

In Search of a “New Morality” for South African Education

Part V

Holding an Office and the Prerogative to Introduce and Advocate values to the Normatively Immature

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Samevatting

In hierdie artikel word na sake soos die volgende gekyk: Besit iemand die prerogatief en gesag om norme aan ander persone voor te skryf? Besit bepaalde gesagsinsansies wettige opgawes met betrekking tot die opvoeding van normatief onvolwasse persone? En, indien wel, op watter beginselgronde? Of is almal vry om te doen soos hulle wil? Met hierdie spanning tussen vryheid en gesag in gedagte, word 'n moontlike alternatief voorgestel. In die lig hiervan word die vraag betreffende die bekendstelling, aanbeveling en voorskrywing van norme aan normatief onvolwasse persone deur gesagsdraers in die ouerhuis, skool, kerk en staat kortliks toegelig.

1. Foreword

In Western societies with their strong emphasis on the autonomy, fundamental independence and right of individual men and women to choose – in complete self-sufficiency – whatever course to pursue in life, all questions relating to trans-personal values, their validity and the power of legitimate authorities to impose them on others are regarded as outdated

and irrelevant. Nonetheless, glaring inconsistencies¹ blemish our supposedly "enlightened" way of thinking about social, economic, legal, moral and similar matters. It would seem that the highly acclaimed virtues of "post modern" men and women, namely *good judgment*, *broad-mindedness* and *tolerance* across the board, are tarnished by a collective egocentricity that callously disregards the interests and privileges of others. Indeed, a *neo-liberalist/relativist* mindset – instead of being the *panacea* for all human tribulations, oppression and duress – did not bring with it the much sought after end results that were supposed to accompany a vital and liberating "new morality" following in the wake of a complete mental transition by humankind from *authoritarianism* to *relativism* and subsequent *individualist liberalism*.

Thus far, we have established the following: The denial of the existence of universal values leaves the door open for unrestrained relativism that, on its part, inevitably degenerates into moral anarchy. It has been determined that only human actions are subject to values. The study has also indicated a number of areas of human life that are directly and at all times subjected to values, and lastly identified a number of universal values that apply – at all times – to all human beings, regardless of personal preferences.

At this stage, the issues that need to be addressed are the following: *Who possesses the prerogative and the power to introduce and advocate values to others? Do certain authorities have legitimate claims regarding the education of normatively immature persons? And if so, on what grounds? Or is everyone free to do as he/she pleases? What is the calling of an educated personality in a free democracy?* In order to arrive at a realistic perspective on these central problems, we will have to examine and comment on the tension that traditionally exists between *authority* and *liberty* against the background of what has already featured in the preceding papers.

2. Authority and Freedom: Never-ending conflict?

2.1 Orientation

The various modes of human existence, as well as all related values that have been identified in the foregoing part of our investigation were not

1 A frequently used example of moral contradiction is that, in most Western societies the death penalty has been abolished as unacceptable to tolerant and open-minded people and disparaged as uncivilized, inhuman and brutal. Nonetheless, other forms of enforced slaying of human persons (abortion and euthanasia) are accepted.

“invented”, as it were. Neither were they derived from some mystic or supernatural source. They were empirically drawn from practical, everyday experience. This means that these universal, relatively constant values have been in sway since the beginning of time. We are all subject to them, whether we acknowledge it or not. An example may clarify this assertion. All humans living together in close association have been confronted – in some way or another – with the universal values of *social consciousness*, *social control*, *social justice*, *social significance*, etc. The specific way in which these universal values for human society were/are brought to bear in practical life situations have always differed and will always fluctuate according to the demands of time, situation, insight, morality, and especially the ideology that influenced or influences a particular community at a specific moment in history. For instance, the demand for *social justice* has been, and will always be in force whether people are aware of its existence or not, and its implementation will emerge as either a *normative* or an *anti-normative* “bringing to bear” of this value that affects certain members (especially minorities) of any given society.

The question at this stage is by whose *authority* may values like, for instance, *social justice* etc. be *introduced* and *advocated* to other persons? In Part I the author has shown that the problem of *value relativism* lies at the foundation of our modern morality crisis. As far as the current *impasse* regarding authority is concerned, the fundamental tension between two mutually exclusive and hostile counter poles, namely those of authoritarian *realism* and liberalist-relativist *nominalism* (cf. Part I of this series) is germane and once more requires our attention.

2.2 Authoritarianism

In terms of their presuppositions and logic, all forms of *authoritarianism* depart from the understanding that supreme authority and all values are vested *immanently* in some *transpersonal collective* as is embodied in any one of many temporal institutions (church, state, the “Great Society”, or whatever) or pursuit (science, economic growth, etc.). Authoritarianism affirms the reality of unity rather than diversity and thus degenerates into an undifferentiated and meaningless *oneness*. State, church, humanity, society and the like “have a reality that particulars do not possess”, namely a reality “above and beyond its every member” (Rushdoony, 1978: 3). The consequence of this attitude is that “there is no appeal beyond this powerful unity, and no right which can be logically asserted against it” (Rushdoony, 1978:19). Therefore, if all things are basically *one*, all “differences are meaningless, divisions false, and definitions are sophistications, in that the tyranny, or destiny, of oneness is the truth of all

being" (Rushdoony, 1978:22). This absolute and final reality transcends all others as it is thought to encompass all its constituent members or parts and inevitably results in despotism, tyranny and coercion. Thus, the state, the church, society or whatever will always take precedence over individual persons.

Educational implications: In line with these presuppositions, the ultimate aim of values education is to educate everyone to be subservient to some or other worldly institution as has been mentioned above (cf. Rushdoony, 1978:4).

2.3 Relativism

True to its *nominalist* underpinning, value *relativism* represents a complete rejection of and radical break with all forms of stagnant and external – that is – extra-personal authority, law or value as having no “binding power” over individual persons (Rushdoony, 1978: 19). This means that neither truth nor reality can ever exist apart from particulars and individuals.²

Educational implications: Following these assumptions, the ultimate aim of values education is to educate individuals “in terms of the particular facts of the universe without reference to God, truth, or morality” (Rushdoony, 1978:4).

3. Alternative perspective: Meeting the challenge of casuistry and value relativism

It must be stated categorically at this stage that everyday reality is *not* composed of two irreconcilable fundamentals, of “nature, science and reality” on the one hand, and “freedom, faith and value” (Rushdoony, 1978:26) on the other. *Fact* and *value* are *not* constant anti-poles, in perpetual tension with one another. Therefore, as long as this contradiction is upheld,

2 “God, law, government, church and morality are abstracts which represent a tyranny to man; liberty means an unshackling of these chains and the affirmation of individuality as the essential aspect of reality” (Rushdoony, 1978:3). The assertion of one’s personal autonomy and the acceptance of one’s inherent intuition and creativity generate one’s own values and life standards. Supreme authority and all associated values are supposed to be vested in autonomous individuals who are regarded as authors of their own life values and architects of their own fortunes. On their part, all forms of external (moral, juridical, social or whatever) restraint on human behaviour are theoretically removed because truth and values are considered “non-factual, implicitly subjective ..., as merely pragmatic or relativistic ... and reality as an atomistic and lawless particularity” (Rushdoony, 1978:28).

supposedly all-inclusive (and unitary) relationships like – for instance – state, church, society, humanity, etc. are erroneously understood as constant and unchanging counter poles of plurality (the so-called “individual”).

If, then, a dualistic interpretation of reality is untenable and the locus of the *absolute* (substance) is nowhere to be found in temporal reality but actually transcends the world we are part of, it means that the latter is essentially a strict and unbreakable unity.

Concepts like *fact* and *value*, *authority* and *liberty* represent – in both cases – but two parts of the same reality, like the two sides of a coin. They are never in opposition. They depend on one another, limit one another and exist in unbreakable cohesion.

A satisfactory clarification (if not resolution) of the dualism that seemingly tears *reality* and *value*, *authority* and *freedom* apart, as well as the reasons why conflict and hostility traditionally exist between totalitarian *authoritarianism* and *relativism* is indispensable whenever we reflect on the moral, political, economical, social, educational and other values we encounter in the factual world we live in. Indeed, should we avoid reflecting on and critically accounting for the most profound foundations of the values that determine our actions, we run the risk of succumbing to superficiality and arbitrariness.

Preserved within the Christian idea of a *universal cosmic law*³ is the primordial differential (as revealed in the Holy Scriptures) between the autonomous Law-giver (Creator) on the one side and, on the other, the insufficient, relative, relational (law-abiding) subject (creature). This *cosmonomic idea* rejects all other interpretations concerned with the relationship between Law-giver and subject as invalid distortions and biased interpretations of the original relationship between Creator and creation. Within the cadre of Christian thinking, the original relationship between God and his creation is regarded as fundamental, God-given, ontic reality. It is, in other words, also the essential pre-condition for any true perspective on matters like *inter-personal relations*, *office*, value focused and guided *authority*, *power*, *responsibility* and *liberty*.

Only human activities are value driven and combine in the creation of culture in step with and inalienably related to an ultimate commitment. Implicit in the brief that we carry for our formation of culture, is our possession of power (entrusted by God to those made in his image) to govern specific things,

3 Cosmonomic idea, cf. Dooyeweerd, 1935.

situations, circumstances, conditions and structures, even persons, under the sway of clearly defined life values. Thus we have the ability to change and mould the above to our own *normative* design, that is to say, bringing them to a state to which they, of themselves, could not otherwise have evolved.

Chosen for the value related (normative) subjugation and rule of our earthly home we are in essence plenipotentiaries and figures of authority. For that reason, all legitimate human authority and (relative and relational) power is restored *only* when – through the grace of God in Jesus Christ – we bow to the fact that the Sure Ground is found nowhere in creation. By virtue of the legitimate (based on insight) office to which we may be reappointed, we are placed as figures of authority in specific positions, wielding authority and authority based power over others (people, things, situations, structures, etc.). Consequent to our subjugation (and transformation into culture) of our natural and social environment, there occurs a concurrent differentiation of the uncomplicated, primitive community into more sophisticated, individually structured and value connected societal entities. Indeed, cultured men and women find themselves enmeshed in a multitude of complex, value driven structures.

It is thus, by virtue of their particular positions in specific institutions, that people hold precise levels of office, possessing accordingly the limited and relational authority and power of that office. Official authority and power are always *normative* and *challenging*. As they always imply *values*, they confront the person vested with authority and power with the need to be *worthy* of his or her position under all circumstances – that is, to be and to remain forever a figure of *competence*. For this reason occupancy of office must be constantly reinforced by proofs of value-compliance and competence within that specific office.

Against this backdrop we may conclude that human *authority* is *never absolute* with respect to anything. Authority is always *relative, limited* and *relational* in as far as it is *relativized* by the sovereignty of the Creator, *limited* by the dignity of all fellow humans, as well as *related* to (and exists only within) the *structural limitations* of human (societal) entities like state, church, family, business enterprise, school, etc. Authority is also of a passing, essentially non-permanent nature because of the developmental possibilities inherent in all those who – temporarily – may possess an “inferior” or “lesser” status.⁴ As authority is, therefore, relative,

4 Relations of super- and subordination or equality that may be present among humans are always relative and subject to change.

limited and relational in nature, so are all forms of (human) power that stem from it (cf. Schouls, 1972:14). In this regard, Hart (1966:145-146) highlights the fundamental reality that the ultimate Origin of legitimate human authority (as well as the emanating legitimate power of one person over others) is of a transcendent nature, namely the Creator of all things. Temporal authority is, therefore, *delegated* to men and women only in their capacity as *bearers of an office* (in some or other societal relationship) with an ultimate objective that is directly related to their perspective of what the most profound meaning of life encompasses.⁵ The true and fundamental meaning of legitimate human authority is that of “having dominion, of unlocking, developing” the boundless riches of the world we live in. Certainly, we are not called to “construct or reconstruct a universe” for its structure was given with creation. Rather, we are called to increase our understanding – in the light of God’s Revelation – of what the *deepest meaning of creation* is (Hart, 1966:145-146).

In the light of the preceding perspectives we may assume that the way out of the long-established dualism between *authority* and *freedom* is directly linked to our perception of the most profound meaning of life and reality. If we find the deepest meaning of our existence in ourselves all values will be relative and subject to our personal predilections. On the other hand, if we find it arbitrarily in some or other temporal institution like the church or the state or whatever, we yield to authoritarianism. If, however, we find the deepest meaning of life in some supra-personal and transcendent Source, the values that govern our lives will be of trans-personal and non-arbitrary in nature. For the Christian the deepest meaning of human life and the temporal world can never be separated from the Creator of all things. Meaningful living is to know, understand, accept and live in full harmony with the will of the Creator as is evidenced in the *cultural principles* given with creation. Only when this state of affairs is acknowledged unconditionally, will authority and freedom never be in conflict with one another (cf. Rushdoony, 1978:32, 33).

Meanwhile, as the traditional tension between *authority* and *liberty* still presents itself everywhere around us, we are obliged to deal with it

5 Thus we have competent persons that are office bearers to the extent that they are erudite and well-informed functionaries of the church, the government of the day, skilled professionals like lawyers, art critics and economists, experts in specific fields of scientific research, specialist teachers, and even lay people like devoted and capable parents etc. Legitimate office bearers are men and women who are imbued with, and dedicated to a definite objective in life, namely to work in the service of a specific societal entity with its distinctive sphere of competence, thus fulfilling their concept of what the deepest

critically and honestly. Although it is possible to disregard this fundamental question in the home, the school, the church, in politics, the media etc., the profound significance of its effect on our day to day perceptions regarding *values* cannot be ignored. It makes itself felt everywhere because it implies fundamental choices concerning the locality of *priority*. Rushdoony formulates the question as follows: "Is the state more important than the individual, or does the individual have a reality which the state does not possess? What is the locus of Christianity, the believer or the church? Does marriage have a reality which makes its condition mandatory irrespective of the conditions of the husband and wife, or do the persons in the marriage take priority, in their wishes, over the idea or marriage? Is education to be geared to the development of the individual or to the welfare of society?" (1978:8).

4. Introducing and advocating values to the normatively immature

4.1 The "Value-oriented nature of education" revisited

As has become apparent in a previous paper,⁶ education is concerned with *introducing* and *advocating* values in all walks of life and all subjects⁷ of the curriculum to normatively immature (i.e. normatively undeveloped and under-developed) persons, thus providing them with priorities for the establishment of a set of values that will be regulative for the full spectrum of their present and future actions.

The *structure of normative behaviour* that encompasses our value-related actions is the most complex of the four body structures⁸ that comprise the human body. In the case of very small children, this so-called *act-structure* is not "active" in the sense of directing – under all circumstances and in a normative fashion – the physico-chemical, vegetative-biotic and psychical structures of the human body. With each stage of the child's progress towards maturity, it becomes increasingly possible to subjugate the latter (three) substructures to the normative control of the human act-structure. Thus, impulses,⁹ needs, drives, emotions and the like that owe their origin to the pre-normative substructures of the human body, are systematically given into the command of values, which *should* exert an influence on all human deeds and actions. Yet, nobody has – from birth – an original, ready-made "set" of

6 Cf. Schoeman, 2006:1-22.

7 The objective is the presentation of as great a variety of values as possible to establish a code for human conduct to the normatively immature.

8 Cf. Schoeman, 2006:1-22.

9 *Physico-chemical, vegetative-biotic and psychical.*

norms able to regulate and control his/her behaviour under all circumstances. All immature persons, in their progress towards normative maturity must, with the guidance and assistance of an already mature person, accept (for themselves) – in full *normative freedom of choice* – their own normative codes of conduct and identify themselves with these.

To be able to accomplish this educative mission successfully, the intervention of a normatively mature person (parent or teacher) who – in practice – sets a worthy example of adherence to norms, and who is endowed with *legitimate* authority and power, is indispensable. The matter of *office, competence, authority* and *power* in educational context will have to be dealt with next.

4.2 Holding an office and the prerogative to introduce and advocate values to the normatively immature

Schouls explains that authority can only be obtained when insight (understanding/ knowledge) is present. *Legitimate power* or the ability to *act correctly* (Schouls, 1972:13; Van Riessen, 1970:12-20, esp. 13, 14) depends entirely on a person's authority that – on its part – is undergirded by his or her *knowledge* and *insight*. He argues that to the extent that people gain or possess insight, to that extent they obtain or possess authority.¹⁰ And to the extent that people possess authority, they ought to be given the opportunity to act out their authority, because “acted-out”¹¹ authority is power (1972:12, 13). Power that is not directly associated with insight is uncontrolled and therefore illegitimate power that should be contained. And in the final analysis, “acting rightly” depends completely on *hearing, heeding* and *doing* the will of the Lord (Schouls, 1972:13, cf. 13-14; cf. Van Riessen, 1970:12ff). Although insight does not necessarily mean that a person must be endowed with authority, the fact remains that when others recognize and accept a person's specialized and expert knowledge of and true insight into and therefore authority regarding specific matters, such a person may be given a *position of power* in society. In other words, such a person may become the *bearer of an office*.

The *office* a person holds must always relate to the measure of authority he/she possesses. Authority provides the necessary foundation for all

10 The mere fact that no one can ever possess complete knowledge and understanding of anything makes all authority *relative* and *disputable* (Schouls: 1972:14).

11 Indeed, no-one can lead unless he/she knows what is right and understands his/her times so that he/she can *act rightly* in them (Schouls, 1972:23).

forms of power that accompany a specific *office* (cleric, the judiciary, government official, economist, scientist, teacher, parent, etc.). Being *in office* or being *endowed with an office* never implies a static and unassailable position. On the contrary, it is essentially something *active* and *dynamic*, in constant need of regular and unremitting "updating"; of never-ending revision and renewal (Schouls, 1972:14). For this reason, power is fundamentally "open to challenge" (Schouls, 1962:14) and should always be subjected voluntarily to critical scrutiny by others for any sign of misappropriation. This becomes painfully evident where authority is lacking and intimidation or brute force is exercised by incompetent and despotic office bearers.¹² Indeed, power that is not undergirded by legitimate authority based on sufficient *knowledge* and *insight* degenerates rapidly into uncontrolled and uncontrollable oppression, destructive through its own tendency to enslave and its own lack of ability to function constructively. This perspective is of special importance in educational context. It establishes the right and obligation of *office-bearers* like parents (within family context) and teachers (within school context) to exercise *legitimate, authority-based power* to *introduce* their normatively immature wards to values (across the entire spectrum) and to *advocate* adherence to these values.

4.3 Normative freedom of choice

In spite of what has been suggested above (cf. *supra*, 2.1), all humans are endowed with a (normative) *freedom of choice*¹³ in that the actions of all (normal, mentally sound and responsible) persons are preceded by the three ground directions in which acts are concretized, namely those of *knowledge*, *volition* and *fantasy*.¹⁴ For this reason, it is impossible to *impose* values on the normatively immature, except by the application of illegitimate power that coerces others to comply with what is being imposed on them.

12 At the root of the problem lies the question relating to *legitimate* and *illegitimate* authority (cf. Schouls, 1972). Illegitimate authority rests solely on the application and exploitation of force. An incompetent leader soon forfeits his/her (legitimate) authority and can maintain discipline over other lesser persons in the chain of command only by means of force.

13 Freedom is never unconditional and unqualified. Like authority (cf. *supra*) it is always relative and relational. It is relativized by the freedom, rights and dignity of others and related to the qualifying mode of the societal entity within which it appears, for instance *logical* freedom, *cultural* freedom, *social* freedom, *economic* freedom, *aesthetic* freedom, *moral* freedom, etc.

14 cf. Schoeman, 2006:12-14.

Before our fall from Grace, we were truly free in that we were able, in complete compliance with the laws of God, to carry out *in true freedom*, our pre-ordained function, namely that of developing and ruling over nature (matter, plants, animals) by forming culture to the glory of God. Radically sundered from God through our own flouting of his will (normative directives for every life situation), we became slaves of sin. Liberty is, therefore, never to be equated with *freedom from* values. The latter, false notion of freedom arises directly from our perverted self-deification and illusions of autonomy. Genuine liberty can be conceived only as *freedom within* the boundaries of the “law” (directives for a normative life). True freedom is, then, freedom from the bondage of sin that estranges us from our true selves as human beings, by warping our perspectives of the Divine law. With our gaze averted from God, we do not obey his laws and decrees, preferring always the anti-normative, namely that of violating his will. Thus it is that we rise in revolt against our true destiny, since we take service with the spirit of darkness, thereby confirming our bondage and enslavement.

Nevertheless, through God’s mercy in Jesus Christ, we are empowered to raise our eyes again to God and to expend our efforts in striving to obey his law. In this way may we regain our lost and true freedom, namely *freedom from sin*. Freedom from sin means the freedom to conform to God’s will and standards with our whole heart (being, soul) that is the epicentre of all the “issues” of our lives. This compliance with values and the voluntary subjection of our selves to the will of God creates in us the capacity to accept true responsibility, as well as true authority, since compliance with the divine law is the precondition for a state of true liberty.

As can be deduced from the above, the image we have of our Origin (origin), by its very nature, is of decisive importance in relation to our concept of the precise nature of authority and power. Christians see God as the Source of all earthly and temporal authority and power. Human authority and power are, therefore, always dependent and relative, being never absolute but rather delegated forms of authority and power.

5. Educational involvement of family, school, church and state in a free democracy

In a *free democracy*¹⁵ where societal entities are at liberty to pursue their own interests uninhibited by the fear of subjugation – especially by a

15 In the case of *totalitarian regimes* the various societal entities are considered subservient to an autocratic and dictatorial state.

despotic state – family, school, church and state each has a special and direct interest in, as well as definite priorities regarding the education of the normatively immature. These societal entities are all endowed with a unique and legitimate office and therefore have the inalienable right to demand from the normatively immature a value-bound lifestyle. They also have the competence and legitimate authority to advocate certain values to those under their sway. However, in the light of the *specialized competence* that is typical of each, no relationship may overreach its own field of interest and proficiency and intrude on the distinctive and delimited terrain of others. An imperative step aimed at preventing – in principle – one institution from impinging on the specialized province of another, is fundamentally to entrench specific areas of concern. It is therefore necessary to provide for the protection of every institution of society on the grounds of its distinctive *structure of individuality* and its corresponding *sphere of competence*. This view envisages societal entities that, while retaining their own identity within the constellation of similar institutes, constitute human society as occupying positions relative to those of all others, as well as to the absolute sovereignty of God. It distinguishes for each societal entity a salient area of competence with its corresponding task and vocation relating to introducing and advocating values to the normatively immature, thereby contributing to the preservation of a balanced and harmonious community.

Against this backdrop it is clear that the demands placed on values education will always coincide with the character of the specific societal entity involved. And as the school is – in a *fully differentiated* society – the institution that, apart from the family,¹⁶ serves general education over a broad spectrum, its position with reference to the family, church and state is of special importance to our deliberations on values education.

Ideally, the school should be allowed the liberty to exist as a relatively autonomous, distinguishable societal entity *alongside* of and dedicated to the *service* of others such as state, church, business enterprise, family and the like, with its *own* and *distinctive* task and mission to fulfil. The mutual relationship of institutions (especially parental home, church and state) with the school and – above all – the different demands made upon the

16 In primitive and therefore undifferentiated societies no formal school and other societal entities have as yet evolved. Under these circumstances education – as we understand it – does not exist. At this early stage in the development of human society, training of young people in necessary life skills aimed at the survival of individual persons as well as the group (sib, clan, tribe) is sufficient.

school, are the factors determining just how relative the autonomy of the school is, in other words, whether it has the right to control its own affairs within the sphere of its own competence. Any totalitarian tendencies exhibited by either parents, state or church will deprive the school of its limited yet legitimate right of deciding – within the restrictions of its structural limitations – the course of its own affairs.

Adequate argument can be brought forward in support of the involvement of not only the parental family and the teacher corps, but also of church and state, in the school as an educational institution, without in any way encroaching upon the entrenched areas of competence of the latter:

- A structural analysis of the *family* reveals that its foundation is in the *biotic* aspect of reality, with its designation (qualification) occurring within the *ethical* mode of human life. Parents, as those responsible for the (biotic) “origination” of a child, are also those primarily responsible for its education. One very clear fact is that the accountability for the *spirit* and *direction* of education in the parental home rests wholly with the parents¹⁷ and may *never* be renounced or transferred to another body (here, the school).¹⁸ The fact that in primitive societies with their essentially undifferentiated¹⁹ character the parents themselves function as the “school”, in no way suggests that they are necessarily best equipped to be in charge of a child’s education, especially with respect to teaching specialized subject matter as obliged by a modern curriculum. However, one very important factor in this respect is that the parent-child relationship, being *qualified* as a relationship of which the essence is *temporal love*, creates conditions that are pre-eminently suitable for *values education*. This certainly does not imply that the teacher-pupil relationship as it exists at school is not beneficial for the normative development of the child on a differentiated basis. On the contrary: an independent and self-regulating school, in a differentiated community, constitutes the prerequisite for the effective deployment of all human talents as well as the development of a value oriented life. This fact

17 Schouls emphasized that, for the Christian, parental power consists in “structuring their children’s lives in accordance with the will of God” (1972:13).

18 The *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights* recognizes the prerogative (“prior right”) of parents to choose the *kind* of education their children are to receive.

19 In undifferentiated societies, societal entities like state, church, business enterprise etc. emerge only when these societies become all the more civilized and the necessity of more societal entities than family, clan, tribe and the like becomes indispensable for the successful functioning of human society.

notwithstanding, parents possess undeniable rights and responsibilities with respect to the special nature of the continued values education of their children.

- The *school*, on the other hand, does not constitute the child's "origin". Rather, it is a cultural institution, the explicit goal of which is to contribute towards the all-inclusive education of children belonging to a specific parental and social community, as mentioned above. Once a primitive community begins to show signs of cultural differentiation, the appearance of the school (with the potential to become – eventually – an independent and self-regulating societal entity) is always by virtue of the parents' inability to comply with all the demands placed on them by new and complicated teaching requirements. All schools, under all circumstances, exhibit exactly the same *structural principle* on the basis of which they can be identified as "school" in contradistinction from other societal institutions. The consequence of this is to lay claim to a *relatively* autonomous area (sphere of competence) in which the claimant is equipped with special expertise. The deduction drawn here is that, pre-ordained from the very first moments of the world, was our eventual activity of founding schools as a means of – *inter alia* – fulfilling our cultural (normative) obligations. This brings about the existence of a specialized, professional institution which will be able to effect full disclosure of the child's inborn potential. With this function, the school can never be regarded as a so-called "extension" of the parental home (family). In no way does it *belong* to the parents of scholars, despite the fundamental privilege of the parental community to demand of the school to function in step with and within the boundaries of their special system of values. The school has its own unique character, purpose, mission and "sphere" within which it functions with expertise and relative self-sufficiency and qualified self-reliance. The school enjoys relative self-sufficiency in the field of *didactics*, that is, with respect to subjects included in the curriculum, methods of teaching, as well as the organized control of the school, discipline in the classroom and other school-related matters, including those relating to instruction in the vernacular, and differentiation.

We must, therefore, also reject the popular misconception that the educational authority vested in the teacher is derived partly from God and partly from the parents. As has become apparent, parental authority is authority that is characterized by the *love* that exists between parents and their offspring. The teacher is not vested with a

similar authority, since the teacher-pupil relationship is not *primarily* one of love. Rather, teacher authority is valid by virtue of the structure of the educational context (for instance a school) in terms of which the teacher is vested with specific (school-related) competence. “School-typical” educational power derives directly from the characterizing structure of the school – *not* from that of the parental home.

As we have noted above, parents (being always responsible for founding the school) have complete say over the *spirit* and *direction* of the values taught at school. It is this fact that imbues the principle of parental participation in “school-typical” education with so much importance. Governing bodies elected by the parents must, as the official representatives of the community of parents, take care to ensure that the education “dispensed” by the school is in accordance with the *spirit* and *direction* of education deemed proper in the parental home. However, although parents have a supervisory right over the *spirit* and *direction* of values emphasized at school, they are certainly not competent to intrude upon the specifically defined terrain of the school (that is, of the staff as professional educators). In the realm of school education, parents are in the main laymen and -women, and – as such – usually have little or no competence.

- The *church*, too, holds a special position in relation to the *value system* that regulates school education. It is authorized with the sole mission of divulging the values or normative guidelines that are to regulate and direct the lives of all its members, parents, teachers and children alike. By reason of its unique nature and specialized mission, the church actually has no direct say over the *basics* of school affairs. It has already transpired that every form of power bears with it a corresponding and necessary authority and office. Thus, in speaking of clerical authority we are speaking of a specific type of authority (emanating from the structure of the church), as well as a specific clerical competence, power and mission that enables clerics to adopt a position of authority in their relationship with members of the church. This implies that, in performing its primary duty of spreading the Gospel, the church does, indeed, function *via its members* (parents and teachers) and exercises, in a Christian community, an extremely powerful and compelling influence upon the determination of the regulating values, *i.e.* the eventual anastate *spirit* and *direction* of the school.
- Neither does the *state*, in principle, have the right to claim responsibility for the education in life values of the child. Nevertheless, by

virtue of their juridical competence, state authorities wield by far the strongest influence over the national household and are consequently responsible for protecting the legal interests of those who are gathered together to form the societal institution of the school. Except in cases where ideologies that are detrimental to the community are being promulgated via the school, the state has no right to intervene in either its *spirit* and *direction*, or the *manner of teaching* the specialized subject-matter as stipulated by the curriculum. Nonetheless, the state bears a great responsibility with respect to the school, in that it is required to supply and maintain the buildings, resources, equipment, etc. that make education at school possible. What this means is that the government (ministry of education) is directly and legitimately involved in both school and education by virtue of having the right to call for an account of the manner in which state funds are spent, as well as of the manner in which teachers, as expert employees of the government, carry out their duties.

The degree to which someone either possesses or gains insight, determines the degree of legitimate authority which he/she can wield. Similarly, the degree of lawful authority possessed by an office bearer determines the scope of the (constructive) power which ought to be vested in him/her. Positive educational authority, then, also leads to lawful educational power. Thus, the basis of legitimate educational power is educational authority that is constantly upgraded and maintained by increasing applicable knowledge and insight on the part of the office-bearer: parent, teacher or cleric. The quintessence of the concept of educational power must then be sought within the context of the capacity of taking proper action (cf. Van Riessen, 1970:13, 14) – a capacity founded upon insight into demands, responsibilities and problems of the normatively immature at home or in the school within which the office exists and over which the office bearer holds sway.

6. The role of the value inspired personality in a free democracy

Values education implies the full development and disclosure of the *logical, cultural, lingual, social, economic, aesthetic, juridical, ethical* and *pistical* dimensions of human life. Indeed, human society,²⁰ being fully

20 In order to gain a proper insight into the multiplicity of human relations – as they have emerged in a fully differentiated society – we must distinguish between *societal entities, communities* (based on kinship) and (loose) *associations*, while remaining well aware of the inviolable correlation linking them. Only two criteria need be applied in drawing this distinction. Those structures of life which exhibit both a *permanent structure of authority* and a *unified character* may be classified as (societal) *entities*

developed and differentiated with a complex spectrum of social structures, demands that normatively mature persons play a *value oriented* and *value enthused* part in the innumerable social relations they may encounter. A prerequisite for this participation is that, through education, we attain a mature level of civilization that complies with the *ultimate commitment(s)* that impel(s) ourselves and the community we are part of. Only thus will men and women of the future be equipped, while coping with differing circumstances and the claims made on them by the various societal structures, to live their lives to the full, to the glory of God and in compliance with prevailing values.

Education that leads to thorough disclosure of the normative life and value inspired actions of immature persons is the obvious “springboard” for their future compliance with established values within the complex dimension of societal structures. Thus, education will be *the* decisive factor determining the behaviour of disclosed personalities who are eventually taken up in all kinds of societal forms that differ not only in their nature, but also in the individual and typical significance and consequence that each awards to different values. This disclosure of immature persons to be able to distinguish between the typical claims of various social structures, has its beginnings in the family circle and in the school where young persons are exposed – in a differentiated manner – to a wide spectrum of value related activities. As members of a differentiated society, young persons will eventually participate in a great variety of value oriented activities, namely ecclesiastico-spiritual (*pistic*), marriage and family (*ethic*), state and political party (*jural*), visual and performing arts (*aesthetic*), business life (*economic*), associations including sports clubs (*social*), language associations (*lingual*), cultural organizations (*cultural-historic*), school and university (*logic*), each one exhibiting a typical and irreducible nature.

Every individual structure of society with which the adult comes into contact conducts itself in a distinctive and typical manner within the boundaries given in conjunction with its own central meaning. Thus it is that we may encounter one and the same aspect – for example the *ethical* with its central meaning of *temporal love* – functioning in different

(for example state, church, family, business enterprise, school, etc.); (based on kinship) such as family in general, matrimony and nation, possess either a unified character, or a permanent structure of authority, while associations such as friendship and “neighbourship” exhibit neither of these characteristics (cf. Strauss, 1978:188-189).

societal institutions, and may find that this specific aspect is accorded a characteristic way of *application* within each separate structure. For instance, love, as seen from the point of view of the unique and typical structure of the *church*, will differ from love as viewed within the context of marriage, family, school and the like. The same holds true for the multiplicity of juridical relations which we may enter into. We are, for instance, as members of a family, subject to the internal "law" of the family, which displays an ethical qualification, or as marriage partners to ethically qualified civil laws; then, as citizens of the country, we are subject to the internal law of the state which, in turn, is juridical, etc. In precisely that same way, ecclesiastical authority and power – by reason of the peculiarities of the church as institution to which it pertains and over which it holds sway – differs essentially from governmental or parental authority and power in that it exhibits a *typically* ecclesiastical (pistic) character, as opposed to a *typically* governmental (juridical) or a *typically* familial (ethical) character, etc.

The need to distinguish accurately in this respect, lays upon educators stringent requirements of training for sensitivity to the possibility of the different "functioning" of values. This will provide a basis for differentiated responsibility, allowing *value oriented* and *civilized* behaviour in a variety of societal structures, as well as a developed and differentiated association with the cultural objects related to and typical of each individual structure, such as household utensils, various kinds of tools, machinery, technical appliances, specialized equipment, books, computers, instructions, information, etc.

Educational implications: The implications inherent in this state of affairs are of great importance to the educator. As children must be educated to take their place within the disclosed and differentiated society, education has yet another task to fulfil, namely that of casting light upon the way in which the human personality functions in its various relations, since no feature of life should ever be considered in isolation from the rest. The very contexture or cohesion of the various social structures must also be held up to the light by the educator, since human persons must not be misunderstood as functioning "automatically" within the various structures of life. It is imperative, then, that education should not dissolve the all-encompassing context in which these societal structures co-exist. This means that education should never be compartmentalized into the divisions of marriage, family, church, nation, state etc., for all these are simply *facets* of society as a whole. No person may, for a moment, be contained within only one, or a few of these many "compartments". Nor-

matively mature personalities achieve maturity, *inter alia*, through their ability to balance their simultaneous and integrated participation in all structures of life. This objective can be realized only in an institution that fosters the unhindered development of values education.

7. Closing perspective

There is little doubt that the bond that holds any society together or causes its disintegration and eventual demise is the *moral fibre* of its individual members. The values that hold sway in a society, on their part, are *directed* by the most wide-ranging *faith* of the members of that particular community. This controlling faith is forever bound to a noticeable and well-defined *Leitmotif* that reveals – in terms of the antithesis – an unmistakable and clear-cut concept of the *Sure Ground/sure ground* of a person or a community. In this respect Hart (1971:145; cf. also 144) aptly remarks that human life cannot “fasten itself” onto anything of true and timeless worth within temporal experience. The moment autonomy and ultimate authority is sought and allegedly found somewhere in temporal reality, the individual person or some or other aspect, relationship or whatever is arbitrarily elevated to a position of superiority in relation to the rest. Thus, the stage is set for the illegitimate division of persons, aspects of reality, societal entities, human enterprises etc. on the basis of *super-* and *subordination*. As a result, the need for *co-ordinational* entities (with the accompanying restoration of balance with respect to the interests of persons, aspects, relationships etc.) in human society is completely disregarded.

The demand for moral revival is not a novel phenomenon. During the late forties of the 20th century a movement called *Moral Rearmament*, aimed at the moral improvement of human society, appeared on the international scene. Based on personal evangelization and resolute transformation of individual life style and life principles it was supposed to function as a novel and alternative approach to the conventional method of spreading Christian virtues like *love*, *unselfishness* and *honesty*. Its sole and admirable objective was the *moral revival* of humankind. This rekindling of *morality* on a global scale was to culminate in a radical change in the lifestyle of men and women that would in time change communities, state policies and even nations. It envisaged the eventual elimination of all forms of distrust, bitterness, animosity, hatred and the promotion of friendly relations, peace, democracy and the like, not only between the different social classes, employers and labourers, etc., but even among nations. Why it never gained much influence and success in post war decades is debatable.

Maybe a fundamental change of heart cannot be brought about at will by men and women on their own. Maybe salvation is not a matter of choice but is initiated by God in Jesus Christ. Maybe christianization cannot take place without recognizing Christ as Redeemer at all times. Maybe to choose for love, unselfishness, integrity and the like is not a life-changing event.

Maybe these splendid virtues should rather be recognized as the *consequences* of a changed life.

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