

Creationism and religious intolerance: how can we work in Earth Science classes? An research on the geography classes in Campinas, Brazil

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Religious notions are presented by children in their thought. Ideas about origin of the Earth, origin of the life and theory of evolution, geologic time are among the main topics discussed by fundamentalists thinkers – this is what we are calling creacionist notions – and the children learn these ideas in Churches and by means of the *mass midia*. These ideas bring negative influences to science teaching. This research relates which were previous ideas of eleven's years old students, at geography classes, of a school in Campinas (São Paulo State, Brazil) about origin of the Earth and the teaching methodologies used to study the origin and history of the Earth. These pupils were Catholic and Protestant fundamentalists and we intended to discover their cultural environment, to discuss these elements and to show up that we can believe in religious knowledge and, at the same time, we need to know the science (this case Earth science). This work was done at the Project *Earth Sciences and the continuing education for teachers of basic school*, during 1998. Data on social, economic and cultural way of life of the families helped to understand how child ideas go into classrooms. The main challenges were concerned the religious intolerance and the apprenticeship of scientific notions on the Earth. We point out some necessary steps to bring the children to *scientific literacy*. These steps can help other people to teach geoscience.