Ultimately, however, the question of whether the 'process of erosion' is *necessarily* also one of politicisation in a given context is not a theoretical question but one which must be treated empirically. Indeed, it is one of the key questions Habermas posits for advanced capitalist societies:

> Is the process of erosion, which can lead to the crumbling of the functionally necessary legitimation of government authority and of the motivation for carrying out tasks, at the same time a process of politicisation which can create potentials for action? Are the groups who render questionable the fulfillment of important functions within the system...identical with groups capable of conscious political action in a crisis situation? (Habermas 1974, 6-7).

The next two sections of the chapter use data from my investigation into colonisation at work to treat these questions as empirical questions and to posit some theories on the connection between the process of erosion involved in colonisation, and the level of union participation on the part of teachers in the NUT. In the course of this examination, it is argued that Habermas's colonisation thesis relies too heavily upon a 'strain theory' of social movement mobilisation to the detriment of recognising just

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[59] Colonisation could in some cases lead to apathy because areas of everyday life (like the school), which are dependant on integration through norms, values and linguistic communication, are made objects of struggle by attempts to reorganise them as a 'system' environments, run on the logic of 'functional rationality'. In the process, existing forms of personality, culture, and solidarity are broken down and reformulated (as we saw in the case of education). Consequently, colonisation erodes the conditions for identity formation, along with the structures of motivation which underlie action, leading to apathy and withdrawal. This results in the reaction to colonisation that Ray labels 'quietism' (Ray 1993, 177).

how important 'lifeworld resources' are for organising resistance, and just how problematic mobilisation becomes when they are increasingly undermined.

SECTION TWO: COLONISATION AND RESOURCES OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

It has been stressed so far that the colonisation of teachers' workplaces erodes existing structures of society, personality and culture in education, and seeks to reformulate them upon a distinctly 'system' logic. As Habermas argued, communicative action is the medium through which these three structural components of the lifeworld (society, personality and culture) are reproduced, and when the communicative fabric of everyday life is endangered, their reproduction is placed in question (Habermas 1987, 138). Habermas makes the important point that the three components of the socio-cultural lifeworld (which depend upon communicative action), are, in turn, 'resources' for action (Habermas 1987, 135). Alongside culture, he argues, 'society and personality operate not only as restrictions; they also serve as resources' (Habermas 1987, 135). Habermas is essentially arguing that the 'intersubjective coordination of actions' relies upon 'membership in social groups', and the 'integration of those same groups', as well as upon shared stocks of cultural knowledge (Habermas 1987, 137). In turn, participation in interaction, as Mead pointed out, socialises younger members into the values of the group and provides them with 'capacities for action' within it (Habermas 1987, 137). In this way, Habermas portrays a situation in which communicative action is the medium through which culture, society and personality are reproduced, but at the same time, communicative action itself relies upon the resources that they provide. This is why colonisation, as a process which erodes

communicative contexts of everyday life, creates disruptions in society, personality and culture, and jeopardises them alongside communicative action itself.

The reorganisation of education, along increasingly 'system' lines, is therefore responsible for the reshaping of existing forms of educational culture, professional identity and professional solidarity, and subsequently, teachers' grievances ranging from workload and bureaucracy, remodelling and deskilling, privatisation, performance management and pay. The reorganisation of education is not, however, only responsible for igniting grievances; it also contributes towards eroding the very resources which are necessary for mobilising resistance. For colonisation, as a process which erodes communicative action within teachers' workplaces, also erodes the communicative action which is vital to union members if they are to overcome the situation, presented in chapter seven, of depoliticised and individualised definitions of workplace grievances and union memberships. I suggest in this section that one of the key problems for union mobilisation is that colonisation narrows the 'discursive spaces' available for union members. It is in these discursive spaces that communicative interaction between union members can take place, something essential for reaching mutual understanding based upon agreement and, ultimately, the force of the 'better argument' (Habermas 1987, 145):

> In communicative action participants pursue their plans cooperatively on the basis of a shared definition of the situation. If a shared definition of the situation has first to be negotiated, or if efforts to come to some agreement ...fail, the attainment of consensus...can itself become an end...Participants cannot attain their goals if they cannot meet the need for mutual understanding called for by the possibilities of acting in the situation (Habermas 1987, 126-7).

The possibilities for engaging in communicative interaction, however, have become increasingly limited with changes in the nature of teachers' workplaces. In their most recent statement on education entitled, *Bringing down the barriers*, the NUT argue that:

> In secondary schools, there is strong evidence to suggest that teachers experience a lack of time for reflection and also lack professional space for talking with and learning from colleagues (NUT 2004b, 22).

Previous chapters also indicated that changes in the nature of education have reduced resources of time and space for teachers. Since 1988 the workload of UK teachers has grown immensely. The culture of 'testing, testing, testing' (interview 19, secondary school teacher) associated with the National Curriculum, alongside state inspections, has increased the amount of administration that teachers are undertaking in addition to classroom teaching. Furthermore, chapter five highlighted the relentless nature of government initiatives in education throughout the 1990s and 2000s, which mean that teachers feel 'battered' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary) and unable to settle into a routine (interview 36, middle school teacher). Instead teachers talked of facing *constant change* in their working practices and procedures, something which further increases their workload.

Adapting workplaces to a world characterised by *constant change* is one of the key aims of New Labour's 'modernisation' agenda for public services (Merson 2000). It is argued that public services, like education, need to reorganise for 'high' modern times, as Giddens calls it (Giddens 1998), in which the flexibility and adaptation of the workforce to ever changing circumstances becomes an essential component of workplace 'efficiency'. As discussed in chapter four, private sector workplaces are seen as best able to meet the demands of this modern global economy

and as a consequence the logic of public service is to be replaced by the logic of the market, or more accurately, the public-private partnership, in organising education. Not only does providing the 'consumer' of education with choice, diversity and information, sustain the workload of teachers, but private sector techniques of managing employees, like HRM and performance management, affect the culture of education and introduce new pressures on teachers' performance throughout the working day.

It is my contention that this reorganisation of education has shaped teachers' workplaces in a way which also erodes the resources needed by union members to reflect upon, discuss, and debate workplace concerns. As a result the possibilities for politicising, collectivising, and mobilising the many grievances that were expressed by teachers in chapter five are diminished.

Colonisation and the availability of discursive union space

Chapter seven revealed that all of the NUT members interviewed related increases in teacher workload since 1988 to a lack of time to participate in union activities. Recent sociological research suggests, however, that people often claim that they lack time for certain activities, when in fact an examination of how they spend their time reveals a good deal of opportunity for engagement (Southerton 2005). Some interviewees supported this assertion to an extent by arguing that time can always be found for activities that people feel passionately about (interviews 33, 36, 23). For the teachers interviewed, however, the experience of work, driven by constantly changing education policy and heavy workload, generated *a feeling* that there was no time left for union involvements, even if 'spare time' could, upon examination, be found. Interviewees argued that, 'by the very nature of their job teachers don't *feel*

they have a lot of extra space in their lives to be active' (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary), and 'the room to be active, to get involved, is very, very, narrow' (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary). The experience of working in schools in 2004-5 was one where the pace of work is 'constant' (interviews 39, secondary school teacher), 'you never stop' (interview 44, secondary school teacher) and 'you're rushing around in your breaks' (interview 1, secondary school teacher). As one interviewee put it, teachers are 'absolutely worked off their feet all day and running around like mad' to the extent that 'people are caught up in their own day to day manic work' (interview 1, secondary school teacher). As a result, '*your time just flies by*...it just *goes so quickly* and you get caught up doing so much' (interview 44, secondary school teacher).

As such, teachers tended to describe their lives as marked by a lack of time and related this to their current, and sometimes future, non-participation in the union. One young teacher for example connected her demanding daily routine with an inability to 'fit in' union activities for the foreseeable future because:

> I tend to leave the house about 7am and I get back about 6pm, and I've taught for however many hours and normally I've had some kind of staff meeting, or planning meeting...by the time I get home...I think 'it can wait until tomorrow' (interviewee 41, primary school teacher and NUT Member, aged 23).

The feeling that time is a scarce resource has major consequences for the availability of discursive union spaces. As chapter seven highlighted, interviewees argued in overwhelming numbers that the feeling of a lack of time is one of the key reasons why teachers do not tend to engage in the conventional form of communication amongst union members: the meeting. As a result, the conditions for collective reflection, discussion and debate between union members are eroded. Meetings at all

levels within the union, from the school to the National Executive, are the main method of organising in the NUT and the main form of union involvement for members. As interviewee 7 argued, union activity tends to be 'defined as a series of meetings at the end of the working day' (interview 7, NUT Member).

Most interviewees saw these meetings as indispensable to union organising. What is essential about them is the space they offer for communicative interaction between members. On a local level, one interviewee argued for example that meetings are essential because 'stuff has to be discussed...if we're going to be an effective and organised union, it has to be debated' (interview 34, NUT School Representative and Local Committee Member). Within schools, teachers also talked about how union meetings represent key discursive spaces where 'we would get together and...come to some agreement about how to go forward' (interview 14, NUT Member), providing a means of 'deciding collectively what your position as a staff is' (interview 1, NUT Member). Furthermore, one Division Secretary stated that the union at this stage is 'a way of discussing the issues and deciding what you want to do' (interview 5).

There was also an acceptance amongst interviewees however that meetings are increasingly becoming a redundant form of union participation in the teaching sector. As chapter six highlighted, attendance at NUT Annual General Meetings is very low, and both the officials and members interviewed talked about how teachers 'don't want to come to union meetings' (interview 10, NUT Division Secretary), partly because they 'don't have the time', and partly because they attend so many work-related meetings. There was a feeling that given these circumstances the members who do come are 'meetings people', who especially 'like discussion... like

being embroiled in debate' (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member).

Teachers' experience of work therefore means that the union meeting as a key tool for communication between members is, in many cases, undermined. NUT School Representatives, for example, talked about the difficultly of holding meetings with members during the working day. As a result, communicative interaction between members in school is reduced to a minimum:

> I couldn't call a union meeting at school because we're inundated with meetings. I could only walk down the corridor and say here's the newsletter and hand it out, that's the union meeting. Nobody would sit down and discuss issues or if we do it's informally in the staffroom and they'll say to me what's the union saying about whatever and then there will be a five second discussion (interview 31, NUT School Representative in a primary school).

Whilst some School Representatives did manage to hold regular school meetings (interview 9), many others admitted that time constraints mean that they only hold meetings in the presence of a major issue in school. One member commented that his representative 'doesn't call meetings for the sake of having meetings if there's nothing to discuss' (interview 36), whilst a School Representative argued that he did not hold school meetings 'because it's time out of people's day and there's not always a lot to discuss', instead he said he operated 'just through personal relationships' (interview 34). Regular communication between union members, however, even if there does appear to be 'nothing to discuss', is essential if teachers' concerns and grievances are to be articulated and collectivised. One School Representative argued that:

> If we have a meeting it has to be about something poignant, there's no point in having a meeting if we're just going to sit

> down and have a cosy chat. *Although in many ways a cosy chat produces an awful lot of interest.* In fact with some of my colleagues I've just sat down with a coffee or over dinner and *I'm amazed at some of the issues that have raised their heads* (interview 21, NUT School Representative).

The problem with meetings was not only a lack of time to attend. In addition, teachers expressed a distinct 'distaste' for attending meetings. Some interviewees saw this as indicative of a wider societal or cultural shift (interviews 11, 18), others argued that meetings merely *feel* too much like work for teachers (interview 33, 35, 41). As one teacher put it 'the word meeting in itself implies extra work' (interview 30, NUT School Representative). This view was widely shared amongst interviewees:

> People see going along to the union as something boring, going along to meetings as a bit of a chore, like they would an after school meeting, not as something pro-active (interview 33, NUT Local Committee Member).

Teachers' experience of work contributes therefore to a narrowing of the conventional discursive spaces available for union members. As a result, some of the key resources needed for the politicisation and collectivisation of workplace grievances are diminished. This situation was not helped by what some interviewees discussed as a lack of 'facilities time' for NUT School Representatives (an issue raised with the NUT by the LRD in 2004[60]), and a lack of distinct physical spaces for communication between union members in schools. One School Representative, who said that his union role had been reduced to 'post-boy' by a busy working schedule, commented that:

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[60] See LRD 2004a. This report states that only seven per cent of survey respondents had facilities time for union activities (LRD 2004a, 5).

> In some industries they get time within the working day to do their union responsibilities. I get *no time whatsoever*. I don't even have a space, we *don't even have a space* as union reps. I think we should have a space within school where we can say, 'this is the union office', you can list when you're going to be there...but *people know that they can come and speak to you* (interview 21, NUT School Representative).

Alternative discursive spaces

The NUT officials interviewed were hyper-aware of the impact of teachers' workplaces on their opportunities for involvement in the union and many were adapting to present circumstances by seeking new forms of communication with members. Significantly, several interviewees talked about what they called the 'going to the members movement' (interviews 22, 12, 18, 26, 19), where 'we're interacting with our members in quite a different way, what we're doing is going to them rather than them coming to us' (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary). The aim of this movement was to bypass the union meeting by visiting teachers in school and attempting to 'engage them in conversation about what their concerns are' (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary). As one Division Secretary argued, members are too tired to come to union meetings so you have to go 'into staffrooms and speak to them' (interview 26). Usually, it was suggested, teachers 'are pleased to talk about things when they see you' (interview 27, NUT Division Secretary). This shift in the nature of communication between the union and members acknowledged the importance of 'talking face-to-face with members' (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary) for union mobilisation.

Opening up alternative discursive spaces by 'going to the members' is not however problem-free. 'Modernised' working practices continued to place obstacles in the way of these alternatives. The pace of work, constancy of demands, level of workload, and frequency of meetings, means that visiting schools and talking to

members is, as one Local Association Secretary stated, 'very difficult ...because at the end of the day teachers don't really want to see you' (interview 8):

> People don't want to see you first thing in the morning when they're preparing their lessons, dinner times they're getting ready for the afternoon, lots of them are doing staff meetings...*you can't get to teachers* (interview 8, NUT Local Association Secretary).

The problem of speaking to teachers was compounded by what some interviewees saw as the decline of the staffroom as the central place within a school where teachers get together. The demands of work mean that 'people are in and out of the staffroom all the time, they've got this and that to do' (interview 27, NUT Division Secretary), and subsequently, 'people don't all congregate in the staff room to the extent that they did' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary).

In this context, new ways of communicating with members were being sought online. The World Wide Web was seen by NUT officials as offering a promising way to reach members who will not attend meetings, or cannot be contacted on school visits[61]. One National Executive member argued for example that 'there are other ways that we need to communicate that are twenty-first century...we've been trying to do it electronically' (interview 22). This was a move reflected in several local areas. A North West Division Secretary stated that because 'teachers don't seem to want to attend meetings...we're trying to set up a website, which would be a way of communicating' (interview 10), whilst members in the South West talked about the potential for creating 'virtual centres' for union activity, in order to 'start to provide a forum...get together as a group' (interview 37).

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[61] The NUT had picked up on the role of computer technology and the internet in aiding democracy within organisations, something on the agenda for local government and public services under modernisation (Cabinet Office 1999).

Young teachers in particular commented on the potential not only for online communications with the union (like email alerts), but online forms of participation. Rather than meetings, some young teachers wanted message boards, similar to the ones they used on the TES[62] website, where 'it's always full of teachers just talking and sharing ideas and having a good moan' (interview 42, aged 24). These forms of communication and participation were seen as favourable by some teachers because they can be accessed at any point in the day and take less time; 'a minute and you could just press send' (interview 40, NUT Member). It was not only teachers in their twenties who exhibited a preference for online discursive spaces over union meetings:

> I don't really want to go to a remote location in a pub...on a Monday night to talk about my views...there's probably a way to do that online, on the website...*if there was a community and I knew about that community...where there's online debate going on*, I would probably be more ready and able to access that (interview 28, NUT Member, aged 38).

There was also an indication from interviews that the national-level union was, to some extent, trying to streamline union participation into forms which were easier and essentially quicker for members to engage in, like for instance, the survey. One Regional Officer talked of the extensive use of membership surveys to quickly and efficiently gather teachers' views on workplace issues and use them to inform union policies and campaigns (interview 4). For some of the local union activists interviewed, however, this type of contact with members signalled a qualitative change in what constitutes a union campaign; a change which bypasses communicative interaction:

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[62] *Times Educational Supplement*, www.tes.co.uk

> A campaign is a survey and thousands of pieces of paper and that's all it ever consists of and that really winds me up because a campaign for me means to get up out of the office, you go and visit the schools, and you make a *very public face* with all your members...we'd actually ring up and say, 'right can we come in and *speak to members*?' We go on the streets with petitions and *talk to people* (interview 6, NUT Assistant Local Association Secretary and National Executive Member).

The real casualty when union campaigns are adapted to members' experience of work is, therefore, communicative rationality. Surveys may be effective tools for quickly vetting members' opinions, but they do not embroil members in discussion and debate. As interviewee 28 argued, 'the only time they *(the NUT)* seem to contact me is when they want a response to a survey or they send me something about membership fees. There's not a kind of personal touch' (interview 28, NUT Member). This 'personal touch', which involves members actually speaking to one-another, was what some union activists saw as the essence of a campaign and the most enjoyable part of being a union representative. Interviewee 6 for instance stated that, 'I love going out to the schools and trying to convince them that the NUT is right...that they should be backing the NUT...you know, face-to-face with the members, that's the best part of the job really', whilst interviewee 5 argued that that at her recent meeting 'it was actually very pleasant to be sitting talking to these members...and hearing their ideas on different things'. Furthermore, it was widely recognised by union officials that speaking to members face-to-face about the union was the most effective tool for recruitment.

An additional problem with survey-based communications is that they tend to involve those 'thousands of pieces of paper' (interview 6, NUT National Executive Member) that teachers claim that they can do without considering existing concerns around workplace bureaucracy. Many interviewees talked for example about how

teachers were put off by this form of participation, harbouring a distinct distaste for it because, like meetings, it *feels* too much like work. Interviewees commented that teachers, 'just don't want to have a piece of paper in their hand' (interview 10, NUT Division Secretary), and that:

> People are so overwhelmed with pieces of paper that they don't necessarily read in it what you would like them to read... People will phone and say 'I've got this piece of paper here now, is it still too late to do something, I've only just found it'. It'll have been on the pile of paper on their desk (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary).

Summary

This section has argued that the colonisation of teachers' workplaces has had an impact upon, what Schutz called the 'spatiotemporal' organisation of their lifeworld (Habermas 1987, 128-129). Teachers' experience of work essentially undermines resources of communicative action by contributing towards a lack of time and space for union members to be involved in 'discursive will-formation'. In the process, the conditions for reflection, discussion and debate between union members are eroded, and along with them, the resources essential in 2004-5 for politicising and collectivising workplace grievances.

In this context, the NUT has sought to establish alternative discursive spaces and new ways of communicating with members, each harbouring varying degrees of potential for opening up spaces in which genuine discussion can take place. Whilst survey-based forms of participation perhaps compound the loss of communicative rationality, strategies like online communities of debate seem, for those interviewed, to hold more promise. In fact, as one NUT Division Secretary stated, 'anything that gets people talking and communicating is helpful' (interview 17), and as such even

CPD[63] courses, which encourage participation outside of the political dimension, may help to establish communicative interaction amongst teachers. Some argued that these spaces in which interaction can take place form vital resources for mobilising teachers at 'crisis points' in education, because when 'the network is there they come out of the woodwork if there is a problem' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary). Discursive spaces are therefore essential for cementing those 'permanent' and often 'invisible networks' within social movements, which can draw teachers into organised union resistance at points of 'contention' (McAdam, et al. 2001). There is more to be said on networks, however, in the next section, which examines the interconnection between resources of communicative action and other 'lifeworld resources' relating to society, personality and culture.

SECTION THREE: MOBILISATION AND RESOURCES RELATING TO SOCIETY, PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

Section two argued that the narrowing of discursive space for union members leads to an erosion of resources of communicative action needed for union mobilisation. The lack of discursive space for members in itself complicates the task of collectivising and politicising workplace grievances. This is not the only point of complication however. As highlighted in section one, communicative action is also the medium through which society, personality and culture are reproduced. Without it, the resources that these components of the lifeworld supply also become scarce. Habermas states that:

> Communicative action serves to transmit and renew cultural knowledge…it serves social integration and the establishment

[63] Continuous Professional Development

> of solidarity...finally...communicative action serves the formation of personal identities (Habermas 1987, 137).

Applying this logic, interaction between union members enables them to: a) transmit stocks of cultural knowledge (like for example, the traditions of the movement and memories of past struggle); b) to cement solidarities, which integrate them as a group; and c) to serve the formation of 'union identities' through, for example, what industrial relations literature calls, 'union socialisation' (Fuller and Hester 1998; Sverke and Sjoberg 1995). With limited spaces for interaction, however, the NUT loses to some extent the resources relating to these three components of the lifeworld. This section explores how a lack of these 'lifeworld resources' contributes to tendencies towards individualisation, disconnection and disaffection amongst union members, and in particular, how it relates to the problem of mobilising young members.

Individualisation and disconnection

The reduction of opportunities for communicative interaction amongst union members means that, as Habermas puts it, 'the resource of "social solidarity" becomes scarce' (Habermas 1987, 141). In fact, it can be argued that the lack of time and space for interaction amongst union members contributes towards an *individualisation* of workplace experience and union membership, compounding the existing tendencies in this direction highlighted in chapter seven. This process of individualisation has two components.

Firstly, there was much evidence from interviews to suggest that union members in schools were, in many cases, isolated from one another and from the union, leading some to argue that that 'I don't think that members feel at all

connected to the union' (interview 33, NUT Local Committee Member). Several interviewees talked for example about how the lack of contact with other members within school made the union a 'faceless' organisation (interview 35, NUT Member); one which was, for them, devoid of a visible community and at best, was reduced to a 'voice on a telephone' (interview 38, NUT Member). One young teacher stated that:

> I wish there was *more of a face* to the NUT at the school I'm in because I don't think that I see the NUT at school as a *group of people*...it would be good if I could *see the community* throughout the school, so you can recognise people (interview 39, NUT Member, aged 23).

In a context where 'service' models of trade unionism tend to suggest to teachers a situation where, as chapter seven highlighted, the 'union is not us but works for us', the lack of a visible community with which they can identify compounds a passive relationship between union and member. Some members commented that they 'wouldn't be aware of who were NUT members' (interview 1), and that they 'didn't have a clue which person you'd have gone to' (interview 35) to discuss workplace concerns. As a result, one young NUT official was struck by the lack of 'networking' amongst union members, arguing that '*people don't actually talk to each other.* I don't expect our staff know who is an NUT member' (interview 33, NUT Local Committee Member, aged 23). Consequently, a Regional Officer discussed the vital need to visit schools and to talk to teachers in areas where union participation is poor:

> We introduce ourselves, and say if you want to talk about any issues and any problems you've got...because if you've actually met people then you've got a face and you're no longer a name on the bottom of a piece of paper (interview 4, NUT Regional Officer).

It is not surprising therefore that with limited opportunities for interaction, members within schools do not necessarily see the NUT as 'a group of people' who take action collectively. Additionally, as chapter seven also highlighted, networks amongst union members are themselves a key resource for participation. Survey and interview data both showed that members were more inclined to attend union meetings when they knew other members who were going, or if they were personally asked. This was particularly the case for young teachers, one of whom stated:

> I wouldn't want to turn up somewhere where you don't actually know anybody and they probably all know each other...that can be daunting. If the rest of the school were going then I'd be more likely to go along with them (interview 41, NUT Member, aged 23).

Connections between union members were also seen as crucial for recruiting new activists to official positions:

> You're always encouraging people to be involved and for many of us that is how we were brought in anyway, you know, you seem to be interested, you're a new face, would you like to be president next time? That's the type of activity that goes on because those are the people you meet (interview 22, NUT Division Secretary and National Executive Member).

There was also some indication that disconnection between members in the NUT was something that had not existed to the same extent before 1988, when the union was perceived to be more active, and indeed, last took strike action. One interviewee, who had been a School Representative in the 1980s, stated for example that compared to her previous experience:

> It's very quiet in this school, you wouldn't know that there were unions most of the time...I've never seen anybody actively talking about anything. I wouldn't know who was an

> NUT person. *It's not like a badge you wear anymore as it would have been a long time ago* (interview 43, NUT Member and former School Representative).

This circumstance is clearly connected to differences in political context before and after the 1980s onslaught of anti-union activity and legislation (Seifert 1987; Williams 1997). Many interviewees suggested, however, that wearing the union 'badge' within schools was also something that most teachers were reluctant to do in the present context for fear of 'management effects' (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary). Officials talked about how members were discouraged from active involvement by the perceived hostility of senior management, and the fear that activism would have negative effects on their career and promotion prospects (interviews 10, 12, 22, 34, 43). The phrase often used was that members do not want to 'put their head above the parapet' within schools (interview 2, 8, 10, 11). One Division Secretary argued that 'I still have the feeling that they're frightened of saying that they're members of unions. There seems to be a stigma for some reason' (interview 10). As a result, members in some schools were sometimes 'very loathed to even be named as the School Rep' (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary).

Although the situation has improved in legal terms (for example, employers cannot by law discriminate against union representatives), the introduction of performance management and pay gives head teachers considerable leverage to affect the career of staff deemed to be 'trouble-makers' (interviews 7, 24, 33), meaning that some teachers 'feel like they're always looking over their shoulders' (interview 21, NUT School Representative). One Division Secretary stated that:

> People are still quite scared of the power of heads and concerned about not upsetting the head, 'what are they going to do to me?' And now we've got lots more things like performance-related pay, performance management, targets,

> they feel like they are going to be penalised, they feel like there are lots of ways that the head can get at them if they want to (interview 2, NUT Division Secretary).

The extent to which heads actually use these powers against union representatives was debated by interviewees, but what they did agree upon was that the threat posed by senior management creates an atmosphere of fear, which to some extent forces teachers to conceal their identity as union members and contributes towards the erosion of a visible union community in school. One School Representative argued for example that because of fear of the head, union members within his school were not 'prepared to put their names to things' (interview 21). Furthermore, others suggested that what was referred to in chapter five as the 'competitive individualism' introduced into schools by performance management systems (Merson 2000, 158-9), contributes to a culture amongst some staff where, rather than pursuing goals collectively, 'you look after yourself first and others later' (interview 34, NUT School Representative).

Secondly, the individualisation of workplace experience and union membership means that without interaction between members, grievances at work tend to be defined by teachers as 'personal' problems, rather than collective and political ones. One Division Secretary said that:

> The biggest single thing that I find is that you go into a school and someone's got an issue and actually everybody's got an issue with it, but nobody wants to come together collectively and do something about it (interview 11, NUT Division Secretary).

This lack of willingness to take part in collective action to address workplace concerns is not, therefore, simply the result of a lack of time or interest. It is also down to a lack of awareness that the issues that concern individual teachers are the

issues that concern other colleagues. One interviewee talked for example about how the problem of work-related stress could be helped by collectivising it, and showing that as a result of workplace demands, it is a problem that tends to affect teachers as a group. He argued that the best strategy for dealing with what teachers saw as work problems of a 'personal' nature was to get union members talking to each other, by whatever means:

> I suggested that she and her friends from school went to the pub and had a few drinks that the union would pay for...They did go out and did have a few drinks and they did start talking to each other and she came along to the last meeting looking wonderful. If that helps then I'm going to keep on collectivising things (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary).

A lack of opportunity for interaction between union members therefore contributes towards individualisation and disconnection, as what Habermas calls resources of 'social solidarity' become scarce (Habermas 1987, 141). As a result, the NUT becomes less well integrated as a group, and is less able to exert what Olson talked about as the 'social pressures' on members of 'small groups' to participate in collective action (Olson 1965). Olson argued for instance that small groups, like trade union organisations within a workplace, can usually command participation of members through face to face interaction, with the group ostracising those who attempt to 'free ride'[64] (Olson 1965). What is significant about these 'small groups' is not essentially their size, however, but their level of integration (or the component of the lifeworld that Habermas calls 'society'). Olson's social pressures are essentially those 'incentives' to participate which can only be exerted in a context of communicative interaction amongst members, and breakdown not necessarily when

[64] Olson's application of 'rational action' theory to issues around collective action was discussed in chapter seven.

groups become too 'large', but when members become too disconnected from one-another. For the data presented here suggests that even within very small trade union groups within schools, these social pressures disappear when union membership becomes an individualised and 'faceless' experience. What really counts, then, is not size of group, but the availability of 'lifeworld resources' relating to 'society'.

Disaffection amongst union members

The process of individualisation does not, however, only have an impact on possibilities for union members acting as a group. It also has an impact on the ability of NUT activists to address the problem of 'disaffection' amongst the membership. Chapter seven suggested that members' non-participation in the NUT could be put down to a lack of time, over and above apathetic attitudes. Despite this observation, interviews with NUT officials still highlighted a certain level of political disaffection amongst members, which was cited as an obstacle to union organising. One Division Secretary stated for example that 'there is a general level of 'what can I do about it?' which is very pervasive' (interview 25). Furthermore, some members exhibited disaffected attitudes in interview, expressing that nothing they do will change current political situations, or alter the policies that affect their workplace. Members stated for example that, 'I think, well what's going to happen is going to happen' (interview 35); that 'people feel that you can't make a difference' (interview 43); and that action is pointless because it will not achieve concrete victories (interview 35). One interviewee argued that:

> I think people see the union as having far less power these days...it appears we are powerless. People are just fed up of it...why bother going to another meeting to talk about the issues when we know the issues anyway (interview 8, NUT Local Association Secretary).

Although some interviewees did describe teachers with these kinds of views as 'apathetic' (interviews 15, 33, 21, 14, 28, 36, 38), most challenged this interpretation of their attitude. It was argued instead that a general level of disaffection amongst union members is easy to comprehend considering the trajectory of teacher trade unions since the 1980s strikes. The loss of national negotiating rights over pay which marked the end of the strikes in 1987 was, as one Regional Officer put it, 'always a disaster for us' in terms of the union's ability to mobilise (interview 4). Further still, interviewees pointed to the lack of major victories since this time, with the NUT unable to prevent the introduction of measures like SATs and performance-related pay. Instead they could only, as one teacher argued, 'fight the worst excesses of it' (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary). This left members lacking the 'concrete victories' which prove that union activism is an effective use of their time (interview 5, NUT Division Secretary). In this context, and considering the increased pressures of work post 1988, interviewees argued that what most members exhibit are not apathetic attitudes, but a lack of confidence to take action:

> I would say that people who work in schools generally lack confidence to do certain things. The most important thing is that changes. A word like apathy seems to be too static...Circumstances create a situation where they lose their confidence; they lose their will to do anything to change their lives (interview 16, NUT Division Secretary).

The point to be made here is that considering the recent history of teacher unionism, and the subsequent lack of confidence amongst teachers, communicative interaction between union members is all the more crucial as a 'resource' for union mobilisation in the present context. Union activists argued for example that the most effective way to overcome the feeling that action cannot change situations was to debate issues

with members; to convince members of the union's stance; to inform members about educational politics; and most importantly, to inspire members with a sense of agency. One Regional Officer commented that because of the context in which teacher unions currently operate, he spends a great deal of time 'trying to give people the confidence that they can actually change things' (interview 3). Other local activists talked of how they 'try and visit schools...and try and encourage more people to participate' (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary).

Actually talking to, and encouraging union members, is therefore one of the mechanisms through which anger and concern over workplace issues can be politicised and translated into organised action; addressing that gap between concerns and actions which was highlighted in the previous chapter. Interviewee 19 for example discussed the SATs campaign of 2004 and argued that it was defeated because not enough members turned out to vote. In this circumstance she stated that 'people were still angry' and that 'you can say, well actually, what we should do is make sure that we *talk to enough other people* in the union' in order to convince them of the value of returning their ballot paper (interview 19, NUT School Representative and Division Secretary).

Furthermore, a major part of overcoming feelings of disaffection and the belief that collective action will not change situations is providing members with a meaningful relationship to the trade union movement as a whole. This is done, in part, by passing on the cultural traditions of the movement and memories of past struggle. As union activists pointed out in interview, 'the whole point of being in a trade union is the belief that by acting together you can actually change things' (interview 25, NUT Division Secretary). The belief that resistance through the union can bring about real changes in working life was particularly prevalent amongst the

generation of officers who had gone to university in the 1960s and had been involved in a range of past struggles:

> I'm a child of the '60s, I went to university in 1968 and politics was very much on the agenda, and at that time being involved in trade unions meant that *we would change the world* (interview 12, NUT Regional Secretary, aged 54).

> I was absolutely appalled by what was going on in my name in Vietnam...Eventually the US had to pull out...it was because of the kind of protest that people like me were making...I think that probably gave us the idea that through protest *we could bring about other kinds of changes as a generation* (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary, aged 57).

Other activists talked about 'lots of fond memories' of past struggle (interview 26, aged 53), or as one Division Secretary put it, 'the heritage we had' (interview 22, aged 57). In particular, memories of the 1980s teacher strikes, despite the defeats involved, provided examples of mass action on the part of NUT members which were in stark contrast to the present situation:

> Memories of going to meetings in Cheshire - not Manchester, not Liverpool - but Cheshire, where we filled to overflowing ...getting over 2000 people at meetings, not enough places to sit...quite extraordinary levels of turnout and level of activity...there's still a large sway of activists now who remember that time (interview 3, NUT Regional Officer, aged 48).

The past successes, traditions, and memories of the movement do not, however, have to remain solely for those who were involved. Through communicative interaction this cultural knowledge can be shared amongst union members in the present context. Indeed, participation in interaction helps overcome disaffection not only because it provides a mechanism through which members can be given confidence and encouragement, but because it provides a space where the cultural traditions of trade

unionism and memories of past activism can help supply what Habermas calls 'resources of meaning' for union members (Habermas 1987, 140). It follows in turn that the reduction of opportunities for interaction (which characterises teachers' workplaces in 2004-5) contributes towards a situation where this cultural reproduction within the NUT is disrupted, and 'resources of "meaning" become scarce' (Habermas 1987, 140).

The problem of mobilising young members

Chapter six used survey and interview data to establish that young teachers in the NUT (aged '30 and under') participate less than teachers aged '31 and over' in union roles, meetings, ballots and campaigns. As such it was concluded that a particular problem exists for the NUT around the participation of young members; a problem which is reflected in the wider concerns of the TUC in 2004-5. The issue of young teachers was talked about in interviews with NUT officials, who argued that they had 'lost a generation' of activists (interview 22, NUT National Executive Member), and expressed concern over the future of the union's democratic structures. Furthermore, survey data suggested that the problem of mobilising young members was perhaps more significant than the problem of mobilising female members, with the relationship between sex and participation in the NUT reversing to some extent in the youngest generation. At this point it is possible to use the arguments made in this section about individualisation, disconnection, and disaffection to shed light on the problem of mobilising young teachers.

It has been argued in this chapter that 'lifeworld resources' are essential for union mobilisation, yet are constantly undermined by the colonisation of teachers' workplaces in 2004-5. As a result, there are tendencies towards an individualisation

of workplace experience and a disconnection between union members. Without a 'visible community' in which collective reflection, discussion and debate can take place, workplace concerns cannot be collectivised or politicised, and members cannot be given the confidence that union participation may bring about change.

Opportunities for interaction are, however, even further reduced for young teachers. Chapter six noted for instance that young members were proportionately less likely than other members to have made contact with the NUT office or their School Representative. Furthermore, conventional forms of communication with the union, like the meetings, are especially unavailable to young teachers, who tend to have even less time to attend. Interviews indicated, for example, that workload is more excessive for teachers at the beginning of their career, with much time being devoted to lesson planning and getting established within a school (interview 24, NUT Division Secretary). Survey data also reflected this, with young teachers' key concern at work being 'work/life balance'. These extra demands on an already packed working day also mean that young teachers have less time for that personal reflection on workplace concerns which, as chapter seven highlighted, can help prioritise grievances for union action.

Furthermore, this lack of opportunity for interaction between young members and the union erodes crucial resources for the formation of union identities. As chapter seven highlighted, young teachers tend to be recruited to the union on the basis of the services it can provide for them as an individual, like for instance, workplace insurance. In this context, it was no surprise that young teachers were particularly likely to view their relationship to the union as a consumer one, and to see the union working for them without their participation. This view was compounded by the fact that the young members interviewed tended to lack

knowledge about the trade union movement. As one young teacher put it, 'I had no idea what the union was there for' (interview 32, aged 23), whilst another stated that, 'did I actually think that...workers joined a union? No, I wouldn't have associated working with a union at all' (interview 35, aged 31).

Without a 'visible community' within schools, the view that the NUT is not a collective campaigning group but an 'insurance company' that 'works without their participation' (interview 7, NUT Member), is compounded rather than challenged. Furthermore, the inability to 'see the community' of union members within school, as one young teacher put it (interview 39, NUT Member, aged 23), leaves young members outside of union networks, which, as argued in chapter seven, are themselves important resources for participation. The lack of connection between union members in school is in fact even more significant for young teachers, who more than any other group, stated that 'knowing someone else who was going', or 'being personally asked', would encourage them to attend union meetings.

In this situation, there is also a reduction of space for interaction in which participants, as Mead pointed out, can be socialised into the values of the group and given capacities for action. This means that young teachers increasingly lack what industrial relations literature calls 'union socialisation': a key element of active membership (Fuller and Hester 1998; Sverke and Sjoberg 1995). As such, resources relating to personal identities become scarce (Habermas 1987, 141). Union socialisation is also important because it involves the transmission of the cultural traditions and memories of the movement, which it was previously argued, have a role in overcoming feelings of disaffection by supplying 'resources of meaning'. Through socialisation, Habermas argues, 'new situations' in the lifeworld are connected up with 'historical time':

> It secures for succeeding generations the acquisition of generalised competencies for action and sees to it that individual life-histories are in harmony with the collective forms of life (Habermas 1987, 141).

Without the transmission of cultural knowledge through socialisation, young members may become alienated from the trade union movement as a whole. This circumstance perhaps accounts, in part at least, for the concern over the 'lost generation' not only within the NUT, but the TUC in general (chapter seven). Disaffected attitudes, for example, were particularly prevalent amongst the young teachers interviewed. One young primary school teacher said that she did not get actively involved with the NUT because of a lack of time, but 'I also think that I'm just one person and I'm not going to make that much difference because they'll *(the government)* do what they want to do anyway at the end of the day' (interview 32, aged 23). Another young teacher argued that collective union action was unable to address teachers' workplace concerns:

> I think that teachers realise that unions have good ideas and that they have a place, but actually in real life there doesn't seem to be a huge amount that they can do to make teachers' lives better (interview 41, NUT Member, aged 23).

Providing young teachers with a sense of agency and the confidence to take collective action was, however, seen by some interviewees as all the more difficult because of the particular characteristics of their 'political generation' (Mannheim 1952). Mannheim defines a political generation as a group of people who have experienced the same political events at the same point in their life-cycle (Mannheim 1952, 276-320). Whilst the majority of the union activists belonged to the generation whose identities were cemented in the tumultuous events of the 1960s, young

teachers in comparison were described as 'Thatcher's children' (interview 12, 20, 24); a generation who 'haven't had the same sort of political history' (interview 19), and subsequently lack experiences where collective struggle drives change. One Division Secretary commented that:

> In order to make you aware of the kind of changes...that can come about in society you have to have some kind of political development, you have to have some kind of confrontation perhaps...something has to happen for people to be aware that there are ways. And the generation of my children, who are 25 to 35, it simply hasn't happened to them in the same way that it happened to us, people who are in their 50s and 60s. They have certainly not been politicised in the same way....without a doubt we were more politicised in my generation (interview 23, NUT Division Secretary, aged 57).

Due to the political context of their formative years it was also argued that 'younger teachers will have been brought up...with a suspicion of union activity because of events of the past, the way that unions have been painted over the last 20-25 years' (interview 34, NUT School Representative, aged 42), and that their university experiences will not have had the same kind of politicising effect that it did for the '60s generation (interview 18, NUT School Representative, aged 52). A Division Secretary stated that:

> When I went to university...people were very political and very active, so you went to meetings, CND meetings you know, and that was part of the culture of university, whereas now I don't think that it's the same...it's not been a part of peoples' culture, they're not used to doing that...they're not going to start doing it when they become teachers are they? (interview 19, NUT Division Secretary, aged 44).

Young teachers therefore especially lack the *cultural resources* which can help to politicise and collectivise present grievances. These cultural resources involve in particular, memories of past struggle, for within social movements Habermas argues:

> Utopias are important...but memory is just as important...We need a symbolic form of representation for those things for which we have fought, for which collective effort was required...It is terrifying both for past suffering and for past sacrifice, which, without the possibility of a reconciling rememoration, is as good as lost, and *for the identity of those who come later, who, without an awareness of the heritage which they have entered into, can have no idea of who they are* (Habermas 1986, 139-40, my italics).

Considering the extra obstacles that young teachers encounter in relation to communicating with other union members, these cultural resources for mobilisation are in danger of falling by the wayside as the 1960s generation of officers retire. Measures like the establishment of 'virtual' communities of online debate, as well as a 'Young Teachers' Section' within the NUT (2005), perhaps signify however some emerging alternative spaces for communication in which teachers can re-connect, collectivise concerns, give each other confidence, and importantly, pass on collective memories of past struggle.

Summary

This section has argued that the erosion of 'lifeworld resources' relating to society have contributed to tendencies towards individualisation and disconnection amongst union members in schools in 2004-5 because 'resources of social solidarity become scarce' (Habermas 1987, 141). The resultant lack of integration between union members as a group does not only undermine communicative contexts in which social pressures can be exerted on members to participate; it disrupts processes of union socialisation and the production of collective 'union identities'. In addition, it has been suggested that less interaction between union members means that the process of reproducing cultural knowledge and tradition is disrupted and 'resources

of meaning become scarce' (Habermas 1987, 140). This is particularly problematic in the current political context of teacher unionism and education, where disaffected attitudes are comprehendible, and union members have to be given the encouragement and confidence to take action in the belief that changing education is possible.

The last part of this section has applied these arguments to the case of young teachers in the NUT, who were identified in chapter six as posing a particular problem for mobilisation. It was argued that discursive union spaces are even scarcer for young teachers, whilst at the same time being even more crucial as resources for participation. Face-to-face (or perhaps even virtual) communication with other union members is essential if young teachers are to *see* the union as a collective, politically active, 'group of people', who are capable of convincing them, with examples from the past, that resistance is not a futile, but is worth 'finding the time' for within an already packed working day.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has reconsidered the relationship between colonisation and resistance in Habermasian theory, using the empirical material presented in chapters 4-7. Rather than assuming (like the NSM thesis) that colonisation is necessarily a process of politicisation, it has examined empirically the response of teachers as trade unionists to the colonisation of their workplace in 2004-5. Section one picked up on the arguments of previous chapters to clarify that although the colonisation of teachers' workplaces has raised a myriad of concerns and grievances, these grievances have not necessarily become politicised and collectivised by the majority of NUT members. As such the reaction of a large proportion of NUT members to the

colonisation of education has been one of Ray's 'quietism' rather than activism (Ray 1993, 177).

The chapter went on to argue that this was essentially because, as a 'process of erosion', colonisation produces sources of strain, *but also* undermines the 'lifeworld resources' which are required for union mobilisation. Section two for instance showed that discursive space for union members is increasingly undermined as teachers workplaces become restructured and 'modernised'. As a result, section three pointed to tendencies towards individualisation, disconnection, and disaffection amongst union members.

Aspects of social movement literature are right therefore to stress that grievances, or 'strains', are not enough for successful movement mobilisation (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy and Zald 1977). This chapter has developed the resources argument in a distinctly Habermasian direction, however, by suggesting that the *lifeworld itself* is a key resource for struggle. Indeed, it has been argued that the resources which are especially needed for mobilising teachers (and young teachers in particular) in the present educational context are exactly those which have been brought into question; they are resources relating to society, personality and culture, and most importantly, communicative action itself.

CONCLUSION

The debate around Habermas's NSM theory has reached near exhaustion point in the field of sociology. The criticisms aimed at his break between 'old' and 'new' movements are numerous and persuasive. This observation has formed the platform for this thesis, which did not attempt to regurgitate or revive debates around NSM theory, but to take the next logical step and move beyond them. Moving beyond them did not, however, equate to the abandonment of a Habermasian perspective in social movement theory. Indeed, it has been shown here that Habermas's theory of modernity can be revised in such a way that brings present day 'capital/labour' struggles within the scope of dynamics surrounding 'system and lifeworld'. Habermas was, for example, wrong to leave the worker and the workplace outside of his thesis of colonisation. It has been argued that this decision was the result of a series of false conceptual separations underlying his theory of modernity.

These conceptual separations originated in the fundamental distinction that Habermas drew between 'labour' and 'interaction', and moreover, the decision he made to employ this distinction as the basis of a division between 'system' and 'lifeworld'. Placing labour in the system, and interaction in the lifeworld, meant that whilst Habermas criticised Marx for placing 'too much emphasis on labour and work and not enough on communication and culture' (Young 1990, 34), Habermas could be criticised in turn for not placing enough emphasis on 'labour and work' in advanced capitalist societies, or indeed any emphasis upon 'communication and culture' *within* workplaces. For all of Habermas's theoretical development of Adorno and Horkheimer, labour remained where it had always been in German critical theory; tied to instrumental rationality, and tied exclusively to the system. The crux of the problem was that in balancing out what he saw as an overemphasis on

instrumental rationality, Habermas swapped 'social labour' for 'communication' as his key concept and, in doing so, tipped the balance in the other direction and lost sight of the workplace altogether.

Once the false conceptual separations underlying Habermas's theory of modernity had been dismantled, the NSM thesis - which rested ultimately on the idea of a conflict shift from the realm of labour to the realm of interaction - collapsed. What was significant about this theoretical deconstruction was that rather than suggesting the abandonment of Habermas's social movement theory, it opened it up to a wider audience which included the contemporary Labour Movement. Theoretical reassessments did not therefore render the thesis of colonisation defunct; on the contrary, its net of application was widened.

The thesis of colonisation therefore has a utility beyond that prescribed by NSM theory. It can, in fact, as Calhoun argued, be used as a conceptual tool by sociologists looking at a range of social movements, including the contemporary Labour Movement (Calhoun 1995). Establishing, if, and how, this could be done was a large part of this thesis. It did not mark the end of its contribution however. Using a revised Habermasian perspective has generated fresh insight into the key points of fracture in the field of contemporary state education; the direction of educational change; and the specific nature of grievances created in public sector workplaces in modern, Blairite, Britain. Notably, the concept of colonisation has highlighted the 'conflict potential' within public sector workplaces, like schools, because of the policy of 'modernisation'. Colonisation is a particularly useful 'set of lenses' through which to view modernisation because it gets to the heart of that 'clash of logic' between workers and the government over the nature of public sector change. It is not that public sector employees are against modernising and improving their

working practices; quite the contrary, the issue is over the logic, or form of rationality, which is to drive and shape this process of change, for when the government intensifies its involvement in the running of schools:

> ...the partial administrative and economic rationality that is functional to such an economic system *(capitalism)* gradually penetrates and restructures ever broader spheres of life, which should on their own be evolving completely different forms of rationality – that is, practical and moral agencies, democratic and participatory processes of forming a collective will (Habermas 1986, 58-9).

The 'clash of logic' which results from this process has been regarded here as the crux of the struggle between system and lifeworld. Whilst the government seeks to extend 'functional' rationality into schools through modernisation proposals aimed at making the service more efficient, productive and cost-effective, teachers seek to defend the 'communicative' rationality of their workplaces, and in turn, challenge the emphasis placed on targets, statistics, and results. This has been reflected in teachers' discourses around education, with interviewees viewing workplace conflicts as originating from the *constant* interference of the government. Moreover, the government was seen as having a different philosophical approach to education; as prioritising different forms of knowledge about education; and as having an overriding economic and political agenda. Interview accounts were therefore suggestive of 'boundary conflicts' between teachers and the government, and portrayed, in some cases, a moral critique of the 'growth of the system' into schools. In this sense, teachers, as well as New Social Movement actors, were engaged in 'policing the boundaries' between system and lifeworld in the field of state education in 2004-5. Indeed, the policy of modernisation forms a recurring point of conflict and strike action by a range of public sector trade unions in the UK today, from the Fire

Brigades Union (FBU) to the Ambulance Service Union (ASU), and the Public Service Workers' Union (UNISON). As such, Habermas's colonisation thesis has been shown to be politically relevant and important to our understanding of modern British society and struggles happening in public sector workplaces.

Whilst not diminishing the importance of economic issues like wages and workforce deskilling, colonisation can show that what is essentially at stake in public sector struggles is the way in which people work, the nature of relationships between colleagues in the workplace, and the skills, capacities and identity of workers. Teachers concerns and grievances at work in 2004-5 were, for example, a direct result of government education policy since 1988, and the emerging workforce remodelling programme contained within plans for the modernisation of schools. Although varied, it was argued that these concerns were all of a particular type; they were issues which arose at the level of social integration in the workplace and revolved around changes in the culture of education (from public service to private business), changes in professional identity (teachers' skills and capacities), and changes in professional solidarity (relationships within and between schools). In short, teachers' grievances clustered around the restructuring of the three components of their 'lifeworld at work': society, personality, and culture.

Like NSMs, therefore, the concerns that teacher trade unionists held were in many cases cultural and symbolic in nature; they were about the cultural traditions of education, 'styles' of working, and professional identity. They were also, however, intrinsically material. The concern to defend professional status from the threat posed by classroom assistants taking whole classes was, for instance, an issue of protecting qualified teachers' wages as much as an issue of professional recognition. Indeed, attacks on professionalism were seen as part of attempts to deskill the teacher

workforce, depress wages, and make public services cheaper to run and more attractive to private investors. These latter aims were wrapped up in the language of modernisation in terms of improving service 'efficiency' and creating 'flexibility' in the workforce. The overall context, in which teachers' 'lifeworld at work' is restructured, is, therefore, a thoroughly economic one. Subsequently, colonisation is only a process sparking primarily 'post-material' concerns if it is looked at only outside of primarily material contexts. The findings of the research concur in this respect with the theoretical point being made: symbolic and material reproduction (and therefore the politics of recognition and distribution), are actually intimately connected, and as such, Habermas's characterisation of 'system' and 'lifeworld' in terms of a division between 'labour' and 'interaction' represents a false separation of them.

Contrary to expectations generated by the NSM thesis, however, adopting a Habermasian perspective to look at the colonisation of schools has not led to an analysis of trade union *activism* as such. Instead, it has brought us to an examination of the problem of 'membership non-participation', or what Ray terms 'quietism', in trade unions like the NUT (Ray 1993, 177). Research suggested for example that the colonisation of the 'lifeworld at work' was not a process which necessarily became politicised in the context of UK state education in 2004-5. Although activists in the largest of the teacher unions, the NUT, had campaigned in 2004-5 against policies like SATs and the remodelling of the profession, survey data relating to over a thousand teachers suggested that the NUT, generally speaking, suffered from low levels of active mobilisation amongst its membership. Levels of attendance at meetings, involvement in campaigns, ballots, and official positions, were for, example, low in relation to the NUT's own expectations of democratic participation.

These findings were supported by interview material from both members and officials in the NUT. Issues around membership non-participation, and the participation of young teachers, were also at the top of the NUT's own agenda at the time of research, with attempts made in 2004-5 to address what was considered as a grave problem for union democracy. Research verified the problem of mobilising young members in the NUT. Significantly, the strongest statistical relationships in the survey, however, surrounded the connection between sex and participation in official union positions, and suggested a proportionate under-representation of women in union roles. This under-representation forms an even more pressing concern for the NUT considering that 76 per cent of its members are female. The gender dimension of mobilisation was not, however, explored in this thesis and remains a topic in need of further research. Instead, the case of young members was seen to overshadow this concern, with survey analysis suggesting that the patterns around sex and participation were reversing to some extent in the youngest generation of members. This was a significant finding from the survey data, which had not been highlighted in previous analyses (like the LRD Report, 2004b), and points to possible changes emerging in the conventional patterns around political participation in this context.

Whilst a Habermasian perspective has helped to highlight the 'conflict potential' in schools because of strains introduced by government education policy, it has also been used to unravel the 'paradox of participation' in the NUT. Whilst membership to the NUT has continued to increase in recent years; the active mobilisation of its members has not. Teachers concerns are numerous; but union actions, for the majority, are not. It was argued using data primarily from interviews that there were two main reasons accounting for these low levels of membership

participation: firstly, some teachers lacked the necessary motivation to be active within the union, often viewing their membership as no more than an 'insurance policy' and themselves as no more than passive consumers of union services; secondly, teachers lacked essential resources for participation, in particular, time. The significance of resources for enabling union participation could not be understated. In many cases, members had all the necessary 'pro-union' and political attitudes associated with active involvement, but still did not act because they lacked the time to participate, or indeed the space in their lives to reflect and make workplace concerns a priority for action. The overriding emphasis that existing trade union participation literature puts upon a direct correlation between members' attitudes, beliefs and actions is therefore misplaced. What is needed is a greater appreciation of constraint. Focusing upon the availability of key resources for participation is a useful start point for future research in this respect.

Habermas has also been criticised here for overlooking the importance of resources for social movement mobilisation, concentrating instead upon the 'strains' provided by colonisation. It is clear from this research that strains are not always enough; we cannot assume in the context of education that colonisation will provoke grievances that *necessarily* become politicised and organised by trade unionists. In fact, the reaction to colonisation that Ray termed 'quietism' was always one of the three possible responses to the 'colonisation of the lifeworld' (alongside 'offensive' and 'defensive' activism) (Ray 1993, 177). As a 'process of erosion' which undermines existing forms of personality, society, and culture, colonisation could lead to a loss of motivation for action. Habermas recognised this, but in the NSM thesis assumed that the process of erosion was necessarily also one of politicisation. He posited the question, 'is the process of erosion…at the same time a process of

politicisation which can create potentials for action?' (Habermas 1974, 6-7), but provided a somewhat selective answer drawn from his observations of emerging movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The empirical material drawn from this case study of education suggests that as a process of erosion which undermines resources of society, personality and culture, and ultimately, communicative action itself, colonisation complicates the conditions for resistance on the part of teachers as much as it provides the 'strains' for them to organise around.

Whilst existing parts of the social movements literature can point us beyond Habermas's problematic 'strains equal actions' approach to mobilisation, they cannot highlight the significance of what, by using Habermas, can be flagged up as specifically 'lifeworld resources' for collective struggle. The resources argument has therefore been developed here in a distinctly Habermasian direction. Whilst Habermas does not talk about resources in relation to social movement mobilisation, he does talk of the 'lifeworld' itself as a resource for action (Habermas 1987, 135). Here, Habermas provides useful insights for theories around trade union participation, and indeed, political participation, more widely. 'Lifeworld resources' include those 'cultural resources' within the trade union movement, those resources of 'social solidarity' between union members, and the resources necessary to transmit a 'union identity'. It has been suggested here that these 'lifeworld resources' are of utmost importance to NUT members in the current context, where tendencies towards individualised and depoliticised union membership predominate. Discursive spaces in which members can communicate and interact which one-another are essential if workplace grievances are to be politicised and collectivised. The 'functional reorganisation' of education however constantly undermines these discursive spaces for union members, and in doing so, disrupts the processes of

cultural reproduction, socialisation and social integration which take place within and through them.

With these processes disrupted, resources of meaning, identity, and solidarity become scarce for union members; contributing towards individualisation, disconnection and disaffection. The table in figure 9.1 below shows what Habermas calls the various 'manifestations of crisis when reproduction processes are disturbed' (Habermas 1987, 143).

Figure 9.1
Manifestations of Crisis When Reproduction Processes Are Disturbed (Pathologies)

Structural Components / Disturbances in the domain of	Culture	Society	Person	Dimension of evaluation
Cultural reproduction	**Loss of meaning**	Withdrawal of legitimation	Crisis in orientation and education	Rationality of knowledge
Social Integration	Unsettling of collective identity	**Anomie**	Alienation	Solidarity of members
Socialisation	Rupture of tradition	Withdrawal of motivation	**Psychopathologies**	Personal responsibility

Source: Habermas 1987, 143

The table in figure 9.1 shows that the resources of the lifeworld essential to mobilising collective struggle are exactly those resources which are placed in question by the colonisation of education. The disruption of communicative processes which reproduce lifeworld resources for union members is, furthermore, reflected in the 'lost generation' of NUT activists; those young members who not only especially lack resources of time and space for participation, but who, because of a lack of interaction with other union members, also lack the more cultural resources relating to knowledge of the trade union movement, its traditions and

memories of past struggle, as well as those social networks which, data suggested, encourage participation. When the concept of resources is widened to include the lifeworld itself, problems of motivation and disaffection within the NUT (and what some parts of the literature term 'membership apathy') also become problems of resources. The resources which are significant in this respect are communicative action, and through it, the reproduction of social solidarity, union identity, and meaning.

Within sociology to date, trade union literature has highlighted to some extent the importance of resources of identity by examining the role of 'union socialisation' in membership activism (Fuller and Hester 1998; Sverke and Sjoberg 1995). Literature around political participation, on the other hand, has flagged up the importance of resources of 'social solidarity'. This latter point has been made most recently in work around 'social capital' and 'social networks' (Crossley 2002; Putnam 2000; Snow, et al. 1980). These themes are currently central to the sociological agenda, suggesting that utilising Habermas's key concepts can generate insights on topics of current importance to the field. Existing literature has had less to say however about the 'cultural' resources needed for active social movement and trade union mobilisation, beyond theories about movements 'framing' meanings in order to appeal to potential participants (Appelrouth 1999). Resources of 'meaning' drawn from the reproduction of the cultural traditions of the movement, and memories of past struggle, are shown here to be crucial in the present context of the NUT. Furthermore, they shed light on the problem of mobilising young members, who belong to a qualitatively different 'political generation' and lack these cultural resources more acutely than other groups. A Habermasian perspective on resource mobilisation can therefore offer important avenues for further research on issues

around political participation, and the participation of young people in particular. The role of collective 'memories' of past struggle represents an exciting avenue for further research in this respect.

The main drawback of the research presented here is that it can only provide a snapshot of levels of active mobilisation within the NUT at a given time. This is an inherent limitation of the one-off survey method, and to some extent, one-off interviews. The point, however, is that the relationship between colonisation and mobilisation is not in any way a static one. Membership participation is related to 'waves of contention' in the education field as much as any other, as reflected in the 1980s teacher strikes and the history of teacher militancy in general (Seifert 1987).

Furthermore, the availability of lifeworld resources also changes; in fact, the importance of communicative action and resources of solidarity, identity and culture, resonate with moves being made currently within the NUT and the TUC. Alongside moves towards the 'organising' model of trade unionism (Heery, et al. 2003), which fosters membership involvement through grassroots networks, the NUT in 2004-5 was seeking new ways of communicating with members and new ways of opening up alternative discursive spaces. NUT officials talked in particular of the 'going to the members movement', of interacting with members online, and of encouraging participation outside of the political dimension through continuous professional development courses. In 2005, the NUT also set up a 'Young Teachers Section', which has its own Annual Conference in which young members can interact with the movement and with each other. It is these permanent, and often less visible, movement networks which have the potential to become mobilised for collective struggle at future 'crisis points' in education.

In this respect, the ways in which social movements themselves employ strategies to rejuvenate lifeworld resources, and importantly, internal public spheres, should not be overlooked. Indeed, that membership participation is expected by the NUT, and low levels of active mobilisation are seen as problematic, is indicative of the importance of fostering internal public spheres to the trade union movement. In fact, viewing state education through the lens of colonisation has highlighted just how substantial the conflict potential within schools is, and the snapshot of mobilisation in 2004-5 cannot determine the trajectory of future conflict and resistance from within education and teacher unions. The fact that teachers for instance feel the need for membership in trade unions more than any other sector of UK workers, and that membership numbers continue to rise, reflects in some ways the existence of this conflict potential. Further research is needed, however, if the question of exactly when and how 'quietism' as a consequence of colonisation turns into activism against it, is to be addressed. What is clear from this investigation is that the availability of 'lifeworld resources' will play a key part in determining the possibilities for mobilisation.

Utilising Habermas to explore trade unionism in the present context has not only generated insight on a substantive level, and in relation to major sociological themes, it has also generated insight into Habermas's theory of modernity itself and has led to revisions and refinements in his key concepts. In particular, the separation between 'system' and 'lifeworld', which continues to attract substantial attention in sociology and political science, has been reformulated here in more accurate and plausible terms. Equally, the concept of colonisation has been refined through its empirical application.

What Habermas sought to achieve with this concept was a reformulation of the relationship between reason and resistance, which, as a theme, had dominated German critical theory since Marx and Weber. Through the concept of colonisation, Habermas was able to break from the interpretation of this relationship offered by his predecessors. Rather than instrumental reason being the key to conscious control *over* the system (Marx and Luckács), or the path to complete domination *by* the system (Weber, Adorno and Horkheimer), Habermas put it in its rightful place *within* the system. Here, it is not the threat it was considered to be; on the contrary, as Marx pointed out, it makes the system of production all the more efficient. Instead, the problem comes when instrumental, or more accurately speaking, 'functional' rationality oversteps its mark and tries to take over areas of life which must run on an entirely different logic. For Habermas, this situation is the hallmark of advanced capitalist societies, and in the NSM thesis he argues it leads directly to resistance.

The material presented here has enabled the relationship between reason and resistance, reformulated by Habermas in terms of colonisation and resistance, to be treated as a question which is open to empirical sociological research. What it has shown is that in UK state education in 2004-5, colonisation is related to a high 'conflict potential' but is not necessarily a process of politicisation. In fact, it is a process which erodes the resources most needed by teacher trade unionists in the present context to mobilise around the strains it produces – these are the resources of the lifeworld, and, most importantly, communicative action itself.

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Interview number	Sex	Age	Region	Teaching Sector	Union Position	Duration of membership (in years)
1	Male	28	SW	Secondary	Member	7
2	Female	51	NW	Secondary	Division Secretary National Executive Member	30
3	Male	48	NW	-	Regional Officer	26
4	Male	50	NW	-	Regional Officer	29
5	Female	51	NW	-	Division Secretary	30
6	Female	55	NW	Special needs	Local Association Member National Executive Member	20
7	Female	52	NW	Secondary	Member	30
8	Female	41	NW	Primary	Local Association Secretary	20
9	Male	40	SW	Secondary	Local Association Member School Representative	14
10	Female	50	NW	Supply	Division Secretary	Not stated
11	Male	52	NW	Secondary	Division Secretary	30
12	Male	54	SW	-	Regional Officer	32
13	Female	37	SW	Secondary	Member	10
14	Male	53	SW	Primary	Member	31
15	Female	57	NW	Secondary	Local Association Member	36
16	Male	54	NW	Secondary	Division Secretary	16
17	Male	50	NW	-	Division Secretary	28
18	Male	52	NW	Secondary	Local Association Member	22
19	Female	44	SW	Secondary	Division Secretary	23

Interview number	Sex	Age	Region	Teaching Sector	Union Position	Duration of membership (in years)
20	Female	52	SW	-	Division Secretary National Executive Member	32
21	Male	59	SW	Secondary	School Representative	36
23	Male	57	SW	Secondary	Division Secretary	29
24	Male	57	SW	Retired	Division Secretary	38
25	Male	49	SW	Secondary	Division Secretary	20
26	Female	53	London	Behaviour Support	Division Secretary Past National President	33
27	Male	51	NW	Primary	Division Secretary	32
28	Male	38	SW	Secondary	Member	16
29	Female	24	SW	Primary	Member	8 months
30	Female	31	SW	Secondary	Local Association Member	6
31	Female	55	NW	Primary	School Representative	29
32	Female	23	SW	Primary	Member	1
33	Female	23	SW	Secondary	Local Association Member	2
34	Male	42	SW	Middle	Local Association Member	17
35	Female	31	SW	Middle	Member	8
36	Male	31	SW	Middle	Member	10
37	Female	48	SW	Pupil Referral	Member	37
38	Female	54	NW	Special needs	Member	20
39	Female	23	Yorkshire	Secondary	Member	1
40	Female	51	Yorkshire	Primary	Member	30
41	Female	23	Warwick	Primary	Member	2
42	Female	24	Midlands	Secondary	Member	1
43	Female	49	Yorkshire	Secondary	Member	28
44	Female	25	Yorkshire	Secondary	Member	6 months
45	Female	49	Yorkshire	Secondary	School Representative	20

Interview Guide

Note: Interviews took a semi-structured 'conversational' format and as such the questions contained within this guide were meant as general pointers and themes for conversation and not as a pre-determined series of questions. Actual interviews thus varied from the format outlined here, whilst covering the key themes. The guide also contained the flexibility required to interview members of varying rank within the union, and in respect of this some questions are directed more towards the ordinary member, or the union official.

1.1 Role within the NUT
1.2 If member only, have you ever had a role in the past?
1.3 Motivation for joining / taking this role
1.4 Why NUT over other teacher unions?
1.5 Motivation for joining a trade union at work
1.6 What does your membership mean to you?

2.1 Current issues and campaigns in school / local area
2.2 Issues felt most passionate / angry about since starting teaching
2.3 Opinion on source of issues in teaching

3.1 How does NUT in school / local area organise when issues arise?
3.2 Nature / frequency of meetings
3.3 Union strategies
3.4 Does this way of organising work for you?
3.5 Would you do it differently? How?

4.1 Are you politically active outside of the union?
4.2 Political parties, voluntary associations
4.3 Social movements and student politics
4.4 Voting in government elections
4.5 What are your key concerns in this respect?

5.1 Describe the relationship between NUT members and non-members in school
5.2 Describe the relationship between yourself and other NUT members in school / local area
5.3 Describe the relationship between NUT members and school leadership
5.4 Describe the relationship between NUT members and NUT leadership
5.5 Describe the relationship between NUT and other teacher unions

6.1 Describe levels of participation in the union in your school / local area
6.2 How many NUT members in your school / local area?
6.3 Level of interest / support from members
6.4 Attendance at meetings in school / local association
6.5. Attendance at annual conference
6.6 Involvement in union campaigns
6.7 Voting in union elections
6.8 Reading union literature
6.9 Contact with union officials

7.1 Opinion on the reasons behind these levels of participation
7.2 Would social events / refreshments / childcare / changing times of meetings make a real difference to you?
7.3 Would knowing someone else who was going to a meeting make a difference to you?
7.4 Would being personally asked to attend a meeting make a difference to you?
7.5 Would you describe teachers as 'apathetic' about the union? Is that a word that you would use or not?
7.6 If yes – why? If no – why not?

8.1 Do you get enough information from the union?
8.2 Do you know when / where meetings are held?
8.3 Do you feel there is enough information on union candidates in elections?
8.4 Do you know the union's position on education / politics?
8.5 How do you prefer to receive information from the union – post / email / school rep / meeings?
8.6 Do you know about the structure of the NUT?
8.7 Is there anything you would like the union to do differently / change?

9.1 Strategies to recruit new members / how were you recruited?
9.2 Difficult/easy to recruit / retain members?
9.3 Difficult/easy to get existing members active?
9.4 Any groups of teachers easier to recruit than others?
9.5 Any groups of teachers more likely to be active than others?
9.6 Opinion on reasons behind these patterns
9.7 What issues and campaigns get the most support / do you support?

10.1 One thing that puts you off union involvement
10.2 One thing that is rewarding about union involvement
10.3 What would motivate you to be more involved / take on a role?
10.4 Do you think that it is important that people take on these roles within the union?
10.5 Can you see yourself getting more involved in the union in the future?

A note on the procedure used to code and analyse the interview transcripts

An initial read through of the interview transcripts generated a substantial list of recurring themes. Once these themes had been identified, I looked more closely at the pattern of responses by counting the number of times these themes appeared across the transcripts. For example, I looked at the number of interviewees who had discussed a particular issue, such as workload, or lack of time, or low attendance at union meetings. Through this process it was possible to identify the key themes that arose from the transcripts and the ways in which the responses clustered together.

These key themes subsequently formed a list of 'nodes' (i.e. codes) within the NUDIST software programme, which were then grouped together in 'index trees' which showed the interrelationships between them. For example, the node 'source of key issues' was subdivided into several categories of response, from 'government' to 'senior management' to 'pupil behaviour'. These responses could then be subjected to further coding, i.e. in terms of theoretical nodes, if appropriate.

Coding thus sliced up the interview data around the key themes that had arisen. Coding was applied to sections of the interviews which ranged from single sentences to several paragraphs, as appropriate. The same sections of text could be coded more than once, and placed in several categories at the same time; something which allowed for a process of refinement as coding progressed. Building up a system of categorised responses in this respect meant that the interview transcripts were analysed in terms of the most statistically recurrent themes, and that all relevant parts of the interview texts could be recalled in the process of selecting and presenting qualitative data within the thesis. For example, all relevant interview responses (i.e. quotes ranging from sentences to paragraphs) could be identified from the nodes and index trees, listed on the computer, and printed for analysis. In this last

stage, I aimed to utilise as many of the responses as possible within the argument of which they formed a part, whether by selecting words and phrases for quotation, or by presenting longer quotes for purposes of illustration. These longer quotes were selected on the basis of representing a summative and/or 'typical' response from the interviewees contained under that node. Where an index tree represented a node with a range of interrelated but conflicting responses from interviewees (for example, 'opinion on the NUT', 'key issues at work'), these could be clearly seen and accounted for within the presentation of the qualitative data.

Appendix 4

National Union of Teachers Members Survey

You have hopefully received a letter in the last two weeks informing you of an important survey being carried out for the National Union of Teachers (NUT) on the involvement of its members in the Union.

The aim of the survey, which is being conducted by the independent Labour Research Department (LRD), is to find out what measures would enrich members' experience of the Union and encourage their participation in its procedures and activities.

You have been selected at random from the NUT database to take part in the survey, and we would be extremely grateful if you could take a few moments to complete this questionnaire.

When you have done this, please follow the folding instructions on the questionnaire, ensuring the FREEPOST address is on the front. This should read **NUT Members Survey, Labour Research Department, FREEPOST, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF**. We would be grateful if you could return the questionnaire as soon as you possibly can.

Your school

1. What is the name of your school/college?

2. What category of school does this most closely fit into?

- ☐ Primary (including nursery, first and special primaries)
- ☐ Secondary (including high, sixth-form colleges and special secondaries)
- ☐ Middle

3. What is the size of your school/college?

Number of pupils ☐ Number of teachers ☐

4. In which NUT region is it?

- ☐ Northern
- ☐ Yorkshire/Midland
- ☐ North West
- ☐ Midlands
- ☐ Eastern
- ☐ South East
- ☐ South West
- ☐ London West
- ☐ London East
- ☐ Wales

The NUT at your school

5. Roughly how many of the teachers in your school are NUT members? ☐

6. Is there an NUT representative at your school/college?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

7. Are you the NUT representative at the school?

☐ Yes *(please go straight to question 9)* ☐ No *(please go to question 8)*

8. **Do you have contact with your NUT representative?**
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

9. **Is NUT information placed on your school notice board?**
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

10. **Is NUT information distributed in school?**
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

11. **Do you think the management at your school is generally supportive of or hostile towards the work of the union?**
☐ Supportive ☐ Neither supportive nor hostile ☐ Hostile

Local association meetings

12. **Do you attend general meetings of your local NUT association or division?**
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Regularly when I can

13. **If you don't regularly attend local NUT meetings, please tick any of the following statements that fit with your reasons.** ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***
(a) Nobody asks me to ☐
(b) No meetings have been organised ☐
(c) I don't generally know where or when they are being held ☐
(d) The meetings tend to be held at awkward times or in awkward places for me ☐
(e) I am not really interested in union matters ☐
(f) I have too many work commitments ☐
(g) My caring commitments prevent me from going ☐
(h) I don't feel comfortable with the environment at the meetings ☐
(i) I don't feel the meetings would have any influence on my working life ☐
(j) I get enough union information from other sources ☐

14. **Which ONE of the statements (a)-(j) in question 13 do you think is the most important reason?** ☐

15. **If you don't regularly attend local NUT meetings, please tick any of the following factors that would be likely to encourage you to attend.** ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***
(a) If someone personally asked me to go ☐
(b) If I knew in advance when and where they were being held ☐
(c) If I knew someone else who was going ☐
(d) If meetings were held at different times ☐
(e) If I was given financial help with the cost of childcare/other care ☐
(f) If a crèche was provided ☐
(g) If they were held in a more convenient location ☐
(h) If they were held in a pleasanter location ☐
(i) If there was a more social side to meetings ☐
(j) If there were more interesting topics for discussion ☐
(k) If the decisions made there had an impact on my working life ☐
(l) If more young people went to the meetings ☐
(m) If more women went to the meetings ☐
(n) If more people from minority ethnic groups went to the meetings ☐

16. **Which ONE of the factors (a)-(n) in question 15 is the MOST likely to encourage you to attend?** ☐

Voting in elections

17. Do you tend to vote in local association or division elections?

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

18. Do you vote in elections for national NUT positions?

(i) National officers (President, Senior and Junior Vice-President and Treasurer)

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

(ii) National Executive Member

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

(iii) General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

19. Do you vote in any of the following elections?

(i) National Advisory Committees

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

(ii) National Disciplinary Appeals Panel

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

(iii) Industrial Action Ballots

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Always

20. How would you prefer to vote if all the following options were available? *(Please tick ONE box only.)*

☐ Post ☐ Internet ☐ Telephone

21. If you don't regularly vote in elections/ballots, please tick any of the following factors that would make you more likely to do so. *(Please tick ALL that apply.)*

(a) If I knew the candidates ☐

(b) If I thought it would make any difference to the way the NUT is run ☐

(c) If I thought it would make any difference to my working life ☐

(d) If I understood more about what the posts/issues involved ☐

(e) If my ballot paper didn't get lost in a sea of paperwork ☐

(f) If it was on an issue I was particularly concerned with ☐

(g) If younger candidates were standing ☐

(h) If more women candidates were standing ☐

(i) If more candidates from minority ethnic groups were standing ☐

22. Which ONE of the factors (a)-(i) in question 21 is the MOST likely to encourage you to vote? ☐

Taking on roles

23. Have you ever been an NUT school representative? ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. Have you ever held a position at local association or division level? ☐ Yes ☐ No

25. Have you ever been a delegate to annual conference? ☐ Yes ☐ No

26. Have you ever taken on another representative role in the NUT? ☐ Yes ☐ No

27. Have you ever taken on a representative role in another union? ☐ Yes ☐ No

28. Please tick any of the following factors that would be likely to encourage you to take on a representative role in the NUT. ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***

(a) If someone asked me to ☐
(b) If I felt I had support from other people in my school/college ☐
(c) If I felt I had support from an experienced NUT person from outside the school ☐
(d) If I had had union training ☐
(e) If I got paid time off to do the work required ☐
(f) If I could "job-share" the role with someone else ☐
(g) If the role did not involve meetings with management ☐
(h) If it was for a clearly defined role (e.g. equal opportunities, learning, health and safety, recruitment and organising) ☐
(i) If I felt strongly about a particular subject ☐
(j) If I thought I could do a better job than the person doing it ☐

29. Which ONE of the factors (a)-(j) in question 28 is MOST likely to encourage you to take on a role? ☐

Training

30. Have you ever attended an NUT training course? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Are you aware of the following types of training provided by the NUT:

NUT school reps training courses at the union's Stoke Rochford training centre	☐ Yes	☐ No
NUT health and safety training courses at the union's Stoke Rochford training centre	☐ Yes	☐ No
Other courses for NUT members held at the union's Stoke Rochford training centre	☐ Yes	☐ No
NUT professional development courses	☐ Yes	☐ No
NUT ICT skills courses	☐ Yes	☐ No
Any locally organised NUT training	☐ Yes	☐ No

32. Would you be interested in attending an NUT training course? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

Other involvement with the NUT

33. Do you have contact with your NUT school/college representative (if there is one)?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

34. Do you read the NUT notice board at your school/college (if there is one)?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

35. Do you read *The Teacher*?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

36. Do you read other information from the NUT?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

37. Do you visit the NUT website?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

38. Do you ever contact the office of the NUT local association, division, region or NUT Cymru?
☐ Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently

39. Would you welcome e-mail communications from your local NUT association or division? ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***
☐ Yes (at home) ☐ Yes (at school) ☐ No

40. Would you welcome e-mail communications from the NUT nationally? ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***
☐ Yes (at home) ☐ Yes (at school) ☐ No

41. Have you ever taken part in organising a campaign within the NUT? ☐ Yes ☐ No

42. Please tick any of the following issues that you feel are crucial for the NUT to deal with. ***(Please tick ALL that apply.)***

(a) Pay and progression ☐
(b) Better career prospects ☐
(c) Better employment security ☐
(d) Improved work/life balance ☐
(e) Pupil behaviour ☐
(f) Pensions ☐
(g) SATS ☐
(h) Harassment/bullying ☐
(i) Workforce remodelling ☐
(j) More training for teachers ☐
(k) More training for managers ☐
(l) Equal opportunities improvements ☐
(m) Better equipment or systems ☐
(n) Privatisation ☐
(o) Workload ☐
(p) Health and safety ☐
(q) Stress ☐

43. Which ONE of the issues (a)-(q) in question 42 do you feel is the MOST crucial? ☐

About you

44. Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female

45. What is your age group?
☐ Under 26 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Over 60

46. Which of the following most closely covers your ethnic group?
☐ White ☐ Mixed ☐ Black or Black British ☐ Asian or Asian British ☐ Chinese

47. Do you consider yourself to be disabled? ☐ Yes ☐ No

48. Do you have caring commitments? ☐ Yes (childcare) ☐ Yes (elder/disabled care) ☐ No

49. Do you work: ☐ Full time ☐ Part time (0.6 and over) ☐ Part time (less than 0.6)

50. Are you: ☐ On a permanent contract ☐ Supply ☐ On a fixed-term contract

51. How long have you been a teacher? ☐ years

52. How long have you been a member of the NUT? ☐ years

Replies to the questionnaire will be treated in confidence, but it would be useful if we could have your name and a contact telephone number/e-mail address so that we can get in touch with you if necessary.

Name ☐

Telephone ☐ E-mail ☐

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please follow the folding instructions at the bottom of the form, ensuring that the FREEPOST address is on the front, and return it as soon as you can.