

**In Search of a “New Morality” for  
South African Education  
Part IV  
The Central Role of Values in Education:  
Disclosing the Normative Spheres of Human  
Experience**

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**Samevatting**

*In hierdie deel van die studie oor die moontlikhede van morele opvoeding, word op die wyse waarop die normatiewe struktuur van die mens tot ontsluiting gelei kan word gefokus.*

**1. Review**

In a previous section of this series it was noted that, since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, our society has undergone a fundamental transition regarding the principles and criteria that once determined human aspirations and actions. For example, strength of *character* no longer impress most people whilst those who, by sheer force of a domineering and imperious *personality* can assert themselves and impose their will on others, are held in great esteem. Time-honoured qualities like those mentioned in Part I of this investigation (2006: 82) have lost their universal appeal and – in most instances – become outmoded, if not entirely obsolete. On the other hand *egotism*, impelled and determined by reprehensible demands that change with time and situation, currently determine the actions of the majority of

people. Small wonder that achievement is presently measured in terms of superficial pragmatic categories like *affluence*, *possessions*, *position*, *abilities* and the like.

The reason why modern life has become so superficial while the profound has visibly fallen by the wayside can be attributed directly to the shift that has taken place in modern perceptions as regards values. At the root of this untenable situation is the tragedy that in our Western world, men and women have – in theory, at least – “liberated” themselves of God, while the Christian religion, the only and rightful foundation of all true values, has also fallen into disrepute. True to the demands of unbridled relativism, human desires, thoughts and actions are no longer controlled by standards that derive from a transcendent, supra-individual source or authority. On the contrary, they are regulated and controlled by arbitrarily chosen values that are relative in that they are valid for each individual person and no-one else, and only in a specific and unique situation.

## **2. Disclosure of the normative aspects of human existence**

### **2.1 *The unbreakable coherence and interrelatedness of modal aspects***

In Part III of our investigation the normative modes of human life were listed and discussed. These modes of human behaviour never function in isolation. They are always completely intertwined and interrelated, as will become evident in the passages below. On the other hand, the uniqueness of each aspect of reality/mode of human experience and behaviour is guaranteed by its *central meaning*. Each has an exclusive, distinct and unique “nuclear” meaning (significance) that is typical of it alone<sup>1</sup>. Despite the irreducible nature of these aspects, it appears that they are always closely related to one another. An *indissoluble inner coherence* binds the various aspects of reality/modes of human behaviour together, thereby imparting a remarkable unity amidst a multiplicity that, in its combination, constitutes a universal order of values for human behaviour.<sup>2</sup> In this *inter-modal cosmic coherence* and by way of analogical moments<sup>3</sup>, every aspect/mode of behaviour “refers within and beyond itself to all the

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1 Thus, the central or nuclear meaning of the spatial aspect is *continuous extension*, while that of the physical is *energy*; that of the biotic *life*; that of the psychic *feeling*; that of the logical *analysis*; that of the social *intercourse*; that of the juridical *retribution*; that of the ethical *temporary love*, etc.

2 An analogy represents similarities despite obvious dissimilarities (differences); or, differences despite obvious similarities that are found in compound concepts.

others” (Dooyeweerd, 1953: 3). The coherence of the modal aspects finds its expression in each of the latter, but also points – beyond its own limits – towards a central totality that is, in turn, expressed in this very coherence and in which the human ego (selfhood) functions as an indivisible whole. In other words, there is no single aspect of reality in which the human person does not function altogether (Dooyeweerd, 1953: 3-4).

All aspects of reality/modes of human behaviour are closely interrelated by means of analogical connections or “links” that are, on their part, always qualified by the central meaning of each specific aspect. Consequently, only when the central or core meaning of each aspect of reality/mode of experience is accurately accounted for, duly acknowledged, rigorously respected and finally appropriately observed in scientific thought, will it be possible to give a lucid and non-contradictory scientific account of temporal reality, as well as human behaviour in general.

The full and encompassing meaning of an aspect is revealed when we examine its close inter-modal coherence with all the remaining aspects of reality. The remarkable interrelation that exists between every single aspect of reality/mode of human behaviour and experience and the rest becomes apparent when the significant way in which they are inextricably bound together by *analogical links* (“*meaning-moments*”) in (cosmic) *earlier* and (cosmic) *later* directions of (cosmic) time are examined (Dooyeweerd, 1953: 28ff). What is interesting is the remarkable ontic state of affairs that each analogical moment reveals a universal norm (value) on the law-side of reality that has to be effectuated (implemented/brought to bear) in practical life situations, that is, on the factual side of reality. These analogical links that connect aspects of reality are designated as *retroicipatory* (before, backwards) and *anticipatory* (after, forwards) moments in the paragraphs that are to follow. Examples of such analogical moments are to be found in compound concepts like, for instance, *economic growth*, *social security*, *moral sensitivity*, *cultural development*, *aesthetic feeling*, *logical unity*, *social justice*, *scientific integrity*, *analytical control*, and the like. In order to facilitate effective analysis of these combinations, there has to be clarity as to the unique and irreducible character of each *modus quo* that we experience in life.

At this stage an example may be helpful. If the commonly used concept of “moral growth/development” is analysed, it is discovered that it refers *meaningfully* to two distinctly different and irreducible aspects of reality, namely the *ethical* and the *biotic*. The question, now, is the following: is “moral growth” essentially an *ethical* or a *biotic* matter? “Growth” is – originally – a *biotic* matter, while “morality” is an *ethical* matter. The

difference between "biotic growth" and "moral growth" is found in the terms "biotic" and "moral"; the similarity is the common usage of the term "growth". With reference to the chosen example of "moral growth", it appears that, despite the obvious and basic differences that exist between the *biotic* and the *ethical* modes of human experience and behaviour, there is also a noticeable similarity term that manifests in the mutual application of the term "growth". These "differences despite similarities" are called *modal analogies*. Thus, in the concept "moral growth" there is a biotic analogy within the ethical mode of human experience and behaviour. In the same vein, *sensory feeling* is primarily a *psychic* matter. On the other hand, aesthetic *feeling*, a *sense* of justice, moral *sensitivity* etc. are analogies of the psychic aspect of reality that appear in – for instance – the *aesthetic*, *juridical*, *ethic* etc., aspects of reality/modes of human behaviour.

When anticipatory moments are led in a regulative direction by the meaning-nuclei of already disclosed modes of existence, they become enhanced in an expansive way by adopting a deepened, more enhanced compass<sup>3</sup>. This state of affairs presents the educator with exceptional and liberating perspectives on the education as value oriented enterprise. The possibilities in this respect are endless. What follows below cannot be more than an attempt to cast a little light on the principle of the matter. However, the following clear-cut possibilities may be pointed out in this respect:

## **2.2 Disclosure of the logical in the anticipatory direction of time**

God requires of people that they should use their powers of logic in His service. This can be achieved only when a balanced view is adopted regarding our temporal functions, and when the logic-analytical aspect is given its proper place in our educational system. When that point has been reached at which the special contribution of every aspect of reality in bringing about the development towards mature civilisation of the entire person is recognised, only then dare one start to look towards the realization of the ideal of the anticipatory disclosure of the normative modalities of the young and normatively immature.

- The development of the capacity for logical-analytical thought within the young and normatively immature has already been

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3 As will become apparent in the following paragraphs.

discussed. The importance and meaning of this modal aspect can, indeed, never be too strongly emphasised, since it is this capability, which enables our maturing charges to think and act in a logical manner. The meaning-nucleus of the logical mode of human life is designated as analytical thought – in other words, pure, logical discernment, and therefore immature persons must obviously be made sufficiently at ease in the sphere of logic. An extension of this necessity is that their powers of logic must be reflected in all post-logical modalities, despite the emphasis upon the fact that the norms applied to the logical law-sphere cannot *per se* be allowed to have relevance to the other modes of experience. The essence of the argument is simply this: our logical development cannot be confined to a few subjects only, and especially to those such as Mathematics. It must become the goal, in literally every subject, for everyone who strives after good teaching practice.

- Logical control: Over and above the activation of the young and normatively immature within the limits of their logical mode of existence, that logical aspect, guided by the historical, can be disclosed (extended) to logical control or control of thought, where their thought-processes become systematic, controlled and controlling thoughts. They thereby take their place within a specific system of thought where non-scientific thought – pertaining to everyday experience of things – is broadened into scientific thought in a pattern of antithetic and synthetic development, i.e. following a fixed, methodical and systematic scientific pattern.
- Logical symbolism: I.e. the insightful interpretation and application of correct scientific principles and symbols, within defined scientific spheres, e.g. ‘x’ and ‘y’ in Mathematics.
- Scientific community or community of thought: No scientific trend can function in isolation from others. There is a constant interchange of knowledge between scientists, regardless of specific points of view and different options. The exchange of ideas – without forfeiting any principles – is a prerequisite for flourishing scientific work, even at school.
- Economy of thought: This involves the guidance of our charges towards the effective and balanced use of their logical capacities: They must never use rambling and digressive logic, since this is economically anti-normative in the context of thought-economy.
- Logical harmony or balance of thought: Whereby harmony and balance are achieved in the thought-processes of our wards.

- Logical adjudication: The young and normatively immature must develop to that stage of critical thought where they are able to distinguish and reject specious reasoning. They must be able to make use of whatever is to the point; what is not, must be excluded from consideration and from their logical activity. Whatever is sound must be given recognition; the unsound must be rejected out of hand.
- Scientific eros: Which means the development of the logical aspect of the young, guided by the ethical, towards a love for science and scientific thought in general, and the willingness to shape their analytical activities along honest and sincere lines.
- Certainty of thought: Which means the development of certainty – granted, of a relative nature – about the world we live in. The scientist who experiences this certainty will possess the gift of true modesty, since complete certainty can arise only from certainty of thought which is directed towards God.

### **2.3 Disclosure of the historical in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Historical symbolism: It is clear, in the light of what has already been said, that the Christian educator has the duty of directing the developmental activities of pupils in such a way to further disclose the historical aspect by the lingual to comprehend a notion of historical symbols, for example, monuments, manuscripts, and similar objects which bear a special message for humankind in its particular cultural milieu.
- Cultural communication: In addition, the social aspect must disclose the historical to comprehend – for example – cultural intercourse between nations. We cannot accept the onus of living with others – be they other peoples, nations or language-groups; we must adjust to association with them, thereby achieving full cultural development through cultural intercourse with other people.
- Cultural economy: The historical *modus quo* must expand through its anticipation on the economic modality to cultural economy: The various cultures (of which our wards form an important constituent part) must be able to achieve balanced co-existence that will rule out mutual attempts at levelling.
- Cultural harmony: Through the aesthetic modality, the historical aspect can be enhanced to cultural harmony. The young and normatively immature must be aware of the existence of specific fields in which the various societal relationships can speak with special authority. They must know that the state, church, family and

school each has its own place. They, as mature, civilised adults and disclosed personalities, must esteem this authority as is fitting.

- Cultural adjudication: In considering the anticipatory disclosure by the juridical, there is no way of excluding historical or cultural adjudication. The young and normatively immature must be brought to realise that if the two cadres, namely the economic and the aesthetic, are ignored, the result will be inevitable. One sees clearly here how essential the proper normative links are: they must be normatively bound to God's own norms pertaining to the existence of different cultural areas.
- Cultural eros: Enhancement of meaning of the cultural aspect is achieved when its meaning is deepened by the ethic modality to cultural love. Our charges must come to recognize the concept of a free state, free church, free family, free school, etc., all bound together by God's all-embracing law. This will ensure the growth of a society that will use every principle in combating totalitarianism of any nature. For example, clergy cannot live their ecclesiastic-religious life to the full, if the church is dominated by the state; and educators can only effectively carry out their duties if the authorities do not relegate them to the level of non-professional employees.
- Cultural security: Finally, the cultural development of our youth is guided by the disclosed pistic modality which ensures that the principles and direction of cultural development indicated for the historical disclosure of a normatively immature person, are truly Christian in nature.

#### **2.4 Disclosure of the lingual in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Lingual civility: Our youth may be said to have achieved enhanced development in this sphere when their own lingual modality has been successfully cultivated to a stage at which obscene language, dirty jokes, inelegant and unmannerly language – all indications of a lack of lingual disclosure – have been completely eliminated.
- Lingual economy: With anticipatory respect on the economic law-sphere, emphasis must be placed upon achieving the ideal of lingual economy which devolves upon compact and effective self-expression, stripped of all undue verbosity and circumlocution, as all forms of pedantry are normatively untenable. Learners at all levels must realise that the criterion of anti-normative behaviour in this respect applies to both extremes: that is, talking either too much or too little.
- Lingual harmony: Enhancement in the sense of the aesthetic modality occurs through the disclosure of the lingual to a state of

lingual harmony. The inherent beauty of the language should so touch everyone's inner self that they are filled with the desire to identify with it and make it their own. The desire to shape its own speech in accordance with the norms for pure, harmonious language usage should be established in the case of every child.

- **Lingual adjudication:** Juridical disclosure and enhancement occurs when, for example, there is sufficient lingual development to justify the connotation of language adjudication: in other words, when our youth use language correctly and when they apply a constant process of critically sifting and scrutinising their language usage. Their goal must be correct and elegant language, given stature by their own adjudication regarding their usage of language.
- **Lingual eros:** In addition, the adult model must impart to his/hers the ideal of love of language. The latter, in turn, through ethical disclosure of the lingual law-sphere, must come to feel love and pride for their own (home) language; they must react normatively towards not only their home language, but also other languages that they may acquire.
- **Lingual certainty:** Finally, under the influence of faith (pistic law-sphere), the lingual aspect of the young and normatively immature will disclose to lingual certainty – i.e. the ability to express oneself as one wishes, in words appropriate to the situation and the time. Through the true faith in God through Jesus Christ, the lingual aspect can extend to prayer and praise giving, in lingual context.

The goal of lingual disclosure should never be considered as applicable to and reserved solely for the language lesson. Every educator, without exception, must lay upon his/hers the most stringent demands of language usage. Literally all subjects must emphasise development of the lingual – from Mathematics to Religious Instruction. An essential prerequisite for success in this respect, is the personal example set by educators at all levels: parents, teachers and clergy.

## ***2.5 Disclosure of the social in the anticipatory direction of time***

- **Social economy:** Education aimed at social adjustment, refinement, elegance and sophistication (urbanity), can be achieved only in conjunction with the anastate anticipatory disclosure of the social aspect of our youth. The child's natural social sense must be so refined as to comprehend social economy, the guiding principle being that, in terms of social economy, it is anti-normative to debar oneself from the wealth of social contact, for in this way one



becomes socially impoverished. The opposite, too, is anti-normative: for example, the cases of so-called “social climbers”, where people suffer from an irrepressible craving for social status, recognition and popularity.

- Social harmony: In terms of the aesthetic, too, the social modality must be disclosed and enhanced, for social harmony is an essential factor in the life of the adults of the future. They must be able to differentiate between the important and unimportant aspects of social life. The need for the enhanced development is felt very early, especially in the case of teenagers.
- Social adjudication: The social modality is also disclosed in terms of the juridical law-sphere, when the question of social adjudication for social rights is raised. The young must be guided towards the exercise of social adjudication in all contact-situations, such as those between parent and child; employer and employee; young person and adult; teacher and pupil; peers; superiors and inferiors; and so on. No person should look down upon another: the point at stake is fairness of association.
- Social love: Guided by the ethical law-sphere, the social modality discloses towards social love. It is God’s injunction to us to love our neighbour. Accordingly, the young and normatively immature must be inspired to become members of society not intent upon exploiting their fellows, nor turning everything they touch to their own maximal advantage. In their social contacts, they must be guided by a norm based in the ethic and enhanced from that strong basis.
- Finally, their social attitude to life as it stems from the disclosed pistic modality, is also enhanced and developed towards loving their neighbour – not for reason of moral consideration, but because God Himself wills it so – and towards being a member of the community of faith as realised in the social intercourse with the community dwelling in God’s House.

## **2.6 Disclosure of the economic in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Economic harmony: Anticipatory disclosure of the economic modality derives from the developed aesthetic law-sphere and becomes reality when the young and normatively immature have been educated to economic harmony, i.e. when their attitude towards their possessions is neither too thrifty nor too extravagant. For example, they should not attach excessive value to material things, but should nevertheless not disregard them entirely. They must show generosity and open-handedness towards the poor; yet, at the same

time they must have a strong enough sense of thrift to be able to afford that very generosity.

- Economic adjudication: Through the juridical modality, their economic *modus quo* should be enhanced to economic adjudication. They must develop to the stage, for example, of not wishing to exploit others economically. They should be unwilling to make exorbitant profits. As disclosed adults, they must pay their employees adequately, never accept a bribe, nor fall into the trap of economic egotism. Their industry and acquisitiveness must not be purely for their own benefit, but they should strive with equal effort for others.
- Economic eros: The economic modality is disclosed by the ethic law-sphere, and enhanced to economic dedication and fervour, in the sense that love for material things should not be overdone, as in the case of the rich fool who filled his granaries to overflowing, in the vain hope of being able to live without care thereafter. Nevertheless, the economically practicable must be pursued with every effort. Although achievement in the working sphere is accorded high esteem, material possessions should never be overestimated.
- Economic generosity: Finally, guided by true Christian faith, the economic modality will be enhanced to include the willingness to make sacrifices in the service of God and our disadvantaged fellow humans; we are never the owners, but only tenants. Our entire "economic domain" must bow down to God as the Giver of all prosperity.

## **2.7 Disclosure of the aesthetic in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Aesthetic adjudication: The touchstone for juridical disclosure of the aesthetic aspect is the question of criticism, as adjudication, with reference to the arts. Our maturing wards must develop aesthetically and finally reach the stage of aesthetic adjudication. This requires that they should be able to distinguish between the aesthetically acceptable and unacceptable. It is a preposterous thought that aesthetically undeveloped (immature) persons, and even so-called "adults", can be openly demoralised and led astray in the name of so-called "artistic freedom".
- Aesthetic eros: Ethic enhancement is brought about by the influence of love on art and artistic expression. Works of art should not be created with the intention of leading undisclosed people astray – rather, arts should be basically ennobling instead of demoralising or offensive.

- Aesthetic security: Guided by the Christian faith, the ideal of Christian art, i.e. of art pleasing to God, is born. Art instruction in schools should focus on positivizing Christian norms, both in the performing arts and in broad-spectrum criticism. Subjects such as music, singing, art, appreciation of art and literature are exceptionally well suited to the realization of this aim. Nevertheless, it must be very clear that the aesthetic development of the young and the normatively immature must be pursued with every effort, in literally all subjects taught in the Christian school.

## **2.8 Disclosure of the juridical in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Juridical fairness: The disclosure of this modality is brought about when all forms of adjudication are moderated by love, compassion and the consideration of extenuating circumstances. In other words, love should become the guiding principle of every juridical course of action. A rigid and restrictive notion of retribution that is driven by blind vengeance and the merciless and callous insistence on reprisal at all costs, regardless of possible extenuating circumstances, characterizes the primitive and unyielding *talio*- (retaliation-) principle of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”. This inflexible juridical principle can become radically transformed, fully expanded and completely restructured when disclosed by the (cosmic later) ethic modality with its central meaning of moral love. Now we can speak meaningfully of juridical morality, because when *aequitas* (equity, fairness) is introduced into the process of justice, a distinction is made between *dolus* (design, pre-meditation) and *culpa* (negligence) (cf. Dooyeweerd, 1953: 29). For this reason, underlying disposition and prior motive are carefully accounted for in any modern judicatory process. We now have an option: punishment in accordance with guilt. We no longer – inescapably – visit evil upon its source. We forgive because our own sins are forgiven, even loving our enemies and praying for them (cf. Strauss, 1978: 65 ff; also, *ibid.*; 1989:81-82).
- Juridical certainty: Finally the juridical mode of human existence is disclosed in anticipation on the pistic modality. This happens when the juridical is enhanced by Christian faith to acceptance of the principle that law and adjudication are gifts of God, and therefore must be regarded as fixed and certain at all times. The cosmic execution of law and adjudication may only be carried out subject to God’s own ordinances for them. Human authority can never be more than relative, loaned and non-absolute. Indeed, our very lives themselves depend purely upon mercy.

## **2.9 Disclosure of the ethical in the anticipatory direction of time**

- Ethical security: The points already discussed give a clear picture of how onerous is the burden resting on the educator. The pistic modality, disclosed by the Christian faith, must exercise firm trust in God through Jesus Christ in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, to bring about the ethic development of the young and normatively immature. The latter must fulfil God's expectations of them, and love their neighbour as themselves, and – by implication – their entire temporal world. Destructiveness should not be a quality found in any maturely civilised and ethically disclosed personality.

The ethical should never degenerate into the purely moralistic, which as such is both meaningless and subject to whim, changing circumstances and environment. The guiding flame of true faith views moral requirements as God-given decrees on interpersonal relationships. Following this lead, ethical education can be freed of all humanistic and moralistic tints, and can be clearly seen in its proper colours, as education towards love that grows and blossoms from true faith. Our youth must develop true love for themselves, their fellows, their country, language, state, church, school, and the like. Even the love which binds together young people, husband and wife, parents and children, is in this sense regarded as pre-ordained by God himself: He has decreed this bond of love, and has made it so from the dawn of creation.

## **2.10 Disclosure of the pistic by a religious driving force**

The enhancing development of the pistic aspect of our youth means that they, through this faith, will voluntarily sacrifice their lives and all the issues thereof to the laws and norms of God. In so doing, they attain true freedom, i.e. freedom from sin; freedom within, as well as in conformity with the law. Faith, as a conscious stirring within the human heart, is the sign of God's revelation, and makes itself known through belief rather than through reason. This, indeed, is what makes the fostering of faith by means of thorough Bible training so important an element of Christian education. Although knowledge of God implies a logical basis, we are able to comprehend and accept only if these actions are performed through faith. Comprehension and knowledge of God and His Word – the essential prerequisites for wholehearted renewal – must be approached with the guiding enhancement of faith. Then, should the question be raised of a logical insight into these matters, one may dare speak of a developed logical modality with respect to the faith of our charges.

### 3. Notes on the effectuation of values: the pivotal role of *structure* and *direction* revisited

In the preceding paragraphs a wide and encompassing “array” of values that relate to the normative aspects of human life and behaviour have been introduced. They all deserve to be stressed at one stage or another during education at home, at school or in the church. They are not of speculative (metaphysical) origin and were not derived from any transcendental source as *per se*. On the contrary, they are all true to the reality of our everyday experiences. They can be analysed and tested experimentally, and will endure the test of empirical reality. Their authenticity lies in their correlation with real life. They represent *supra-individual, transpersonal* “anchor” values that apply to literally everyone, despite time and historical situation. These universal values should be “made specific”, that is, refined and applied (effectuated or implemented) by responsible and accountable subjects according to the particular demands of changing and disparate life situations.

Many more values can most probably be added, but these furnish the basic scope. This scheme undoubtedly recognizes and appreciates every human *modus quo* in its own right. The recognition of the individual uniqueness of each *modus quo* assures and allows for the correct and non-reductionist analysis of analogical moments that – on its part – yields the great many possibilities of value enrichment that has to take place at home and in literally every subject of the school curriculum – in some instances even at institutions for tertiary education (cf. literature, art appreciation, ethics, economics etc.).

Should anyone contest the legitimacy of any of these “anchor” values or find them inappropriate for our modern times, they should do so in terms of sound ontological arguments. If not, all these values should – to some or other degree – become part and parcel of education in the family, at school and in the church.

In their fervour to discredit and dispose of the appeal that pre-effectuated principles exert on us, all supporters of *individualist liberalism* declare humankind free to opt – in every situation – solely in accordance to the unique demands of each discrete and isolated set of circumstances. In other words, the situation *alone* coerces the appropriate values that are to regulate our conduct. As a result, in our allegedly “post-modern” world, the only and absolute authority is *personal* rationality that produces *autonomous* and *self-sufficient* insight. Individual men and women are regarded as having been emancipated by now from all external forms of

authority, principles and norms. Everyone is capable of deciding – in complete self-sufficiency – what is good and bad for him-/herself and devises – in unlimited freedom and complete autonomy – his/her own destiny and chooses the deepest meaning of his/her life.

This over-simplistic illusion of the modern apostate spirit is, however, demonstrably in conflict with reality. What, then, is the way out of this clear-cut fallacy? The *crux* of the matter is that, should the origin of principles and norms not transcend the individual person and there does not exist any accountability to a higher authority, then there is no earthly reason why values should not be regarded as completely contingent, arbitrary and unpredictable. *But this is not the case.* By virtue of the creational order for all things, the particular and unique *structures* of diverse phenomena remain the same for everyone, at all times and under all circumstances. Thus, the ontic structure of *faith* or *belief* is the same for one and all; “un-belief” (agnosticism; atheism) or “disbelief” (incredulity; scepticism) are distinct possibilities, but “non-belief” does not exist. Likewise, the ontic structure of *love* is valid for everyone; hate is an alternative, but “non-love” is impossible; the ontic structure of *justice* holds good for all time and place; injustice is an option, but “non-justice” is non-existent; the formation of culture is the very same everywhere, irrespective of predilection, time or place, etc.

What, then, is the *raison d’être* of diverging, even conflicting effectuations of principles? On account of the *religious antithesis* between *Light* and *darkness*, the particular *direction of effectuation* (that is, *anastate* contra *apostate*) of each of the above random polarity, indeed, *may vary* according to the above mentioned basic polarity, thus giving rise to *apostate* belief, *apostate* love, *apostate* justice, *apostate* formation of culture, etc. Educators at home, in the school and in the church should carefully take note of this state of affairs when they reflect on the transfer of specific norms in educational situations.

The consequence of this state of affairs is rather startling. Consider this scenario: the moment we reject the existence of a supra individual, transpersonal Sure Ground in which all our values are – finally – anchored, we run the risk of succumbing to arbitrarily interpreted and randomly chosen values. Secularization, pursued to its final consequences implies that we forfeit the very essence of civilization. This can be illustrated as follows:

- those who place their faith in something of immanent nature and compass, forfeit their bond with the religious fullness of love as is expressed in the love of Christ for ordinary, undeserving human beings;

- severed from this selfless love, temporal love can never rise above self-love, situation ethics and even worse;
- devoid of selfless love that emphasizes compassion, empathy and consideration, the possibility that true justice will be done to other parties becomes remote and we are left – at best – with a cheap and superficial moralism that depends entirely on capricious self-interest;
- without true justice, harmonizing the interests of dissimilar interest groups becomes impossible;
- without harmony in interpersonal relations, frugality becomes unachievable: greed and excess become the order of the day and everyone becomes a slave of his/her own appetites and passions;
- without frugality, pure self-interest impels all interpersonal relations, and the latter are characterized by their brutally unsocial nature;
- devoid of sound interpersonal relationships that characterize every truly civilized community, appalling and vulgar language no longer evokes censorship and becomes the norm;
- all inferior, low-grade cultures are characterized by the use of bad language;
- when the culture in which we live is substandard, the occurrence of illogical – virtually instinct-driven – behaviour is no longer experienced as unacceptable, causes no alarm and is no longer denounced straight away by the majority, but in due course becomes the standard of living for all.
- And in the end we are left with a being far worse than an instinct-driven animal: although it possesses human functions, it is a slave of its own appetites, acting in a sub-human, brutish way, exhibiting neither the responsibility nor the accountability that characterize the actions of civilized human beings!

#### 4. Interim conclusion

*Inquietum est cor nostrum et mundus in corde nostro, donec requiescat in té, Dominé!*

**Aurelius Augustinus** (354-430)

Humans have both a religious and a social responsibility: we do not live for ourselves. We ought to find fulfilment in our service to God and our fellow-humans. This demands of us unreserved and unconditional religious devotion and social commitment, communal involvement and selfless dedication in the service of others. But this necessitates abandoning all egocentricity, all emphasis on personal rights and privileges, as well as lack of consideration for others and living in accordance

to values that permit the selfless love and dedication demanded of us by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In our days and times the demand for unbridled (essentially negative) unrestricted and limitless personal freedom, unreserved tolerance and value relativism has caused a moral deterioration and decay that manifests in many ways in our society, *inter alia*, in the general and wide-spread lawlessness, questionable sexual morality (promiscuity, excess, lack of control, perversion), defiance, disobedience and insubordination against the *laissez-faire* discipline imposed by weak leaders and spineless authorities, unbridled drug abuse, blatant aggression and resulting violence, chaos, anarchy and the like. The question is: Is this our destiny? Are we witnessing the final stages of the inevitable and irrepressible decline of apostate humanity?

In order to counter the onslaught of contemporary apostate schools of thought regarding values, the Christian regards it as imperative to bow – afresh – in wonderment and awe before the will of the Creator of all things. It has become clear from our preceding investigation that the whole question of values and value preferences relate, in the final analysis, to our most profound commitments. It has also become apparent that there does not exist an uncommitted sphere of life in which we can ever hope to engage. Even if we intentionally try to “parenthesize” and momentarily ignore the suppositions that precede (and supposedly impede) our allegedly uncommitted (neutral) scientific enterprises, we can neither suspend, nor rule out this indisputable and self-evident state of affairs. Any attempt to ignore the significance of the decisive influence that these presuppositions exert on our ways of thinking about and of explicating the realm of values is nothing but a flight of fancy and will seriously detract from the credence and significance of such an investigation.

This is, without doubt, especially applicable to the field of education where adults as responsible wardens and leaders are responsible for the normative well-being of their charges. Every human person, being created *imago Dei*, is endowed with what Dooyeweerd labels “the innate religious impulse to concentrate our whole temporal life and the whole temporal world upon the service of love to God. And since the love of God implies the love for his image in man, the whole diversity of temporal ordinances of God is related to the central religious commandment of love, namely, ‘thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, soul and mind, and thy neighbor (sic) as thyself’. This is the radical biblical sense of the creation of man in the image of God. It leaves no room for any neutral sphere of life, which could be withdrawn from the central commandment in the kingdom of God” (Dooyeweerd, 1965: 189-190).



On what *grounds*, then, can anyone insist on the observation of and compliance with *supra-individual* values? Only by referring them to some or other supra-individual Sure Ground (sure ground). The moment one (hypothetically) pronounces God “dead” and divorces one’s life from this (or some other) *Sure Ground*, then, in the words of Paul Feyerabend: “Anything goes!” Indeed, if values are not related to some *supra-individual* source or origin, there is no reason whatsoever why *complete relativism* should not be propagated! What becomes then more important than *my carnal desires and I*? So, if we intend to do something *contra* value relativism, but do not link our values to some or other Sure Ground (sure ground) as proposed we are *wasting our time entirely*.

Therefore, all discourse concerning values and value related matters obligates participants to reveal – unequivocally – the deepest convictions that concern their idea regarding the ultimate Origin (origin) of all things behind Whom/which no deeper origin can be conceived meaningfully. Consequently, in our common quest to address and solve the problem of value relativism and its negative impact on human life in general and education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in particular, it will be necessary for all involved in this venture to acknowledge and divulge the nature of the deepest and most profound dynamics that command their mindset and impel their theorizing.

Contributions that reflect various and divergent viewpoints on values and values education are *sine qua non* for the eventual success of an enterprise like rethinking the whole question of moral regeneration through education, and can only add to its merit and significance. Along these lines it may ultimately be possible to gain an adequate perspective on the issues at hand and appraise likely and achievable solutions.

If we refrain from seriously and candidly reflecting on, and subsequently critically accounting for the most profound foundations of our “values” (i.e. general normativity), we inevitably succumb to a cheap and superficial moralism.

## 5. Preview

We have already determined that rampant relativism is the sole reason for the moral dilemma modern societies are experiencing; we have established the origin of values, as well as the reason why only human actions are of a normative nature and subject to values; we have also delineated a range of value-areas that are relevant for human behaviour and, finally, we have outlined a minimum range (scope) of values that

need to be addressed during the educational involvement with youthful and normatively immature persons. We are now at that stage of our investigation where we have to change our "angle of incidence" to encompass *practical teaching matters*: we are, indeed, obliged to turn our attention to the practical aspects of education for morality. This will be undertaken in the next and last part (V) of our investigation.

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