THE SCHOOL AS A MEANS TO DESIGNING A WORLD•

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1. Introduction

Closely examined is the statement that a school is placed on a child's way to help him/her design his/her own world so he/she can independently and meaningfully dwell in it. To gauge the deeper grounds of this statement, attention is given to "school", "means", "world", "design", "dwell", "meaning", and "help". There is a search for the essences, grounds, or preconditions underlying the aim, establishment, and maintenance of [educative] schools. In other words, what is it that is invariant about a school which makes the above pronouncement generally valid?

In a search for the essence of a matter or a particular reality, there is a questioning about those structural characteristics, truisms, or categories which are necessary for the matter of concern (school) to be thought about and its essence manifested. Accidental characteristics are put out of view or provisionally placed between brackets while the investigator pushes through to the essence structures. Essence structures must then be viewed with respect to the validity of (their) reality[1], and the logical structure of a constellation of values and norms by which the phenomenon shows itself—how it must be, and not only from the that-ness and what-ness or factuality of the phenomenon.

Husserl's appeal, "back to the things themselves"[2] has a bearing on the essence, ground, meaning and value of a particular meaning-carrying or intentional object which represents [or reflrcts] the typical humanness of humans as this functions in the human world.

In connection with what is said above about the essence of a matter, the question is asked if an investigator can finally, absolutely, and completely see a particular reality. The contrary of this must be accepted. "The disclosure of the sense of any being, even the smallest, in principle and in fact is inexhaustible."[3] This means that one can approach and view each matter from an incalculable number of points of view. These perspectival views and approaches from many possible points of view (also of a school) deserve additional brief specification. On the one hand, there is a search for the essence, ground, or what is always valid of a[n educative] school, and, on the other hand, an account must be given of its continual change, development, and progress—two themes which seemingly contradict each other.

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I have inserted a few words [in brackets] to make my translation more readable to an American audience. G.D.Y.

To find an adequate answer to these questions, it also is necessary to find an answer to the question: what sort of worldly being is a human being who can and must design his/her own world (including a school) and who intervenes in his/her own designs?

De Waelhens observes: "The being of a human being is an understanding of Being,"[4] according to Heidegger's[5] ontology of being human. This means a human being is a being whose way of being depends on his/her participation in what is generally real.

By virtue of a human being's ontic openness (openness for and meaning-giving directedness to the world), it is possible that he/she can approach a phenomenon from an inexhaustible number of perspectives. The title of this article assumes a particular perspective from which the author examines the problematic central to a[n educative] school. Each perspective includes a certain location, thus, an area of reality which is surrounded by a horizon.[6] "Human living, his deeds and thoughts take place within perspectives"[7], according to Van Peursen. A perspective, then, implies that a thing, object, or area of study cannot be simultaneously seen from all sides. A world without perspective is neither human nor imaginable. The total coherence of surrounding reality is never given as such but is grasped in perspectival aspects. Perspective means to see through, to behold.[8] Perspective is essential for all human orientation with reality. As being-conscious-of-being, a human being must give a decisive answer about what really is, but he/she is never instinctively, or as a matter of course placed within reality.[9] He/she has knowledge of him/herself, and even a pre-reflective awareness of a reality in which he/she is involved. This implies that he/she must continually determine his/her own position with respect to reality. Within the dialogue of the mutual implication of person and world, meaning arises or reality is disclosed. Thus, a human being is the way of access to meaning. However, this way of access is not straightforward. One can also formulate this as a human being continually viewing reality under new perspectives. Also, the sum of the data of these given perspectives can never make the matter fully present. The succession of changing, mutually complementing and correcting are what make change, progression and history possible.[10] What has been said thus far must in no way be interpreted as a radical relativism. Each perspective discloses its own truths and must continually be understood in connection with the truths from other perspectives [on the matter]. Thus viewed, pronouncements about the essential grounds of a[n educative] school must be concluded with, "and so forth". A human being continually designs to situate him/herself, but through reconsideration, he/she redesigns and intervenes in existing designs. In doing so, one is continually involved in transcending his/her existing situatedness and his/her world comes to stand in a new perspective for him/her.

2. The term "school":

As a second order human design, over time a school has undergone fundamental changes in meaning because of the mutually correcting perspectives from which it is examined. The term "school" is derived from the Greek word, "schole," which expresses the Greek perspective on "free time" during which truth is diligently sought for its own sake. These activities are elevated above any connection to labor or economic motives. In the

"schole" scientific practice is independent of being human as laborer.[11] The Latin word, "schola" refers to another perspective. "Schola" means "scholarly research", to distinguish this way from "explaining" things as a way of investigating. Both perspectives, however, refer to a person's attempt to orient him/herself to life and reality. Today, the school is considered from other perspectives. The practice of the science of teaching is an involvement in the world of labor. Whoever thinks about a school today, thinks about a design which has the future of the child in view and, again, this cannot be considered apart from his/her vocation, life task, work, view of life, etc. This does not mean that the modern system of labor, in all respects, determines the baseline of the systems of educating and teaching although, in a deeper sense, the Greeks misunderstood the more profound significance of labor.

As a second order [i.e., created] design, the school is not a primordial or original human phenomenon. It is not given with being human, as is educating (bringing up a child), suffering, striving, dying, etc. Even so, the possibility has always existed which, at one time or another, a[n educative] school could be designed. It is a later addition to human reality and, hence, is an integral part of culture. As a cultural design, it carries the imprint and symbols of being human and is evidence of human intentions or strivings. In his/her activities with a child in a[n educative] school, an adult is involved in assisting him/her to humanize the human world as a matter of propriety. These activities reveal spontaneity, freedom and creativity as aspects of propriety, in the sense of adhering to the normative.

When there is a search for the structural characteristics, primordial structures, or essences of a reality, there is an inquiry about its reality- or ontic-status, i.e., about what is irreducibly or absolutely given primordially. As a second order design, indeed, a[n educative] school is a reality, but what is its ontic status? In other words, how is it possible that a human being could create a[n educative] school? In which primordial human reality does such a school have its source? There is only one answer: A[n educative] school is grounded in family upbringing as a primordial human reality, where "primordial" refers to a truth which now is, as it always has been and will continue to be, and whose existence cannot be thought away or denied. Upbringing was not discovered, invented, or created, or called to life later by persons. In its [educative] normative, teaching, and learning aspects, it is ontic; it is a primordial, original and integral part of being human, and of the human world. The naïve, spontaneous and natural home upbringing is used by a parent, as an adult, to normatively orient his/her (not-yet-adult) child in a world of adults. The educator stands at a juncture between the world of a child and that of an adult. Both adult and child know the latter cannot remain a child. His/her destination is the adult world, and upbringing in the home is the primordial way, *par excellence*, which must be followed to that destination. In the family, upbringing and teaching also are not two separate matters. Each thing a child must do or learn there must occur in terms of norms. If a school interprets the continuation of the educative teaching of family life in a school as different although related, a school must show why this view is justifiable.

3. Upbringing in a family and educating in a school as

means:

Every human orientation implies a method as a means or way of realizing a certain aim. An aim refers to truth, to experiencing, realizing, anticipating values and eventually to fulfilling and affirming life. There is a close connection between means and end, but they are not the same. A means can never be an end itself but leads to an aim. Thus, a means has a referential character: it points to something other than itself. Hence, a[n educative] school is a means for a child to reach his/her destination.

The choice of a means is valued to the degree that it optimizes attaining the aim. There are always wrong ways which obscure aim attainment. Hence, a[n educative] school is an illuminating, standardizing and normalizing means. As such, it should never be child or teacher centered. It is a norm-centric institution because it is in terms of norms that its aim can be reached. Both didactic [i.e., teaching] and pedagogic [i.r., educative] activities must realize the criteria of norms and values. A school event, as a means, is considered by the author to be educative teaching. Within this structure, the participation of teacher and child must be understood as a conversation about the adult world (learning content).

It is observed that a[n educative] school is a means by which a child must be helped to design his/her own world to ultimately dwell in it independently and meaningfully. If this aim is attained, the means becomes superfluous. However, this designing, planning and using such a means would not have been possible in school if it had not been already spontaneously implemented in the original family situation. Thus viewed, a school, as a[n educative] means, is an extension or re-constitution of family upbringing, by which a child must be helped to design his/her own world.

Logically, it follows that the concept "world" receives attention below because the method or means of being concerned about the world shows and includes a variety of perspectives. During methodical thinking and practicing science, the world is accessible and transparent. Thus viewed, a[n educative] school is a means to help open the world and reality for a child. It offers the opportunity for a child to explore and orient him/herself in the human world.

4. The term "world":

In modern thinking about the total human situation, the human world is viewed from various perspectives. The "lifeworld", with its unimaginable number of "horizons", has a central place in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. The lifeworld is the intentional correlate of a human's many-sided oriented intentional life.[12] This world precedes all categorical thinking, logical constructions, scientific formulations, derived explanations and reflective judgments which are all grounded in the lifeworld. The lifeworld is the bedrock and ground of all human activities, creations, behaviors, achievements, beliefs, and contents of faith, expectations, values, in which each person participates daily and by which he/she designs, aims at, signifies, plans, organizes, shapes and marks it a world-for-him/her. Thus, the lifeworld is not an independent thing or data but a phenomenon

which a human knows because he/she says something about it. The concept "lifeworld" does not mean the earth, the raw, untouched nature or the cosmos which exists independent of any form of human attribution of meaning. The existence of the latter is not denied, but it is only part of the human world as soon as a human has said something meaningful about it. This means a human being is continually involved in humanizing his/her world. "World" means the human being's meaningful, cultural world, his/her total field of meaning and existence, landscape, field of presence, or the total spiritual situation of a person as a matter of propriety. This is corroborated [for a believer] in the Scriptures. In 1 John 2, verses 15-17, the Apostle states the meaning of the concept "world" from a Christian perspective. Verse sixteen says:

> "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

This Scripture warns against the world's finiteness and desirability and against a worldly love that supplants the love of God. However, here the author's perspective is phenomenological. The concrete, everyday, naïve ground of human existence is relevant here. It is a world which already is in motion and underway before any scientific or philosophical thought about it. The sciences, philosophical systems, life views, etc. spring from this world. Without it, all second order human designs are impossible. There are no separate objectified "subjects" or sciences in this world. It comprises the pre-reflective experiencing of persons which, as an integral unity, is experienced and lived through in terms of its obviousness to everyone.

In contrast to this phenomenological perspective on the world, an objectivistic one can be put forth. In the Western world, it is acceptable to mention a natural scientific world image of the Westerner. This objectivistic vision posits a subject who stands in opposition to the entirety of all beings, and these beings exist in a meaningful way independent of a human being's intentions, evaluations, and meanings. It is a world of things; a world of bodies, and a human being is part of this reality in the same way as a meteor or any other body.[13] Such a world is objective in its functions and lawfulness, which is knowable itself. It is devoid of all human additions, evaluations, meanings, and subjective experiences. So viewed, a snake is gruesome because it is so itself, and the earth turns lawfully each twenty-four hours on its own, irrespective of what humans say. It can be asked if there really is such a world which is totally cut off from all human giving of sense and meaning, intending, evaluating, and formulating.

A school arises in the lifeworld of humans. In the search for the grounds or essences of a[n educative] school, the question arises whether this naïve, integral, undifferentiated lifeworld shows essential structures. If primordial, ground, or essence structures of it can be indicated which, for all time, have validity for the ground situation of being human, the possibility exists that the deeper ground of a[n educative] school, which arises as a second order design within the lifeworld, can be indicated. Indeed, [such] a school cannot arise "outside" of life and come to life. This means that the essence of a[n

educative] school must show essential ties to the lifeworld. The mentioned fundamental structures then must be purely possible, generally and necessarily valid expressions of the world. Each world, including a[n educative] school as a special "world", must adhere to this fundamental structure of the lifeworld irrespective of the fact that the lifeworld of persons, communities, etc. differ from each other because of their historically varying contents. Once the structures of the lifeworld are determined, the anchor, ground, justification, and design of a[n educative] school in the human world can be better understood. Such structures must answer to the same *a priori* as mathematics, logic, and arithmetical formulations, and are construed in the same way. All factual sciences, each possible human activity, calling, design (including educative teaching in the school) find their ground in these structures and are anchored in them. It is necessary that each person, also each child, must design his/her own world within the possibilities of the lifeworld. In each structure, form and content must always be distinguished. If "the normative" is a generally valid structure of the lifeworld, this normative moment of the form remains invariant, but the content which a person or people give or have given to the normative must necessarily differ with time, place, and person.

Elsewhere,[14] I have fully elaborated the structures of the lifeworld and, because of limited space, only the following structures are mentioned. The human world is a temporal-spatial, finite, discussed, open, normative, religious, personal (subjective), relational, cultural, affective, situated, tattered, destitute, heterogeneous, and mysterious world. In addition, it is a person's standing and dwelling place and it nourishes every human creation or design. It furnishes stability in his/her wavering existence and is experienced as a task, command and gift. Outside these [lifeworld] structures, no human being can design or create his/her own world, a fact which applies equally to a school. This implies that a[n educative] school must be a normative, religious, relational, cultural, etc. creation.

5. The term "design/create" – human orientation in the world:

From the above, the following is inferred and empirically demonstrable, i.e., as generally valid and necessary:

a) The lifeworld is radically human – it carries the mark of humanity.
b) The familiar world in which humans thrive is designed by them.
c) The designed character of the human cultural world is evidence of fundamental human possibilities. The cultural world points to the culture-creating achievements of humans.
d) Human and world make each other understandable. To understand a person, his/her world must be understood. A human being is a being-in-the-world.
e) There are not two worlds which exist: on the one hand, a

world which someone imagines and thinks, an imminent world and, on the other hand, a naturalistic world of things which exist "outside" a human being. There is only one world: a human intentional, meaning carrying world as planned, designed, and signified as a world-for-him/her. A conscious being can never think in isolation from the givens of his/her consciousness.

f) In this everyday, pre-reflective world which is lived-through as it is experienced by each person each day in his/her association with life and reality, there are no "subjects" or sciences. It is the source of each science and is already underway before any science can have its start. Take language as an example: In the lifeworld of a Boer [Afrikaner], language is not experienced as a separate subject. It is integrally interwoven with the total coherence within which each person is embedded. This also holds for norms: If a distance is taken from a language or norm, and it is objectified, systematized and, as it were, torn away from the lifeworld, a linguistics or ethics can arise.
g) There is a smooth transition between the lifeworld and the scientific data about it because a human being transforms the scientific designs into customary things, and they are then experienced and used as such.
h) Each possible design of the world must be realized within the generally valid structures of the lifeworld and must be consistent with them.
i) A human's communication/dialogue with the world is ontic. It is an original [primordial] human event.

The question now is how such a world arises as a human design. A generally accepted and current understanding, which is a possible answer, is the concept "learning". What each person eventually is, what he/she knows and can do, he/she has "learned". Thus, he/she learns to breed cattle, farm, engage in commerce, justice, and its administration, about norms and values, constructing a house, town, city and means of communicating. As he/she is educated, he/she also "learns" the difference between right and wrong, and to do what is good and avoid what is bad. He/she learns to know other people: their appearance, manners, and thoughts. He/she also learns about animals, plants, and things. In addition, he/she also learns what other persons have said about and how they described the aforementioned. The great encounter event between a learning person and that which he/she is not, is then a formidable and prolonged "learning process".

[For an empiricist], generally what is learned is meaningful and independent of the learning person. Therefore, what is learned is already meaningful and learnable because a person has at his/her disposal sense organs which, like open windows, give access to a meaningful outside world. This "meaningful" external world projects light rays which reach a person via receptive sense organs. The senses transform the stimuli into images in the mind and are mysteriously interpreted as knowledge. A person "reacts" to these stimuli and adapts him/herself in his/her involvement with the world.

In contrast to this empiricist interpretation of learning is the idealist view: the external world can never really be known. What one knows about it is only what a person can imagine or think.

Both these perspectives are one-sided because person and world (subject and object) are isolated from each other by them. In contrast to these theories of the communication between person and reality, Husserl poses the theory of consciousness as intentionality to bridge the subject-object problem [of their separation]. The implication of this latter theory for the knowing life of a person is formulated as follows: There is an unbreakable connection between consciousness and that which consciousness is not, i.e., the givens of consciousness. This also implies that consciousness, as ontic openness, includes meaning-giving, meaning-experiencing [i.e., receiving], sense-giving and sense-experiencing [i.e., receiving] functions. These latter points to the normed and normative function of intentionality. Being human implies "existing": stepping out of oneself; existing implies intentionality (the world is a human-intended world) and it implies giving sense to and designing a world. Intentionality characterizes a new relationship between the knowing subject and the object known. Meanings, values, and evaluations are added and attributed to objects by which they are transformed into meaning-carrying or intentional objects. They then bear or carry the mark of humans. In this way, the nonhuman becomes humanized and part of the human world as cultural world. A human being shows him/herself as a being who organizes and plans his/her own world. This planning and organizing continually occur in terms of norms and criteria. Moreover, it is worth noting that a person does not merely maintain his/her encounter and association with the world through an intellectual orientation. This encounter is also embedded in his/her life of beliefs and trust, his/her willing, and his/her sense for values. This encounter is continually realized in a stream of emotions; thus, a person's world is affectively colored. Ethical, social, religious, juridical, historical, etc. perspectives of the world arise from this encounter. Thus viewed, a person can never bring about a totally chaotic world, but always an ordered, organized world as a dwelling place. However, this last statement must be qualified. A person's design of his/her own world can be divided into two categories: an authentic, genuine world design or an inauthentic one. World design always remains an adversarial matter because of a human being's basic recalcitrance in his/her world conversations. Because of this, the world never shows itself with complete clarity. A person's total world image is a dawning obscurity.

The conversation with the world is an advancing event by which the world horizon of each person continually widens. Person and world are a relational unity indicating that a person's original experience with the object has the character of a dialogue. This dialogue is executed in four main fields of conversation:

a) a conversation with oneself;
b) a conversation with fellow persons;
c) a dialogue with nature; and
d) a conversation with God or a Transcendent Power greater than him/herself.

There also is a distinction between a pre-reflective orientation in the naïve lifeworld, and scientific and philosophical ways of orienting to the world. In the case of the latter, because of conscious reflection, a discontinuity arises while living in the lifeworld. Distance is taken from an object and by objectifying, it is elevated to a known object. The integral and original data of the lifeworld are gradually formulated in language and its extensions, such as artificial languages, and are preserved as an objectified culture of words. By ordering, sectors of the lifeworld are categorized from different perspectives into so-called categorical systems of ordering. In this form, the world is brought into the school as syllabi. The cloak of ideas which a person lays on the world provides him/her with a powerful grasp of everything which is.

This world orientation occurs mainly within the primordial familiarity and encounter with fellow persons. Within this mutual understanding, the world is accessible. Mutual understanding is a ground-form of the totality of human existence and orientation. Thus viewed, the human world, is a large field of encounter and a[n educative] school is a re-designed and canalized field of encounter which has its origin in family life.

Learning, educating [upbringing], play, making things his/her own, educative teaching, instructing, laboring, acting, religious practice and arts must be seen within the framework of this/her world orientation. A[n educative] school must help a child have a part and take a part in humanizing the world. Alas! No child can do this independently on his/her own accountability. Hence, a child is dependent on the help of an adult. In fact, the human world is an adult world.

6. The term "help" ["aid"]:

The fundamental helplessness of a child makes an appeal to adults. With the birth of a child, the primordial relational involvement of parent and child immediately springs into view. Filiation and parenthood are anchored in this. The ontic need of a child summons the parent to help and to commiserate with him/her by which the parent establishes a world [for his/her child]. The terms help, guide and commiserate are strongly imbued with normatively significant connotations. As a normative matter, help refers to a bipolar state of interhuman relatedness. At one pole, the accent is on the helpless, help-seeking, threatened existence of the one in need and, at the other, it is on someone [i.e., an adult] who can address the distress and do something about it. Because of this fundamental relationship, in its normative aspects, the conversation between parent and child thrives. The parent must see his/her child in his/her child-being, while he/she him/herself portrays the norm-image or idea of adulthood by exemplifying to his/her child how he/she generally ought to be.

7. The term "to dwell meaningfully":

Human being is a being who dwells. To do this meaningfully implies appreciating norms in their unconditional, demanding nature. Dwelling means the realization of security. As the experience of security diminishes and declines, dwelling loses content.[15] Even though "dwelling" refers to being at home and security, this can never be viewed as a

self-sufficient and closed human condition. This "secure dwelling" must be achieved anew each day. The human world is a large, natural living room but, at the same time, it is a room in which the humanity of humans ought to be displayed. This "ought to be" calls for a dwelling- and working-together. As existence, coexistence is the way of human beings for which the way of the family constitutes its fundamental form. The family offers opportunities for exploration which must result in a child's becoming free on his/her journey to maturity, being formed and adulthood.

8. The modified [redesigned] world and the school:

From being redesigned by adults, the modern world has become very complex and not synoptic. Nowadays, parents and children communicate with distress about their child's orientation in the world. The redesign of the natural educative teaching of family life into a second order institution, such as a[n educative] school, is a great human achievement which creates the opportunity for realizing the idea of adulthood as a way of being, but by way of a detour.

9. The teacher:

The idea "teacher", as a cultural creation, arises from the ontic structure of the norm-image of adulthood. To realize his/her intentions with his/her child, a parent "extends" him/herself through a teacher. In professional ways, a teacher must build a bridge between the world of the adult and the child. This implies he/she must be familiar with both these worlds. His/her participation assumes that he/she must meaningfully implicate him/herself in both worlds. If a teacher does not identify him/herself with the world of a child, the latter will not readily follow his/her example. On the other hand, a child has need of an adult who will make the world of the adult optimally visible. As one who gives experience and interprets meaning, a teacher must invite and summons each child to participate in the conversation about the world (learning content) of an adult. A parent, as well as a teacher, has a purpose with a child to the extent that they have a purpose in their own lives. Many pupils discover their own purpose in life, to the extent that a teacher has made the purpose of his/her own life visible to them. In school, a child also ought to push through to the universalities without neglecting his/her own unique design.

Finally, the following characteristics of an educative teaching situation in a school are noted:

a) The situation involves norms and is normative.
b) It is a formally ordered situation but shows signs of informality.
c) In contrast to the naturalness of a family situation, school situations often show a certain degree of arbitrariness.
d) School situations are woven through with meanings, but in a more ordered and synoptic form than in family life.
e) It is an authoritative situation by virtue of the norms, values, and meanings of adults.

f) These situations are dialogic: a conversation which is realized in terms of the most highly valued data of the adult world.
g) There are large qualitative differences among the conversational partners.
h) It is formative and orienting.
i) The demand that the situations must continually be broken through refers to their dynamic character. Temporality is an important characteristic of these situations.
j) The mutual involvement of the participants, on the one hand, and their openness for and directedness to the world, on the other hand, are essences of these situations.
k) In these situations, wonder is often awakened which results in life fulfillment and the experience of meaning.
l) The referential character of the situations must be noted. They embody the task character of this world to which the participants are called. They have the future of the participants in view.
m) The design of school situations is possible because a human being answers, adds, appends, includes, brings about, enlivens, brings to light because he/she him/herself stands in the light of everything which is.

It is the author's hope that the perspective in which a school is viewed in this article might open new perspectives for discussing a[n educative] school.

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