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OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

EDUCATION OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN DURING NAZISM AND THE CONSEQUENCIES FOR CONTEMPORARY PEDAGOGY

By Ingeborg Korhammer

Supervised by
Prof. Salvatore Fava Ph.D.

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I do hereby attest that I am the sole author of this project/thesis and that its contents are only the result of the readings and research I have done.

Angeberg Karhammer

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The education of girls and women during National Socialism

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

The immediate motivation for the present work was an exhibition that took place in the Frauen Museum Bonn (Germany) titled 'The traditional role images in National Socialism'.

The central themes were the self-perception of the individual with respect to the understanding of the prevailing ideology at the time as to what specifically the female individual had to be and do. In what manner can the images and artworks of that time be political propaganda images for a clearly conceptualized presentation of female and male role behaviours? Or are they merely artistically nugatory images of a kitsch idyll, and therefore harmless?

The visitors of the exhibition could explore such questions. The understanding of the different roles, as demonstrated in the female and male nude images, the pictures of couples, of the mother and father as well as the family in the scene, serves as a contextual framework.

The official art of the 'Third Reich' propagated a role behaviour of women and men that was single-sided. The partition into a female, generally serving role that is primarily related to the private sphere and the male, leading role predominantly related to the public sector ensured a simultaneous hierarchical valuation of these roles.

The question that arose from the beginning for me as a woman and a teacher was how I would have fared in my private and professional life in those days. In what way would political propaganda have influenced my own personal life? The education of girls and women during National Socialism was particularly interesting for me in this regard.

1.2 Systematic and fundamental pedagogical principles

The aim of this work is to analyze the position of women during National Socialism based on the opportunities available to them. Since the educational institutions rely on the social position of the sexes, it is necessary to explain the respective ranking of women and men in the National Socialist community.

The image of man as promulgated and characterized by National Socialism form the basis of this presentation. The allocated roles and role expectations are documented in them. The appraisals of people that are thus expressed are transferred, to a considerable extent, into the educational objectives. Indeed, one of the primary objectives of National Socialism was to shape people with a conforming worldview. The National Socialist image of man and the institutions that were entrusted with the upbringing and education should be read in conjunction. The present work aims to show the manner in which young girls and women in the NS state were compelled to conform to very specific roles.

Another part of this work deals with the consequences that can be drawn for contemporary education and pedagogy within a democratic society.

1.3 Methodical approach

The entire work will focus on the following ranges and questions:

chapter 3: When does education turn into seduction?

chapter 4: In what way did NS-education turn off influences of family, religion and other social groups?

chapter 5: Why is the formation of a strong self-identity important and how should this process start?

chapter 6: Which factors enable humans to make morally “good” decisions?

chapter 7: What is the “dialogical principle” and where are the limits to manipulation and indoctrination?

chapter 8: How do norms and values of a society affect the education of young people?

chapter 9: Is living in freedom and dignity practicable for human beings?

chapter 10: Why is man searching for “freedom” and what does that mean for a human society?

2. Traditional role images of women in the NS state

2.1 Women as the source of life

A painting by Ernesto J. Liebermann is called 'The female slave'. He portrayed a young woman facing the viewer. A light satin cloth falls from her shoulders. The woman bundles this cloth in her right hand and thus covers her nakedness. She has brought her left arm up to her chin and holds the cloth over her shoulder. This pose in which the woman remains gives the spectator time to observe her body from the front perspective without being watched in return. She has turned her head slightly to the side and lowers her gaze, her mouth is closed. A passive presence is characteristic of this woman. But she agrees to be viewed, she does not turn away. At the same time, however, she seeks protection. The cloth gives her protection. She clings on to it, thereby hiding her sexuality, but she also holds herself in the cloth. In his portrayal of 'The female slave', Ernest J. Liebermann imitates a statuesque form derived from classical Greek antiquity. (Here, a reference is made to the 'Venus de Milo'.)

In the national socialistic ideology, the woman offers herself to the man, she is the sexual object and 'The female slave'. Furthermore, the image of the woman as a 'source of life' should be conveyed. The term 'source of life' appears to be unique to National Socialism; it is taken from the title of the National Socialist publication by Hans Hagemeyer, 'Woman and mother — the source of life of the nation', published in Munich in 1942. Hagemeyer formulates his vision of a happy life in the National Socialist people's community with the woman as the giver of life at the centre. In the broadest sense, it is a worldview that is centred around women and expresses a clear veneration of women.

This subject is also raised in images, posters, and photographs. There is, for instance, a photo taken from a book owned by the highest-ranking woman in the bureaucratic hierarchy of the Nazi state, the Reich's Women's Leader (Reichsfrauenführerin) Gertrud Scholtz-Klink. It shows a mother carrying her child on her shoulder who is stretching his arms upwards. The caption 'Young Life' outgrows the old life and guarantees the continued existence of the NS ideology. This interpretation is especially imposed when one looks at the statues of the 'Lebensborn'. The 'Lebensborn' was a Nazi Institution where the children were anonymously raised by selected women in homes that were

conceived by SS men for so-called 'racial' considerations. Thus, the development of the 'Nordic race' was promoted and the continued existence of the NS state was ensured.

The arms that reach upwards and the open palms of the depicted women indicate that they receive and impart 'currents of life'. The question as to whether this suggests a matriarchal representation during National Socialism can only be answered by considering two different levels. One level is the claims directed at women, the other is their effect. Effectively, there were barely any depictions of men in this 'life pose' among the Nazi pictures. This means that there is a certain expectation towards women in the National Socialist ideology that does not exist towards men: here is the woman who has the ability to give or provide life; she is the 'source of life'. The man cannot be this, consequently, he is dependent upon the woman. This gives the woman a higher authority, which speaks of a matriarchal concept.

The other level is the effect of this authority. In such depictions, the woman does not exist for herself, but only in relation to a child or a male partner. In this fashion, the old stereotype is reproduced, which states that women have to serve and be subordinate to men. The woman is at the beginning of new life, but the further course of life is determined by men.

The National Socialist perception of the woman as the 'source of life' is based on the distribution of roles as 'women = central but serving' and 'men = dependent but dominant'. The assumption is that by resorting to old Germanic conception with regard to family structure and role behaviour, it should be demonstrated how deep the roots of the new, National Socialist period reach into tradition, and that people can therefore have faith in the propagated ideology.

The woman was not permitted to be associated with 'sexuality', she had to devote herself to higher obligations: she was the woman of the NS population, the 'source of life'. The NS ideology substantiated this allegedly 'higher' operation of women with the 'laws of nature'. It is when a woman 'is chosen' by a man that the time of waiting and of showing herself comes to an end. It is suggested to men that women are available and manipulable.

Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, gave a speech on March 18th, 1933, at the opening of the exhibition 'The woman in the family,

home, and work' during which he likewise propagated the servitude of women from the perspective of the National Socialist ideology that had recently become state-supporting:

“German women have been transformed in recent years. They are beginning to see that they are not happier as a result of being given more rights but fewer duties. They now realise that the right to be elected to public office at the expense of the right to life, motherhood, and her daily bread is not a good trade.”

Here women are separated from the public spheres of influence, they are even threatened: the right to a seat in parliament is played off against the right to life.

Bereft of many functions in this way, only a few days later, on April 5th, 1933, women heard Adolf Hitler declare that they had equal rights:

“We do not know of any men’s rights and women’s rights. We only know of one right for both sexes, which is simultaneously an obligation for the nation to live, work, and fight together.”

This wording, however, was not aimed at the recognition of rights, rather at their withdrawal. This was an attempt to enslave women.

The politicisation of women as gullible voters for the NSDAP was countered as early as in 1931 by the work of Wilhelm Hoegner, ‘The woman in the Third Reich’, which warned that women would experience a regression of the emancipation process under the domination of the NSDAP.

2.2 Women as mothers

“Motherhood” was of social and public interest for National Socialist society. Women as mothers could therefore claim their place in media outlets where widespread dissemination was guaranteed. Maternity was the most important form of existence that the NS ideologues granted women. In so doing, the National Socialists reduced the idea of “womanhood” to “having children”, which they surrounded with the catchwords “naturalness” and “femininity”. An attempt was made to “educate” women through ideological obedience. Concomitantly, the possibility to critically reconsider the maternal role had, temporarily, come to an end. Emancipatory aspirations, which had aimed to enforce the rights of women to a self-determined life, were now being eclipsed by the

image of women's lives that only acquired meaning through dedication and sacrifice. Devotion, however, not only to their partners, but foremost to the idea of "national community" as propagated by the "Führer". So it was not primarily about giving a child to one's own husband, but rather to the "Führer".

In a speech in 1934, Hitler divided the roles of women and men as follows: "The sacrifices which the man makes in the struggle of his nation, the woman makes in the preservation of that nation in individual cases. What the man gives in courage on the battlefield, the woman gives in eternal self-sacrifice, in eternal pain and suffering. Every child that a woman brings into the world is a battle, a battle waged for the existence of her people."

The term "nation" means the life of the "general population", which men spend in war and which women can replenish elsewhere, namely at home. Women were especially geared towards making decisions regarding their lifestyles not according to their own wishes, but according to the exigencies of the "national community". The requirements demanded more people; these should be "produced" by women as mothers.

In order to implement such a rigorous heteronomy, the NS ideology created the illusion of an ideal world. Having children was portrayed as particularly desirable. Motherhood and motherly love appeared to be something superior. The idea of being reduced to the role of housewives and mothers should not be perceived as a restriction of freedom, but as a means of concentrating on the essential. Motherhood was regarded as a blessing and therefore willed by God, as if it were a superordinate law of nature. This guiding principle obliged women to negate their personality. The desired objective was a surplus of births that could compensate for the losses of the war.

An association, which was called the "Fount of Life" (*Lebensborn*) was founded at the end of 1935 as a means of further raising the birthrate. The duties of this organisation were exclusively in the sphere of population policy and consisted in supporting racially and hereditarily valuable families with many children, as well as taking care of mothers who, after a careful examination of their own family and the producer's family, were believed to give birth to valuable children.

The "Fount of Life" established homes in which the wives of SS men, as well as single mothers, could go during childbirth. The latter would often remain anonymous, at their own request. In this manner they avoided the social ostracism that still existed, and it would enable them to name their children under the patronage of Adolf Hitler. In some

cases, children could also be given up to adoption. By offering to treat the pregnancy confidentially and providing a workplace after the delivery, the number of abortions could be reduced. However, this only applied to women who could prove their own and their partner's "Aryan descent" and hereditary health. The new population in these homes was expected to replace the men who had fallen during the war. Yet a woman who had been involved with Jewish fellow citizens was to be marginalised from society. This makes it particularly clear that women and mothers were made serviceable to the state. The fulfilment of every woman should be the child that she brings into the world, whereas the fulfilment of men was work.

2.3 Couples

Lovers and everyday couples are central motifs in European art. As developed during National Socialism, the idea of the couple does no longer demonstrate the disharmonious tension or the tragedy of human relationship but expresses and supports positive forces. Two complementary halves should represent a unified whole. Entirely in accordance with the NS ideology of healthy, "new" people, all upsetting, ironic, and critical aspects were disregarded. The National Socialists' recourse to Germanic deities promoted the sacralisation of this motif in this instance, as well as in the role images of the mother. Ideal images of the relationship between the sexes, as envisaged by the NS ruling authorities, will be presented and shown. The relationship is hierarchical: the man is the leader, he is the "head"; the woman is the "body". The duty and purpose of women should evidently be to show appreciative admiration towards men. The male capacity to confer protection and the female need for protection become standard motifs in the representations of couples and are contrary to the predetermined equality of men and women.

Viewed in the historical context, this mode of thinking divides the members of society according to gender and racial characteristics and differentiates between the "good" and the "inferior". A discriminatory mindset, however, can encourage criminal activities or even justify them.

Hitler had substantial influence on the role images of men and women. He argued for a very particular view on the inequality of the sexes, namely on the inferiority of women. The German girl should be considered as a "national" only once she is married to a

“citizen”. Female German nationalists in the labour force, however, could be granted “citizenship”.

Even at the mass gatherings, such as the Nuremberg rallies where, characteristically, only men participated, Hitler appealed only to the male youth— his figure of speech “the youth” should be “as tough as Krupp steel” was intended solely for them and not for young women.

Hitler’s concept of the imbalanced granting of citizenship to men and women was the expression of a certain judgmental attitude that was always present in many areas of social coexistence. On that point, his differing appraisals of men and women is expressed in the application of the *Blutschutzgesetz* (the law concerning the protection of German blood and honour). Accordingly, neither “Aryan” women who had been in a close relationship with Jews, nor Jewish women who had associated themselves with “Aryans” could be penalised. This apparent protection was based on Hitler’s notion that the female character was unstable, which correspondingly affected the relationship between women and men. Hitler deemed women as beings without any real moral and ethical independence who were dependent on male leadership and who consequently merely played a passive role in the relations between the sexes; therefore, they were not responsible for “racial defilement” and could not be punished for it.

Marriage was considered to be a special institution that goes above and beyond itself and should only be concluded if both partners were in good health, thereby ensuring that the offspring would, if possible, be even better than the parents.

But Hitler did not want any “improvement” in the sense of a “maturation” of the individual person, rather, he aimed for a change of the whole “national body”. For his idea of the “purity of the blood”, he proclaimed certain population groups as enemies of society, which should be separated and ultimately killed.

The concept of polarity between the masculine and feminine principles— which, united, keep the life of the universe in equilibrium— became widespread. But man’s “protective function” changes all too easily; the woman is not protected but possessed as the “good” piece of the household.

2.4 Family

It was considered as the nucleus of the state. The National Socialist concept of the German state was as follows: the men's camaraderie was one element; the familial life of men and women was another. An emphasis was placed on hereditary healthy families with many children and a happy German mother. It is remarkable that the family unit was not held in such high esteem for its own sake, but the authorities were, first and foremost, concerned with raising the population figures. The social area of families was assigned exclusively to women. They were much more than single, working girls, they were their husbands' companions and mothers of their children.

The distribution of roles proved to be rigid: women were defined by the cliché of their motherliness and domesticity, whereas the men were expected to conquer the world by fighting. The demand for a minimum of four children in each family grew. The National Socialist ideology placed men's leadership in the forefront and consistently reaffirmed their legitimate claim to leadership.

What functions beyond the domestic spheres would, under certain circumstances, still be granted to women? They should be engaged in the social public by lending a helping hand to those in need. Their role was therefore to act as an intermediary between the state authorities and society. The image of a "mother figure" as a figurehead, who feels responsible for the entire population and regards this care as her exclusive goal in life, was prescribed. Housekeeping and social welfare were the preferable occupations.

The image of women as helpers of the people in the sense of an intermediary of the National Socialist ideology was widespread. The media of those times addressed the act of helping in images and texts alike. The appeals to the female willingness to help increased as the war dragged on. Women's work beyond the house, as technicians in the aircraft industry, as stationmasters or as Wehrmacht helpers, appeared to be valuable insofar as it replaced the work of men who were engaged in the war effort.

In this respect, the "possibility" to develop motherly leading behaviour could develop into an "obligation" to motherhood through ideological conditioning.

3. Pedagogy as an instrument for the enforcement of National Socialist objectives

3.1 Fundamental concepts of the National Socialist educational mindset

3.1.1 Race

During the National Socialist era, biology was considered to be a “basic science” (Zimmermann 1936, p.28). It should provide a “biological worldview” (Stämmeler 1938, p.208) in order to guide the population towards the “highest attainable standard of species-appropriate perfection” (Jänsch 1938, p.12).

In the context of National Socialism, humans are not personal entities with their own responsibilities, but rather they are an integrated link in the population as a common organism, they are unreservedly governed by its organic laws. According to this perception, “... the whole is circumscribed in its organic structure: the links serve the whole” (Krieck 1932, p. 23).

The “racial substance” (Heilmann 1939, p. 13), “racial soul” (Rosenberg 1936, p.3), and the “enigmatic rhythm of the ancestral blood” (Sturm 1942, p.118) were perceived as the interconnecting and unifying fortitudes of “true national wholeness”. The term “race” constitutes a basic category of the National Socialist ideology and serves to legitimise of the most diverse educational approaches and objectives. Furthermore, it is attributed with a mental-spiritual and metaphysical quality: “Biology, as the doctrine of the body and its functions can only get to grips with the racial problem from one side. Race permeates through all people in the spiritual and mental areas of life, in their relationships with fellow human beings, and their supra-personal lives, for which it is no less fundamental than for the life of the individual. Race is a type of being and behaviour: it immediately places its bearer in a specific relationship to their fellow human beings, be it one of togetherness or opposition, and the ultimate benchmark for them are the political, social, and history-making values along with the ensuing lifestyle and direction in life” (Krieck 1932, p.28).

Even Bäumler, who declared “race” as being the “fundamental concept of educational science”, does not use the term in the strict biological sense. For him, human beings are primarily “creatures of character”, whereby character is also shaped by race.

“Whoever wants to say something about the significance of race for upbringing must first clarify what the character of man means. Racial thinking is based on the mostly overlooked, yet undeniable premise that humans fundamentally consist of their character

and that, in the end, the capacity for intelligence depends on character. It is these deeper layers of the human personality, the layers in which the human existence are rooted, and which determine the survival curve of the given individual in relation to his capacities, that are fundamentally independent of the environment” (Bäumler 1942, p.83f).

3.1.2 Soil and community

In addition to “race”, the second formative power was the “soil”. The landscape, settlement form, popular customs and traditions are attributed to a certain effect on the type and character of an individual.

“On the other hand, it is the native place inhabited by the people, the local soil that not only provides bread, but also contributes to the shaping of the unique regional peculiarities and the development of the ethnic history. The real Germans has only become a historical reality on German soil. The natural (motherly) powers of blood and soil exert their characteristic influence both on individual members of the nation, and on the permanent formations created by the general public: the customs and traditions, the myths and symbols, the language, the works of art and science, the state system” (Sturm 1942, p. 118). The “community” is also of great importance. It is what makes education possible.

“The essence of education is preserved not by isolating the development of individual dispositions, the forming of free individuality, but rather by developing a personality that is bound to the community through knowledge, experience, and will” (Beck 1933, p. 18).

The “community” in this sense is not, in point of fact, a social category that emerges from collective action, from interactions, but it is established on natural and organic grounds. It presupposes “the equality of those connected to an educational community”. The reason being that “... upon the fulfilment of this condition of similarity, an internal community that shares the same opinion can usually be created” (Hehlmann 1941, p. 445). One constantly comes up against the idea of “race” as the bedrock of every education. “There is virtually no real community that does not have a community of blood at its core. [...] The world of blood is, whoever, a world of community, and indeed the most primordial one that is conceivable” (Grunsky 1935, p. 20f).

The characteristics of the National Socialist education derived from these elements. If the individual no longer possesses a value in and of themselves, but solely as a segment of a greater whole, then the “educational connection” (Nohl) loses its meaning. The “community” becomes more important than the personal relationships between two individuals. Education is thus the “original function of the community” (Hördt 1932, p. 11).

Since the National Socialist education implies a human “essence contingent upon race” whilst character traits and attitudes are perceived as being produced naturally, education can no longer simply consist of developing the abilities of adolescents; instead, it should “...be formed by the nation’s own (specific and racial) flexibility through appropriate educational systems and educational content” (Sturm 1942, p. 114). The individual only important in his function as a vehicle of the “national community”, as a guarantor of its “improvement” and “growth”. Each and every person can only develop fully by virtue of their “ability to form a part of a whole”. “The individual is never independent as a self-sufficient essence, but rather it should be incorporated as a member of the organism as a whole, and this membership is a precondition for it to grow, develop, and mature by itself” (Kriek 1933, p. 1).

The objective was the education of the community to become a community. According to the “law of the greater whole”, each member has their own place. It was from this approach that National Socialism derived its claim to complete education and permanent selection.

3.1.3 Selection and accomplishment

“Selection is therefore the most efficacious and essential part of a complete education and must cover the entire education system of the nation” (Fischer 1942, p. 69). A complete form of education is not comprised of development as an interactive occurrence, but as the “shaping” of human beings. The objective is the inner rectification of all. The outcome is the new, Nordic people, “... who overcome the instinctive self-preservation of their own ego through their behaviour, thus subserving themselves to the life of the community as a national personality” (Horsten 1938, p.17). In this context, “attitude” relates to “... more than the rational affirmation of an idea. It only exists where individuals are intrinsically captivated ...”, hence, they associate themselves with the National Socialist ideology (Mehring 1938, p. 69).

Selection can be subdivided into biological, political, professional, and scholastic components. Criteria such as “racial purity” and “hereditary industriousness” form the basis of education, especially for young girls and women. In this instance, National Socialists invoked the “law of nature”.

“Fighting is the fundamental law of nature. And the essence of this fight is as follows: the selection of the good, extermination of the bad, the health maintenance and breeding of the species that constitutes the entire living environment” (Stämmeler 1937, p. 95).

“Yes, our nation is perishing, it must die if things continue as they have been. All those signs that we recognise among the dying nations in the past can also be noticed in us. Moral and ethical decline, a decrease in the number of births, the uprising of sub-humanity, the invasion of the lower races, these are the distinctive marks” (Stämmeler 1937, p. 10).

The principle of selection is based on the notion “... that there is no such thing as life per se, nor people as such, but only people of certain races, of certain racial mixtures” (Gross 1938, p.105). The foundation for this reasoning is an “ideology of inequality”, which does not allow unequals to stand side by side, on the contrary, it selects and promotes the “higher class”, eliminates the “inferiors” as far as annihilating them physically.

“There is no equal right for everyone. Those of a higher class have the right to be promoted, the inferiors do not” (Stämmeler 1937, p. 48). Thus, National Socialism differentiates between eugenics and racial care.

“Eugenics simply raises the question as to whether a person, a family, a nation is hereditary healthy, free from hereditary diseases, but it is not concerned with the racial composition. Racial care in the strictest sense of the word not only aims to protect the genetic make-up against diseases, but it should equally pay attention to the racial composition of people from different races and, where necessary, attempt to influence this composition. Eugenics is the racial care of bastardised people. Pure eugenics will only promote those who are assured of an alleged equality of the races, of their equal value. Those who do not fall into this category must acknowledge their need for racial care” (Stämmeler 1937, p. 49). Methodic racial selection had a twofold objective: “racial breeding” and “racial exploitation”. On the one hand, the desired outcome was “cleanliness” and “higher development” of the genetic material with the help of the racial legislation; on the other hand, the promotion of “Aryan” early marriage and the preferential

treatment of families with many children. In this manner, the “fundamental natural law” of breeding should also apply to human society. “Accomplishment” was a key feature of breeding goals. “This means that one breeds for something that is a guarantee of a certain value, one breeds for a certain achievement” (Stämmeler 1938, p. 198).

“Race is therefore the foundation of every achievement, or expressed differently, achievement is the function of the genetic material. If, however, achievement is a function of the genetic material, that is, racial assets that can be developed or hindered, but can never be changed, then it follows that the cultural and achievement potential of a nation can be equalled to the sum of hereditary achievement predispositions” (Schulz 1939, p.166).

“For National Socialism, the idea of community results in the need to elect the best, the leaders, who are able to achieve the absolute best due to their special aptitudes. The concept of selection is an integral part of the National Socialist worldview. The national community is a community of accomplishments; the capacity of this nationalistic community is largely determined by the correct deployment of their powers. The National Socialist state thus keeps its one great interest in mind, which is the development and support of the strong, creative forces within the national community. The social stratum is altogether insubstantial in this regard. In the Third Reich, property, rank, or the social standing of the parents are not relevant measures of value for the advancement of the talented” (Spellmann 1939, p. 597).

Achievements should not be equated or confused with an individualistic or egoistic definition of accomplishment. An achievement can be “recognised as the expression of life of the whole person in personal unity and in their unity with the national community. ... Achievement is therefore the idea of acting out of a sense of responsibility towards the higher unit of life of the community” (Horsten 1938, p.220).

Selection and the scholarship system do not serve to promote a given individual according to their respective possibilities regardless of their social background. In fact, it is incumbent upon everyone to develop their “abilities” in order to contribute to the enhancement of the national community. People were not able to secure a social position subject to their self-determined willingness to perform, rather, they were “positioned” in accordance with the requirements of the national community.

“Individuals no longer rely on their own ambitions, inclinations, and talents to determine their path as they navigate through the vast range of constraints of modern society, instead they are given their place by an organisation that has the orderly labour assignment of the entire nation in view” (Bäumler 1942, p.126).

“All forms of education acquire full meaning from the selection. The aim of all education and selection is therefore to model the German people that best embody the virtues of our race, or — in other words — the contemporary principle of education is the breeding and election of a specific type, which would allow the German people to achieve maximum performance in all areas of human life” (Zummach 1935, p. 539).

National Socialist education can therefore be defined as elite pedagogy that replaces the helping and supportive approach with exclusive teaching methods. The following work should demonstrate whether and to what extent it thereby loses its actual educational aspect.

3.1.4 Objectives and guidelines of National Socialist education

First and foremost, the educational system fostered unconditional submission to the national will, which was represented in the leaders and in the figure of Hitler himself. On the other hand, the aim of this ideology was to promote a sense of race as a condition for maintaining the racial foundations of the German nationhood. (In this respect, “ideology” should be seen as a declarative system that deliberately and unilaterally distorts the social reality while claiming absolute applicability.)

These objectives should be achieved with the help of a national community from which racially inferior elements had to be eliminated. Hitler saw racial quality as a precondition of mental ability. According to him, this was inherited and should be promoted through racial hygiene. The primary aim of education for Hitler was the promotion of physical health and exercise:

“The State [...] will first of all have to base its educational work not on the mere imparting of knowledge but rather on physical training and development of healthy bodies. The cultivation of the intellectual facilities comes only in the second place. And here again it is character which has to be developed first of all, strength of will and decision. And the educational system ought to foster the spirit of readiness to accept responsibilities gladly.

Formal instruction in the sciences must be considered last in importance.” (Hitler, 1935, p.452)

“And here again it is character which has to be developed first of all, strength of will and decision. And the educational system ought to foster the spirit of readiness to accept responsibilities gladly. Formal instruction in the sciences must be considered last in importance.” (Hitler, 1935, p.445)

The enforcement of such an education where there was no room for other ideals or guiding principles, had to be both a task for schools and extracurricular National Socialist youth organisations. There was no reference to an individually catered and theoretically justified educational ideal. On the contrary, a hierarchy of human capabilities and behavioural patterns was established that was binding in nature. The point of departure was the model of a national fighter, a heroic man, a faithful mother. The exaggeration of physical discipline characterises this general principle. The National Socialists intentionally appealed to emotions. Their “educational ideal” was a ubiquitous prototype developed by the Führer. The educational goals were not represented by the educated and independently thinking and acting citizens, but by the synchronised national comrade, the unquestioning henchmen and political activists.

3.2 Initiation and exploitation of the National Socialist pedagogy

Initially, the complete political authority of National Socialism was noticeable in the regimentation of many spheres of life. The preferred instruments in youth education were the youth organisation of the NSDAP: the German Youngsters, the German Girls, the Hitler Youth, and the Band of German Maidens. In this way, the NS leaders had direct access to the younger generation. Not only the radio, the press, films, art and literature, but also schools and universities were strongly influenced by National Socialist ideology.

A form of education that could promote individuality and the development of one’s personality was deliberately avoided: “And when this lad and this girl join our organisation at the age of ten, as they get a breath of fresh air there for the first time, then four years later they come from the *Jungvolk* to the Hitler Youth, where we keep them for another four years, and then we do not return them into the hands of our old class leaders, but we immediately accept them into the party or the German Labour Front, the SA or the

SS,... and so on. And when they are there for two years or a year and half and have not yet become fully compliant with National Socialism, then they will be sent to the Reich Labour Service where their skills will be honed for another six to seven months with the help of a symbol, the German spade. And should any class consciousness or snobbery still be present after six or seven months, the Wehrmacht will take over further considerations for two years. And when they return after three or four years, we will immediately take them back into the SA, SS, and so on, to ensure that they do not regress under any circumstances. And their entire lives they will no longer be free.” (Hitler, 1938, cited from v.d.Grün 1982, p.101) It was through “schooling” that party officials and teachers had to be ideologically “aligned”.

This indoctrination took place in camps and courses. There was a particular appeal at the emotional level. A focus was placed on strengthening the body and the mind, which was achieved by drills, discipline, strength, and stress training. Intense propaganda was launched in the mass media, which also affected the leisure sector through entertainment.

At school, biology was the subject that was impacted the most by racial doctrines and genealogical research as propagated by the Nazis; new curricula, decrees, and textbooks emerged for almost all other areas. Kindergartens were no exception.

This complete interference with childhood and youth development complied with a profound pedagogical doctrine. There was talk of a “politicisation of pedagogy” and of a “politicisation of schools”. (Hehlmann 1933, p.31/32) The Hitler Youth turned out to be a powerful tool of political influence. In the year 1936, it was declared to be binding by the State Youth Act (*Staatsjugendgesetz*). From then onwards, hardly any young person could avoid this “service”. The indoctrination was supported by educational intentions and means, as used by earlier youth movements and progressive education. The principles of independent leadership and community education formed a part of this, as well as the emphasis that was placed on musical elements in communal life and at celebrations. Young people’s aspirations towards self-determination, towards life in the great outdoors, towards adventure and faraway worlds were taken into consideration. National Socialists also accepted the forms of travel, camps, sing-alongs, and social evenings that were practiced by the German Youth. In this respect, the young boys and girls were skilfully played off against their families and school in that the beliefs and experiences of older

generations were depicted as being obsolete. The ideological goals were supposed to be realised through different forms of training and cults in the following ways:

There were social afternoons and social evenings during which National Socialist ideas were conveyed. This included the preservation of the nationalist songs and linguistic heritage. At celebrations one aimed to establish a connection with Germanic traditions.

Youth rallies took place on a variety of occasions and involved encampments that lasted several days. Marches and party congresses served to reassert the NS regime and to attain political objectives. Admission rituals such as the boys' (the so-called *Pimpfenprobe*) and Jungmädel Challenge intended to develop the values and ethics of young people and reinforce the National Socialist ideology.

Symbols, aphorisms, and songs of consecration influenced the youth even more, especially on an emotional level.

3.3 Malpractice of the educational principle and its consequences

The National Socialists initiated a calamitous development in many areas of life. Education was no exception, quite on the contrary, education was considered to be an important instrument for meeting their objectives. Neither Hitler nor the party activists employed by him could propose a viable education theory. They did, however, have a strong, power-political feeling for how the education sector could be made even more useful for attaining the Nazi goals and what forms of previous education systems stood in the way of their political interests. Hitler developed an extraordinary aptitude for using basic idealistic attitudes, which are adopted by every young generation, for his political-ideological ideas with the help of targeted propaganda. His notions of pedagogy were clear and consistent. Whatever the National Socialists were planning to achieve with the help of education could be found in the second volume of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. It states:

“The State is only a means to an end. Its end and its purpose is to preserve and promote a community of human beings who are physically as well as spiritually kindred. Above all, it must preserve the existence of the race, thereby providing the indispensable condition for the free development of all the forces dormant in this race. A great part of these faculties will always have to be employed in the first place to maintain the physical existence of the race, and only a small portion will be free to work in the field of intellectual

progress. But, as a matter of fact, the one is always the necessary counterpart of the other. Those States which do not serve this purpose have no justification for their existence. They are monstrosities.” (Hitler 1935, p. 433f)

At the centre of this thinking is the “national community”, which everyone has to serve, and which gives meaning to the individual in the first place. Within it the individual is superseded, albeit at the surrender of their individuality. Their personality merges with the “we” of the national community. Thus, the usual slogans were not simply the “common good before the individual good”, but also “you are nothing, your people are everything”. These fundamental principles were expressed in the following definition of pedagogy:

“Pedagogy is educational behaviour that is related to the bigger picture, not the individuality of single educational cases. ... It is the epitome of the educational practices and the creative drive within the people as a whole and thus simply cannot be separated from them.” (Hehlmann 1933, p. 8f)

As a result of the indoctrination of the NS regime, trust in human reason, the capacity for critical analysis and the evaluation of different points of view, as well as tolerance, a sense of responsibility, self-assessment and the development of a conscience was deliberately disregarded. The consequence of this was a biased formation of the personality. The overall demands of the “Führer” in educational matters suppressed individuality and permitted personal responsibility on a very limited scale. Each individual without any exceptions was granted limited functions. Inevitably, maturity and the capacity to make decisions had to wither away. The educational relationship degenerated into a relationship of unilateral dependence. Community and leadership cults effected the development of conformity, forced submissiveness and unquestioning loyalty. The promotion of a sense of shared responsibility and autonomous morals, however, was not forthcoming. In youth groups and schools, opinions were deliberately influenced, whereas convictions and value orientations were transmitted. An education that would strive for enlightenment, political empowerment, and the promotion of critical judgement was not imposed. Moral sensitivity was unwelcome.

“Schooling” and manipulation could be detected in the one-sided selection of content that favoured certain racial concepts and conceptions of history. Other perspectives were not allowed. The individual was left with very few opportunities to defy the collectively prescribed worldview and moralities and to develop autonomous moral assumptions in

spite of strong political pressure. In this respect, there was a perversion of pedagogy or a form of “non-pedagogy”. (Blankertz 1982, p.272)

In time, the educational intentions of the NS regime were adopted in several movements. Many philosophers, anthropologists, and pedagogues called for a renewal of education by resorting to an educationally effective order of life in the national community that was bound together by race, blood, and soil. In this context, Ernst Krieck and Alfred Baeumler are worth mentioning. In his theory, Krieck highlighted the educational effectiveness of secondary public educational institutions later in life. For him, the underlying strengths of communal life were the starting point par excellence for all education systems.

Baeumler attempted to determine the character of the state and educational system on the basis of a national anthropology. In so doing, he paved the way for “political education” in the sense of National Socialism.

3.4 Education as deception

Due to the fact that the political models of the Nazis were anchored in the “nationalist” principle, they appealed to many and did not fail to have an impact on the youth. The concept of a large national community that existed beyond antagonist classes and divided parties found its way into wide circles of the population. The Nazis knew to appeal to the common virtues of mutual aid, of standing up for one another, and the abnegation of broad sections of the population. The promises of the NS ideology seemed to present a wide array of future possibilities to many individuals. The “intermediate steps” that would lead up to it were underlined in the propaganda and required each individual to participate in the action. The National Socialist movement was presented as being historically necessary, meaningful, and predetermined. Many people who served the National Socialists experienced support and promotion. Educational qualification requirements did not play a decisive role. Loyalty to the party line, political knowledge that was achieved through schooling, and political suitability were sufficient. The psychologist David Katz reported that “... as early as 1900, there were trends in German education that were likely to lead to a development that did not take place until 1933. ... Education was markedly authoritarian. ... According to the overall authoritarian approach, discipline and drills were major educational instruments. ... Particular attention was paid to exemplary behaviour, perfect achievements and organisation, effectiveness. There was not much room for

contemplation, ... for games and fun,... in such an education system. I would like to say that for too long German schools maintained authorities who could not have withstood constructive criticism, but who were nevertheless protected from attacks by taboos. ... To summarise, I would like to say that the authoritarian education meant that Germans could only think critically in areas— like science— that are defined. This seduced them to rely on the conscience of others instead of their own.” (Katz 1969, p. 15ff)

The belief in a “Führer” and his ideology was also fostered by the family circumstances of that time. Authoritarian manners prevailed. Above all, an emphasis was placed on the right of parents to dominate and the child’s duty to obey. Many people passed the social dependencies of the state and enterprises onto their family circle, which can partly explain the passive, obedient attitude of young people towards leaders. The consequences of an authoritarian education with drills and fault-finding can cause different reactions depending on character disposition, ranging from conformant to aggressive behaviour. Ego weakness and a low self-confidence make individual self-assertion far more difficult, rendering individuals susceptible to ideological manipulations of all kinds. Many did not overcome the stage of a morality that is shaped by a figure of authority and did not develop their critical thinking, their autonomous ideas.

3.5 Consequences of improper education

Political attitudes and preferences cannot be taken for granted, rather, they involve educational processes. These can be found in a life that is shaped in political terms, in convincingly effective forms of democratic practice, in political and factual discussions, and in dialogue-based interactions with one another. Furthermore, the effectiveness of education consists, among other things, in the idea that there is a greater awareness of values that govern democratic practice, and that democratic traditions are taught in a better manner. This would require young people across all population groups and parties to be addressed not merely in terms of their critical rationality, but also with regard to their pursuit of worldly experience. Do we ensure that young people are adequately prepared for this in their families, schools, and youth organisations? What matters is the experience of one’s own democratic society, developing it further, confronting the risks involved, as well as anticipating and preventing undesirable developments. In the field of education, it is important that they do not become members of a party. Conversely, the inherent laws

of pedagogical action should be respected, and pedagogy should not be regarded as being on the same footing as politics.

In a pluralistic society, an education should help people to critically differentiate between the multitude of political alternatives, to develop their own way of life and worldview. According to Theodor Litt, it possesses an “enlightening” function. “Educating” cannot be synonymous with “leading”.

“As we have acknowledged, the concept of leadership, if it is taken quite seriously, cannot be separated from its relationship to a goal that the leader has in mind, which is what binds the group together; in this regard, therefore, the constitutive moment is that the so-called “leadership” of the educator must be avoided at all costs.” (Litt 1927, p. 72)

Following on from Litt, we should turn against any ideological claim to power in pedagogy that the educator may have in relation to children or young people. An educator who wishes to provide an “introduction” according to Litt should consider schools as a valuable experiential space in life. They should respect the adolescents in their individuality and offer them models of inspiration. Only then is it possible for people to face challenges and problems that they will be able to tackle.

4 Women's education in the NS state

4.1 Women's organisations

The National Socialists, and especially Hitler, attached great importance to the political education of young girls and women. Every single opportunity should be used to convince them that their fate and personal well-being lay in selfless service to the national community, namely they were expected to meet the needs of this community from the perspective of the NSDAP leadership. The objective was not to encourage each individual to think independently, but to provide an education that would ensure an uncritical acceptance of the National Socialist worldview and an adjustment of their lifestyles to its needs. The main task of the organisations during the Third Reich was to promote and maintain the belief in the NS ideology in the general population through indoctrination by continuous repetition, as well as to ensure compliance to the will of the Führer through surveillance and stimulation. The women's organisations in the Third Reich existed for the purpose of getting women to accept the roles that were assigned to them by the NSDAP leadership and to make them aware of their responsibility as educators of adolescents at their impressionable age. The political work of women's organisations targeted especially those women who corresponded to the ideal of the German mother and housewife. The education of these girls and women was assigned to two organisations: the National Socialist Women's League (abbreviated to the NSF) and the *Deutsches Frauenwerk* (DFW). The NSF included women who held leading positions in other organisations, such as, for example, the labour service or the National Socialist People's Welfare; it was deliberately intended to serve as a leading group. The DFW should follow on from the NSF. It was the umbrella organisation for all women who wanted to participate in organised life in one form or another, be it in sports or work, in singing circles or volunteer work. According to the Reichsfrauenführerin Gertrud Scholtz-Klink, the task of the women's organisations is "to lead German women to their family and national assignments and to secure their positions" (Das Archiv 1943/44, p. 939). The education of young girls, family health care, housekeeping and baby care were specifically highlighted in lectures and discussions. Through this schooling and by passing on such instructions, the NSDAP wanted to gain influence over the mass of German women. The impact of the work of NS leadership increased even more after the war broke out. Its task consisted of maintaining the ideological conformity and bolstering the morale of all the women whose husbands were summoned for military service.

Although the political concerns of organised women's work never receded into the background, a large part of the educational work of the DFW took place in practical areas. These tasks complied with the view of the party with regard to the position of women. Soon afterwards, the *Reichsmütterdienst* was established to teach mothers and future mothers in all matters relating to infant care and childcare. The political objective was to promote a certain attitude. It should encourage women to have families with many children and to raise them to love their Führer, showing their approval of the work of the Hitler Youth and to happily allow their children to take part in it. Economics/ housekeeping as a subject aimed to encourage the general public to purchase German goods, to economise, to patch up hand-me-downs, and to deliberately support the government in its commitment to self-sufficiency. The objective of the Department of Culture-Education-Schooling was indoctrination in all ideological questions. The cultural aspect was valued highly. This included the collection and adaptation of German songs, the revival of German customs, traditional costumes and folk customs, as well as the renunciation of all foreign cultural influences. Political schooling came first and foremost, especially in matters of racial politics. The young girls and women had to familiarise themselves with the National Socialist principles and their justifications. The objective of the women's organisations was to persuade the female population that party leadership was always concerned with the welfare of the nation. The NSF in particular was expected to respond to any and all questions that may arise so that even young girls and women who were not political would convert to the National Socialist worldview.

4.2 National Socialist image of women

Girls were only mentioned in Hitler's "Mein Kampf" if, as potential mothers, they fulfilled the biological prerequisites to create generations of new warriors. With regard to the masses of people on the whole, the women, as opposed to the men, represent the passive part of mankind. Marriage is not a personal relationship, but an inherent purpose of the species. It serves to increase the population. The women's strive for emancipation were referred to as "degeneration". Girls were considered to be "illogical", "emotional", and they existed only as objects in human history that was determined by men. Their world should consist of the husband, family, children, and home. Working in this area was regarded as "a task predefined by nature". The female soul is determined by the urge of

an “indefinable emotional longing for supplementary strength”. For this reason, the intellectual education of girls was reduced to the bare minimum. Women had to come to terms with the fact that they would be in need of a special education and would remain immature for the remainder of their lives. In view of this need, the educator has a natural obligation and a pedagogical responsibility.

4.3 Extracurricular girl' s education as exemplified by the League of German Girls (BDM)

In line with the single-sex education principles of National Socialism, boys and girls were separated. The “Female Hitler Youth” was given the name the “League of German Girls” (BDM). It was not, however, independent, as it was integrated into the youth league “Hitler Youth” from the very beginning.

The BDM gathered female adolescents from the age of ten to twenty-one. In order to make the most of their age-specific needs and capabilities that would serve their own goals, the BDM was subdivided as follows.

At the age of ten, girls would join the Young Girls' League. By the age of fourteen, they would automatically be transferred to the BDM. In order to ensure continuity and influencing control on the older girls who had left school, the Faith and Beauty society (the *BDM-Werk Glaube und Schönheit* in German) was established. There the 18 to 21-year-old girls who had not previously been part of a National Socialist organisation, such as the Reich Labour service, for instance, were registered. It was hoped that this organisational structure would fulfil the functions of the BDM in a more comprehensive, permanent, and effective manner.

The function of the BDM was to provide a valuable supplement to the girls' upbringing at home and at school. It was conceived as an education and schooling centre for German girls and was oriented towards the organisation of their leisure time. It was seen by the National Socialists as an opportunity to assure complete influence and use it accordingly. According to the Reichsjugendführer Baldur von Schirach, the girls in the BDM should be educated to bear the National Socialist worldview. At the youth rally in Berlin on the 1st of May 1936, Hitler declared the following: “And you in the BDM educate the girls to be strong and brave women.” The binding, pioneering formula for work in the BDM was that

the girls should be prepared for their tasks of being a mother of future soldiers and, ultimately, the state-supporting elite. This was a matter of strength and bravery, not intellectual education. The point of departure was determined far more by instinct than logical thinking. The girls' characteristics that were propagated as being inherent to their nature—which were, more often than not, purely biological—were considered to be the sole eligible qualities. One educational goal for girls and women was that they should be trained, functioning members of the National Socialist national community. There was no intention to develop independent personality and to support individuals who were capable of taking responsibility; the truth was contained in the principle “you are nothing, your people are everything”. The following applied to the commitment to serving the national community:

“The German girl, like every German child, should be educated as an active member of the foundational associations of the nation and the state. The majority of girls should be prepared to work in the family and family-like settings (be they social, socio-educational, pedagogical) in the communities. ... The female member of society needs the same careful, specialised training in the areas of work that are assigned to her as the male member of society. The same exemplary and firm leadership should encourage the formation of a strong personality.” (Lippert 1978, p. 112)

4.4 Areas of work and methods of the BDM

The various areas of work of the League of German Girls were:

- an ideological education, as a parameter that was superordinate to all areas and to be included in all areas,
- Sports,
- Cultural work,
- Promotion of good health,
- Social work and
- Domestic training.

At the weekly social evenings, the beauty and richness of Germanic culture should be exemplified, amongst other things. The thinking behind the National Socialist way of life—as it succeeds the Germanic one—were put to the test in practice during trips and camp

holidays. ‘Education based on experience’ was the slogan. The propagated schooling did not require theoretical instruction, but practical exercises. Experience and the awakening of emotions aimed to make it easier for young girls to internalise customs and norms. Apart from group pressure, which is not to be underestimated and which made individual behaviour virtually impossible, the camaraderie, the feeling of togetherness was especially important for this age group. The insecurity of young girls due to puberty was replaced by a feeling of security and of not being alone with their own problems.

If the ideological education of the BDM conveyed the meaning of the fundamental positions and values, such as abnegation, willpower, loyalty, camaraderie, courage, determination, and perseverance, these would likewise be applied in other areas. In this respect, sport— according to the National Socialist body-mind hierarchy— played a dominant role. The girls were instructed to form healthy bodies. Gymnastics and competitive games serve to achieve the women’s ideals, which combined strength and grace. The objective was to educate them to become healthy, fresh, ready-to-go girls, who were in full possession of their physical and mental abilities, who could move harmoniously, who were efficient and beautiful.

Furthermore, the intention behind this education was to illustrate the importance of comradeship for the existence of a national community. Every girl had to adjust her own behaviour to the standard of living that was based on the National Socialist worldview. The fundamental qualities were courage, rigour, operational readiness, and perseverance. By emphasising these values and goals, the hope was to educate the girls to become “valiant” women, similar to the female figures idolised in German sagas, who protected their families and would avenge injustice even at the risk of their lives.

Another area of the education of National Socialist girls in the BDM can fall under the category of “cultural work”. This concerned the endeavours to spread and support Germanness or the new German lifestyle as it was shaped by National Socialism. Initially, only the external characteristics of nationality were placed in the foreground. For instance, clothing and the design of accommodation had to be characterised by simplicity and functionality. With regard to furnishings, articles created by German manufacturers were preferred to foreign products. The type of furnishings should reflect the character of its residents— unpretentious, uncluttered, artless sublimity. When designing the residence,

women had the task of creating a cosy, warm atmosphere by adding knitted handicrafts, self-sewn curtains and tablecloths.

At the same time, cultural work was seen as an integral part of general cultural and racial politics. The preservation and proliferation of native culture was an important concept of the National Socialist ideology. In the BDM, the “cultural evenings” served this purpose, either by giving lectures, reading the works of German authors or singing German folk songs. Old customs and traditional rites were passed on through social gatherings with music and dance. By promoting the preeminence of German traditions in its manifold manifestations, National Socialists hoped that the girls would become the bearers of these traditions.

In the BDM, the knowledge that was imparted in school and through sport about the significance of a healthy woman for the nation and the fatherland was referred to as “health management”, which was widespread and profound. The development of a healthy and well-trained body provided both the girls and the mothers of the future generation with a moral compass. This “moral compass” concerned questions of population policy with a focus on racial protection and eugenics. The girls were taught to “think biologically” so that they would follow “the voice of their blood” when making decisions such as the choice of partner or the number of children. Personal feelings were shifted from the private sphere to the public one, to the national community. It was deemed necessary to make the girls aware that whatever they did, they did not act out of personal responsibility, but rather as conscientious members of the national community. Individual interests were placed below those of the people. The German national body, it was emphasised, could only become stronger and healthier with the help of each and every girl. It was therefore a natural obligation to take care of the preservation of the race and to contribute to eugenics, as per the racial laws, by raising healthy offspring. Within the framework of “health management”, the BDM had the task of preparing girls for this duty and providing instructions for its fulfilment. Aside from the training work, a great importance was attached to “social work”. Girls were employed in families with many children, in nursing homes, hospitals, and foster homes. The work in socially disadvantaged spheres made it abundantly clear to the young women how important their help was for the national community. The significance of these work areas was illustrated in the labour conscription that was adopted in 1938 to “upgrade housekeeping”. This decree stated that every German girl between the ages of 14 and 21 had to be involved

in the household, agriculture or social work for a period of one year. Female high school graduates received their diplomas only upon the completion of their service. Urban migration had resulted in an acute shortage of workers in the agricultural sector. The women who resided in the countryside could not fully contribute to housework and the care for the children due to their employment and help with tillage and livestock farming. By employing the girls of the BDM, the consistently high pressure placed on rural women should have been counteracted. The girls were also employed in agricultural labour, although the key focus was on looking after the house and taking care of the children. The economic and social situation in the cities was similar due to unemployment. In this regard, household tasks in many families were not necessarily regulated because the women had to work at different enterprises. Then the girls from the BDM would lend a helping hand. Their employment also extended to orphanages and homes for the elderly.

4.5 Education and schooling of the Reich Labour Service for young women (RADwJ)

The aim of this organisation was the education of young girls to become German women and mothers under the supervision of women. Discipline, obedience, abnegation, and loyalty were required. The motto “work is ennobling” legitimised every right. The education goals were supported by the National Socialist ideology: community service, objective work achievements, carefully planned leisure time. The girls were educated in housekeeping, they contributed to social relief work, agricultural labour, and helped in settlements. The National Socialists wanted to possess complete control over the female youth and influence them politically. The RADwJ was as compulsory as compulsory education or compulsory military service. The compulsory labour service existed for all unmarried girls who were not fully employed, who were not completing their education or training and who were not urgently needed as assisting family workers in the agricultural sector. After the war began, the so-called “Arbeitsmaiden” (working maidens) were brought into the agricultural sphere, from 1941 they were involved in the war emergency service and from 1943 they were employed in the air force instead of men. By that time, however, there was no longer any pedagogical entitlement.

There were three types of labour service institutions: those for housekeeping and social relief work, others for helping in settlements, and rural labour service institutions. They

failed to fulfill their professional and educational obligations. In most cases, the education was only focused on what was necessary for running the camp: domestic and partly agricultural knowledge. The development of skills was left for practical applications. There was a transition from “women’s professional work” to tasks pertaining to “the family and their native place”. Above all else, the girls had to do agricultural work for a small daily allowance. The workforce at each individual labour service institution had to represent a section of the female workforce of the whole nation.

The RADwJ did not have any welfare measures, it did not provide any accommodation for unemployed girls, and it did not provide any welfare education for vulnerable members. The education in the RADwJ was focused on forming the personality, a constant willingness to work and a spirit of service, motherhood, and a faith in leadership. The organisation of their leisure time was also important. From a historical perspective, the RADwJ was an educational institution without precedent. For the first time, camp education was a closed form of community education for girls in conjunction with work and lessons. Depending on the project, the camp community was comprised of 20 to 50 “Arbeitsmaiden”, as well as one camp leader, three female assistants, and three comrades-in-arms. In the peacetime, the girls served at least 13 weeks, but mostly 26 weeks. The working day was 16 hours long. When spread over 6 working days, this resulted in:

42 hours of work:

14 hours of organised free time, of which

6 hours of actual free time

4 hours of political lessons

3 hours of physical education,

1 hour of housekeeping education or handicrafts.

One evening a week, Saturday from 14:00 and Sunday were officially free. Nevertheless, the days off had to be spent, if possibly, on reflection, celebrations, and festivals in folk style. The following leisure activities were offered: sewing, patchwork, reading, handicrafts, singing, music, folk dancing. The area of housekeeping aimed to reduce

consumption in view of the market situation, offered substitutes, instructed on the recycling of old materials and waste, as well as inventory management. The objective was not personality development, rather, a willingness to serve, obedience, and a National Socialist mindset.

A meticulous schedule and rituals prevailed in the camp: raising of the flag, awards, uniforms, appeals, the Führer's principle and a self-determined penalty order. It was expected that they were fundamental to the political fate as National Socialists and the biological fate as mothers. The training of female leaders was neglected due to a lack of funds. "The capacity to lead" was seen as a talent that could not be learned. Becoming a female leader in the RADwJ was a job in and of itself. First, the female candidates had to complete their service as Arbeitsmaiden, then they had to become comrades-in-arms, later they had to complete 5 months of camp training courses and 3 months of training courses in a district school. Through the RADwJ, girls and women were enveloped by politics to an unprecedented extent. No other generation of women had been so deliberately "educated" by the state for their people. The RADwJ was supposed to establish the complete identification of the female population with National Socialism.

Why did National Socialists try to alienate women and girls from their families and move their education to groups of their own age? This question will be explored in the following section.

4.6 Women's movements and emancipation during National Socialism

In the National Socialist state, women were assigned a subordinate role. If the previous efforts of women's movements were aimed at integrating women into the public life on the basis of equal rights, this process suffered an obvious setback due to the separation of the sexes into spheres of influence. Above all, politics was seen as an exclusively men's world. Here they had all the competencies and all the decision-making authority. For this very reason, a woman could not and should not be a man's partner in this area. She had to be subordinate. Her duties were in private, domestic life. In this context, and in her function as the mother of the people, women were allowed to act independently and on their own responsibility. She only had political significance insofar as she was able to pass on the foundations of the National Socialist worldview to her children.

Since the men claimed all the decisive positions for themselves and filled them whenever possible, they were in a position to decide on all areas alone. This had a particular effect on matters concerning female educational and career opportunities.

“It is not the women who have to answer or take part in this issue, but the men, and only the men. As long as it is the men’s business to protect the woman and child, the house and the farm with his body and blood against the enemy, it is a state of men and nobody else” (Kutzleb 1941, p. 134).

The woman had to be a dependent being that was subordinate to the man and was only independent, to a certain extent, in the domestic sphere. She was recognised solely in her biological function as a mother. All other duties and rights derived from this. Their common characteristic was to “serve” the family and the house, the community, and the nation. The women’s process of emancipation was drastically interrupted as a result. Whilst the school curricula for boys and girls had become increasingly similar, which was a success of the women’s movement, they now had to be changed after the eradication of co-education and due to the emphasis placed on gender-specific education. The promotion of German identity and housekeeping subjects were the focus of education for girls.

The National Socialist state was not interested in women with higher education. The women were denied the possibility and necessity of self-discovery and self-fulfilment beyond the family sphere. A low educational level seemed to be the best guarantee that women would accept the positions that were assigned to them by men. Therefore, National Socialists were interested in quickly undo any merits and successes of the women’s movements with regard to the education of girls and women. Well-educated women were seen only as a possible rival to men, not as an equal partner. By transfiguring and mythologising both womanhood and motherhood with reference to the Germanic tradition, the loss of their civic and professional opportunities had to be concealed from women.

The major concern of “new rulers” is to educate the people according to specific goals and values and to win them over. The task of education is, therefore, to establish and secure power and to abandon the development of an individual’s personality.

4.7 Education in groups

People are always in social contact with others. Unquestionably, they first grow into given social activities and form interconnections that they actively participate in, as does a child in the family, for instance, a student in school, in a sports club or a colleague in the company. Such participations in groups form concrete social context for an individual. They work together with others in them and learn, through imitation and under supervision, how certain tasks are to be approached and mastered, how problems are solved, goals are set, and of the like. This is associated with participating in the identity of a group, in its culture and ideology. The respective group presents itself as a relative unit and distinguishes itself— to a greater or lesser degree— from other groups. The individual participates in the group's "collective life plan" (Erikson 1966, p. 15), in its perspectives, interpretations of reality, the "way these social relations in a group are structured and formed, but also" in the "way these forms are experienced, understood, and interpreted" (Clarke/ Hall/ Jefferson/ Roberts 1979, p. 41). In this regard, participation does not, in any way, mean a passive accommodation to the group practice; rather, it should be understood only as an individual's active engagement with the tasks that arise within this practice. Such participation is shaped by the group insofar as the discussion takes place by considering the materials and means that are available to the group. By participating in a group, an individual simultaneously participates in the group identity, which, among other qualities, form the foundation for orientation that is acquired in such a way that it can serve as the material and means for developing the ego identity. In addition, the group also offers the individual the opportunity to gain an understanding of themselves and their role in a concrete social setting. Every participation in groups presents the individual group members with requirements— concrete tasks have to be accomplished and group identity has to be explored. In this manner an individual can uncover and assess their own abilities and weaknesses, possibilities, limits, behaviours, and characteristics. They can begin to understand what others expect them to do, what place they are assigned in the group, and ultimately how they perceive themselves or would prefer to be perceived by others. Firstly, however, the individual forms a basis for orientation for behaviour and development within the group. Participating in a group allows individuals to define themselves through their activity in a relatively fixed social structure and to find their place in a concrete social setting. Thus, the group enables the development of individuality. The noteworthy achievement of the ego identity is not the participation in a group identity, but in the development of one's own identity. The ego identity implies that the individuals should form an idea about themselves and their

position in society, which can be maintained regardless of a specific group context. Everyone should be in a position to evaluate and classify the complex requirements, which are articulated quite differently in various groups and social contexts, in accordance with their own views.

In this fashion, the change from a conventional role identity to an ego identity can take place. “The optimal result... is the transformation of strict forms of identity that are bound to roles ... into a more individualised, relatively role-independent ego identity” (Döbert/ Nunner-Winkler 1975, p.41). This transformation does not necessarily occur in every single case. “Either the young person reconstructs the broken role identity that is tied to the birth family on the same structural level or he overcomes the role identity in favour of an ego identity. In the first case, the sense of belonging to more abstract groups replaces family affiliation on the basis of identity; this is usually the case when they belong to a certain professional and status group, mostly in connection with ... national, state or linguistic-cultural member roles. In the second case, these more abstract role identities that are no longer tied to the family must be acquired as well; but they break once again, and in this process the young person learns how they can generalise the capacity to outgrow the old identities and build new identities and to apply them to any situation” (Döbert/ Nunner-Winkler 1975, p. 15). In both cases, the adolescent individual has to achieve a certain form of abstraction: he has to transform his identity, which is linked to a context of life and activity that is structured relatively firmly, into an individual identity that relates to more abstract groups. Only this relation enables individuals to define themselves as being independent, relatively autonomous from specific social contexts. This faculty of capability of the mature person is designated as the ego identity. “Abstract groups” are also relevant for the formation of an ego identity, which are not immediately relevant to the individual as a member of a group, but in which they can likewise participate and through which they can define themselves. Under National Socialism it was the “national community” that was supposed to draw attention to a central commonality, namely, to create a feeling of belonging, which would help individuals to locate and orient themselves in the bigger picture of the abstract concept of community. Participation in groups can therefore also be seen as an “internal activity”, an “ideal participation”, as it were. By means of an “internal” orientation activity, every person can participate in the group identity of any group, but at the same time pinpoint their own individuality. Participations in groups have the function of reinforce an individual’s confidence and trust that his or her way of orienting themselves will be recognised.

4.8 What can pedagogy achieve?

The first task that presents itself to pedagogy that aims to make the most of different chances and possibilities in the interest of adolescents is to clarify the qualification processes that can take place within groups. Orientations that occur outside the school as an institution and that are important for young people should be recognised. The objective could be to deliberately include the experiences and interests of the young people in the teaching process, enabling the pupils to deal with their environment in an independent and critical manner. A mere consideration of the “needs” of the students is not sufficient. This would not reveal any new, expanded possibilities for orientation, rather it would only reinforce the existing positions. The experience and the life context of the pupils should be taken into account in such a way that they can be reflected on and addressed by all those involved in the teaching process.

5. Identity as a pedagogical problem

5.1 Identity

“The first, best, and most suitable place for the women is in the family, and her most glorious duty is to give children to her people and nation, children who can continue the line of generations and who guarantee the immortality of the nation. The best place for the woman to serve her people is in her marriage, in the family, in motherhood. This is her highest mission. ... We are convinced, however, that the first task of a socially reformed nation must be to again give the woman the possibility to fulfil her real task, her mission in the family and as a mother” (Joseph Goebbels, 1938, p.118). Wolfgang Klafki deals with the constellation of different factors of the process of identity formation of children and adolescents under National Socialism. He refers to the term “identity” as being “...more or less reflected and effective in practical life, yet a provisional self-image of children and adolescents, which they developed under the influence of and in an engagement with their social world of experience under the NS regime” (Klafki 1988, p. 7ff).

Although there is a wide spectrum of dominant forms of attitudes and actions, Klafki distinguishes between five main types:

1. The first type is that of the convinced young National Socialist, regardless of whether they are a girl or a boy.
1. The second type consists of the “followers”, both male and female. This includes those who were essentially obedient with less commitment, yet they only partially identified themselves with the NS ideology.
2. The third type presents the male or female “pragmatist”. These are the children and adolescents who took advantage of what the NS system had to offer whenever it seemed appropriate to serve their subjective interests. (This could be sporting activities, music, or gliding.) Nevertheless, there was a partial identification with elements of National Socialism. On the other hand, an attempt was made to avoid fulfilling the requirements that did not correspond to their own convictions.
3. The fourth type comprises the ones who had “distanced” themselves or the “resistants”. These young people rejected the NS system of domination and tried to avoid its influence as much as possible. Their attitude could be seen more or less clearly, or it may have been hidden behind a fitting appearance.

4. The fifth type was represented by the active “resistants”. These were the few individuals or groups that developed their own forms of resistance or joined existing resistance groups.

Naturally there were many mixed forms and substantial conversions. But what conditions did it depend on whether and how a young person in the NS system was influenced in their individual process of development?

5.2 Identity as an issue of education

Every education activity varies according to a certain idea of what a person is and what they should or will become. The main focus is placed on the distinctive characteristics of each individual, which distinguishes them from others. The question of identity is concerned with the conditions and limitation, as well as the peculiarities and abilities of the individual. How can the challenge of identity formation be approached in an appropriate manner in education?

“What is important about the identity of a man is the fact that it unfolds in the duality of being and consciousness: his identity encompasses what he is as well as what he knows about himself, he recognises what he defines himself as, since for a man what he defines as real is all that truly matters.” (Zdarzil 1978, p.251)

Educational activities play a constitutive role in the development of this consciousness. The educator has the possibility to “shape” identity and to treat it as temporary. The student constant responds to this temporary nature in conversation. In this manner, it becomes an opportunity for self-assessment and gradually enables one’s identity to be handled autonomously.

“Whoever educates creates an image of a child. He alleges to know what is needed and lacked, what must be preserved and given to them, he has ideas about it, about what can and should someday become of these young people. No educator can exist without a preliminary draft, which, of course, should not degenerate into fantasises and which must be kept unchanged at all costs. His image of the child as such and what they can become is the foundation that enables him to have experiences with them in the first place, which, in turn, prompts him to make any adjustments to his ideas. At the same time, the educator’s image of the child is a demand placed on the young person, with which he must grapple, which me

must fulfil, correct or reject, but which, in any case, compels him to step out of himself and become himself.” (Sacher 1976, p. 75)

5.3 Responsibility in dealing with an evolving identity

The identity of an educator is a concept of what is and what should be. What can the pedagogical guidance to achieving self-awareness resemble?

“The educator does not anticipate a particular future for the young person, which he reinforces in activities and which he teaches by providing rules, instead he qualifies him for his own arrangement of a future that he chooses and creates for himself. The respect for the individuality of the young person does not permit any direct normative intervention. The young person is not an object that needs to be modified, but a subject to be shaped, they should not be formed in the image of the educator, on the contrary, they have to form themselves under the guidance and assistance of the educator.” (Menze 1978, p.288)

Such assistance cannot simply be a transfer of knowledge. The educator has to test himself. What he has recognised as significant or “valuable” from the sum total of his life experience, he shares with the students. At the time of National Socialism, the dialogic principle of reciprocal engagement was deliberately abandoned. The success of an educator was based on the identity adapted by the pupil, not the one achieved by himself. As a result, young people were often nothing more than reflections of overpowering projections that were imposed upon them by adults. From a contemporary perspective, a “dialogue” in education means that while adults express personal ideals and convictions in their actions, at the same time they also include real and ideal possibilities for young people. Thus, identity is continually “negotiated” between the educator and the pupil on the basis of interaction and communication processes. Therefore “it constitutes the fundamental objective of education to enable oneself, that is, to provide the conditions so that mutual understanding can occur without which all education leads to absurdity” (Schurr 1981, p.416)

As the language abilities progress and the concept of the world becomes more complex, the student is able to oppose this “offered” identity more and more, uncovering any possible contradictions. Thus the relationship founded on dialogue stays alive and generates observations from both sides. Understanding is sought, but preconceptions are increasingly questioned.

“In view of the natural reality and the historical predetermination, the interlocutor is in a situation where they have a different relationship with these dimensions of reality, which allows me to question my past consciousness of the world and history and to productively transcend it. In light of this, I can adapt to the reality that our conversation aims to convey through language, in such a way that it presents me with a new possibility to shape myself and the world. It gives me the chance to change under the banner of a reality that is understood differently, towards which I strive. Through it I find out that I am something unfinished, in need of completion, and thus, as someone who seems himself open to his own possibilities. Hence, I acquire an open mind as to what I can be, which we call hope; I see that half-open door behind the threshold of which I am able to catch up with my selfhood” (Schäfer 1978, p.27).

Due to this dialogical principle in education, the subject and the world were not seen as one finished whole. The student gains certainty with regard to his identity if they feel involved in new decision-making processes in a reflective way. “The hermeneutic hope therefore has its true foundation in the dialogical constitution of the person” (Schäfer 1978, p. 3).

At the same time, what is up for consideration should not simply be presented as a mere possibility, rather it must be proposed as a valid possibility that the student can voluntarily acknowledge. In principle, this process is infinite and depends on the consciousness that needs to be identified. Thus, both dialogical reference and reflection are two indispensable moments when dealing with identification. This is where education has its roots. It should produce subjectivity and preserve this sense of consideration, i.e., allow both the student’s acceptance and rejection of identification. Educational activities have a double meaning in this context: it must offer situational challenges and expectation structures, but at the same time allow the student themselves to present an identity that stimulates imitation. This approach presupposes measures of value in dealing with the world. All decisions that result from this are historical decisions and cannot claim universal applicability. Educational achievement is the attribution of subjectivity, which enables the subject to be educated to determine their own position.

“Above all a positive education of resolve ... is about attribute children with a will in the first place. With this attribution, what we call education (in the broadest sense) commences. (...) The self is thus formed through the anticipation of an environment that the child experiences as if they already had a self, and through empathic, selective response to certain innate potential of the child. (...) And what applies to the earliest seeds of a rudimentary self must

also apply to the evolution of the functions of will. ...: the favouring of the functions of the will through the attribution of such” (Bittner 1982, p. 270f)

During the Hitler era, children and adolescents were compelled to learn educational content without resistance. National Socialist pedagogues demanded responsibility for something that was not up to debate. By deciding on the content and form of education, the educators made young people subject to their will.

The self and will may only be offered to the subject so that it, as Gehlen claims— “grows again”. Education therefore has to reassert its claim to power over and over again, thereby constantly bringing the concept of student’s identity up for discussing. Furthermore, children and adolescents should be offered viable alternatives to their notion of self that they had chosen. In the long run, it was not simply the adherence to a judgment that had been made that provided security, but rather the constant assessment of new situations and positions. If the educators allow a retrospective assessment of their decisions by the pupil, then “the student takes over the knowledge of the point of view, at the same time as the knowledge of the context to which it applies” (Sacher 1976, p.123).

“From the moment when the ego has become independent, ... the process, which takes place over the course of life from childhood, is always only a temporary self-interpretation of the education that was received as it leads to a certain conclusion because the educator is no longer perceived in the light of the curricular prospects that they offer, but in retrospect: from the point of view of those who make these perspectives materialise or those who fail to do so, they must be recognised as wrong or right and therefore they must be able to pass a final judgement on the significance of their education over the course of their life” (Loch 1979, p. 95).

A “mixture of the new and the familiar” (Allport 1973, p.241) is essential in order to get the pupil out of their comfort zone for them to turn to unknown content and forms.

5.4 Identity and responsibility

It is significant whether a subject sees their actions as a result of an internal sequence of processes or as the result of decisions. If identity formation is to be understood solely as the free development of immanent forces, then responsibility for one’s own actions is no longer relevant. It is a different matter entirely if one assumes that a person is not an identity, but has

an identity, that is, has a way of dealing with it and can consequently influence, shape it. By reflexively examining the idea of being so, a person bears responsibility for their decisions. “Nevertheless, the will to think must arise” (Ritzel 1973, p.72).

If, however, it is a matter of a will that is “implanted” by the educator, then this does not presuppose any accountability. For pedagogy, this means that the educator’s remarks and actions are focused on the pupil’s cognitive development. Behaviour can only be exemplary if it is justified and as long as it does not cognitively overwhelm the student. There is also always the possibility to return to past decisions at a later date, when the young person is fully capable of forming a judgment. Should the educator indicate meaning-related action based on ideal concepts that are recognised subjectively, they offer an opportunity for identification. A dialogical way of proceeding with regard to justifying decisions places the greatest importance on the difficulties and conflicts that occurred in the process.

If a child’s decision-making capacity is to be encouraged, the importance of the reasoning behind these decisions must be pointed out at an early stage.

5.5 Identity and the ideal

An aspect of the cognitive development of children and adolescents that is likewise important are their— sometimes unrealistic— plans, wishes, and visions as manifestations of the ego-ideal. This is where the education of the sensory consciousness can commence. Ritzel calls such meaning connotations “motifs”, which “although not meaningless, (are) nonetheless nonsensical: they are disproportionate in relation to the abilities of the pupil that takes over them, yet as it turns out, as soon as the execution begins, the motif should be realised by gradually mastering all of the individual tasks” (Ritzel 1960, p. 401).

So that setbacks and disappointments do not rob young people of all hope, new tasks present themselves to the educator:

“On the one hand, instead of those nonsensical motives, he has to present motives that the pupil can handle; on the other hand, he has to teach them how to master individual tasks in which the motives are quite different” (Ritzel 1960, p. 402).

Under no circumstances should the student be encouraged to fully relinquish his ego-ideal. It makes far more sense for the educator to transform unrealistic pursuits of meaning into feasible ones. This procedure facilitates identification through insight.

“In order to carry out what the emergent human being wants, the goal that he has set himself and the shape that his life will take, courage is indispensable. Only those who have courage to take this risk, to shape their lives, have a chance at self-realisation despite the opposition of fate” (Loch 1969, p. 166)

Since ego-ideals can change, it is justified to discard their character and give priority to another. The “reasonableness” of a task depends on whether and to what extent a subject has the means to handle it or is able to come to terms with it. The objective of education is to facilitate the experiences that contribute to the young people’s building of confidence.

“... obstacles should be overcome, the psychological state of mind should be stabilised in such a way that the emboldened individual does not need to shy away from new obstacles” (Kluge 1970, p.371).

The educator has to constantly adapt to the identity and self-image of the pupil. The ability to make meaningful and well-considered decisions can only be developed through concrete tasks. An education that takes this into account both empowers and represents the right approach to identity. The manifested courage “...allows the student to understand his biography as a sequence of imperfect preliminary decisions, which, even as wrong decisions, may still contain meaningful experiences, and which guarantee him, as the subject of these decisions, that the continuity in the alternation of these events, which is constitutive for the awareness of identity and continues to be a task of self-education, is an immanent disposition of every position that had every been reached” (Krieger 1969, p. 297)

5.6 Formation of identity as a pedagogical undertaking

In pedagogy, the concept of identity is closely related to the work of Klaus Mollenhauer. He assumes that “the purpose of education and training is in the maturity of the subject” and that therefore “the interest of educational science of imparting knowledge must be an interest in emancipation” (Mollenhauer 1977, p. 10). Only a “communicative understanding of education” does justice to this interest, which Mollenhauer juxtaposes with the “manipulative” (Mollenhauer 1976, p. 84). Education should be understood as communication that is accomplished in interactions, yet the norms thereof must be negotiated in dialogue. Mollenhauer describes “identity” in the following manner:

“The term identity means that which is available to consciousness through language provides an individual person with their place in a social relationship system. Admittedly, we speak of identity only when the person possesses a self-understanding that they linguistically produced by themselves, sharing the understanding that other people in this relationship system have of them. Should this linguistically formulated self-image not coincide with the understanding or the image that others have of this person, there is a risk of identity crises or ... identity loss” (Mollenhauer 1976, p. 86)

This definition shows that Mollenhauer’s notion of identity is mainly represented through the relationship between individuality and adaptation. This relationship is a constant balance between one’s own and others’ expectations.

During the National Socialist period, girls and women were mainly forced to meet others’ expectations, which were prescribed by a National Socialist ideology, and to put their own wishes and visions aside, whenever possible. It is reasonable to suppose that some women may have only given up their rights in order to avoid identity crises or to prevent the imminent loss of identity. This approach may, initially, seem easier than permanently resisting or being social outsiders. According to Mollenhauer, however, not the enforced norms, but rather the norms negotiated in dialogue are the prerequisite for successful identity formation. Identity includes the ability not only to take part in social interactions, but also to assess claims that are presented as normative in discourse and, when appropriate, to reject them. This is the only way that the “maturity of the subjects” can be expressed, which is what an “emancipatory education” is all about (Mollenhauer 1977, p.10). A mature subject is also represented by the capacity for self-reflection. Erikson likewise alludes to a “group identity” (Erikson 1974, p. 129). This encompasses an “ideology” that contributes to what the mother has to do for her child: a control of the environment that is proportional to the evolving abilities (Erikson 1975, p. 129). An “ideology” that combines “identity” with a “worldview” is, according to Erikson, a necessary precondition for human development (Erikson 1974, p. 181). On the other hand, there is the risk that the “ideology” will turn into a “totalitarian” view of the world that legitimises the annihilation of the enemy group (Erikson 1954, p.161f). As emphasized by Erikson, “identity” can never be assured once and for all. “Identity formation” represents a lifelong development (Erikson 1974, p. 140f). It is linked to the ability to consciously recognise common values (Erikson 1982, p. 104).

The “meaningful function” of “ideologies” is expressly pointed out (Erikson 1981, p. 193ff).

Habermas likewise deals with the aspect of “group identity”. He presumes that the form of self-identification with the “reference group” to which the individual belongs must change (Habermas 1973, p. 222ff). The term “collective identity” is supposed to capture this concept: “I would like to reserve the term collective identity for those reference groups that are essential for the identity of their members, which are, in a certain respect, ascribed to individuals and which cannot be chosen by them arbitrarily; and which have a continuity that goes beyond the perspective of the life histories of its members” (Habermas 1976, p.22).

Now the vital question is how a “collective identity” would have to be constituted in order to safeguard the “individual identity”.

“Nowadays we can see a collective identity being anchored, if anything, in the formal conditions under which identity projections are created and changed. Their collective identity is no longer opposed to the individual as a keeper of traditions, ... rather, the individuals themselves participate in the process of education and the formation of opinions of an identity that should first be shaped together. The reasonableness of the content of identity is then measured solely based on the structure of this process of creation, by the formal conditions of the establishment and assessment of a flexible identity in which all members of society reciprocally recognise each other, in the sense that they can respect one another” (Habermas 1976, p. 107).

6 Maturity as a pedagogical challenge

6.1 Maturity and emancipation

The term emancipation was originally used as a slogan for liberation movements. It has historical and legal-political roots. Accordingly, it was initially not taken into account when describing educational processes. Alternatively, the term maturity was used in pedagogy. The German term for mature, *mündig*, originates from the Old High German word “munt”, which means protection or hand. In the strict sense of the word, if a person is mature, he or she is released from the hand and protection of the educator. In this context it relates to the term emancipation, which contains both “ex” and “manus”, which means that an individual has outgrown the father’s hand or violence. The concept of maturity attains its educational meaning from the idea that a young person should not be defined by certain ideals or guidelines, on the contrary, an education allows them to fulfill the requirements to find themselves in their environment. With regard to coexistence in this environment, maturity does not mean that the individual is released at the freedom of their own choosing— it is a social responsibility experienced as a strain between freedom and boundedness. Individuals are mature if they are prepared to take responsibility for themselves and for others, if they are willing and able to avoid being guided by prejudices, rather, they should trust their own thoughts, insights, and reasoning in order to do justice to both people and things. In this sense, education for a responsible personality is always a superior goal. An intended education always has to do with the individual growing up. Maturity in this understanding is not a characteristic of groups, but of individual people. Education should be a guide to dealing with the world, with its substances, ideas, and norms. The task of the educator is to maintain a certain distance from social forces that claim exclusivity. Only this distance allows ideologies and forces to be assessed in terms of their meaning and true content. Education and society are interrelated: on the one hand, social circumstances shape education; on the other hand, education, through critical independence, has an impact on the social fabric. The chance of social change through education lies in the relative autonomy that society accords education.

If education were merely the outcome of decisions made by individual entities of power, it would only be related to applied politics, as is the case in totalitarian systems. The educator’s respect for the child’s right to become mature prohibits him from placing adolescents at the service of ideas and things, the worth (or lack of worth) of which they cannot yet decide for themselves. He develops a sense of political maturity in them precisely because he cannot

politicise them. The right to object and the ability to find your own standpoint are constituents of maturity. Education and schools can be places that encourage the spread of political information or reflection, but not of political action.

6.2 Kant's theory on moral maturity

A major concern of the Kantian theory is moral autonomy. A moral act is only possible if it is preceded by a free decision made by the individual. The moral law on which the decision is based must be autonomous in nature. Kant justifies this as follows: there are only two possible origins of the moral principle. Either it originates from the outside world or it lies in the will itself. It cannot originate from the outside world since otherwise it would be empirical, it would not be universally valid and, moreover, it would not be a common that could be contrary to the outside world. The moral principle must therefore come from the will itself, indeed, from the rational part of the will, not the sensual part. It functions as an authority over the empirical reality. When Kant outlines this law, the emphasis is not placed on the fixed goal, that is, on what we want, but on the formal process, namely how we want. The law, the categorical imperative, goes: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law" (Kant Vol. 4, p. 51).

Moral autonomy, the return of the moral law to the rational will is regarded more as a criterion than as a consequence of a moral act. As such, an education aimed at moral autonomy does not seem necessary. No other process, such as a social act, produces moral autonomy either, since this already belongs with the essence of man and no longer needs to be attained. Kant writes about this in the "Critique of Practical Reason":

"The commonest intelligence can easily and without hesitation see what, on the principle of autonomy of the will, requires to be done; but on supposition of heteronomy of the will, it is hard and requires knowledge of the world to see what is to be done. That is to say, what duty is, is plain of itself to everyone; but what is to bring true durable advantage, such as will extend to the whole of one's existence, is always veiled in impenetrable obscurity; and much prudence is required to adapt the practical rule founded on it to the ends of life, even tolerably, by making proper exceptions. But the moral law commands the most punctual obedience from everyone; it must, therefore, not be so difficult to judge what it requires to be done, that the commonest unpractised understanding, even without worldly prudence, should fail to apply it rightly. It is always in everyone's power to satisfy the categorical command of morality;

whereas it is seldom possible, and by no means so to everyone, to satisfy the empirically conditioned precept of happiness, even with regard to a single purpose” (Kant, Vol. 4, p.149)

In this context, Kant was critiqued by the pedagogue Roth. The latter refers to the fact that the moral wickedness of children and adolescents does not occur as a basis of an autonomous decision in favour of evil, but as a consequence of faulty learning processes (cf. Roth Vol. II, p. 395) If this thesis were to be interpreted strictly, it would suggest that the education and society are entirely at fault for crimes as they abolish individual freedom and responsibility. Roth believes that the assumption of the existence of moral autonomy, even before any pedagogical effort is made, does not correspond to the real state of affairs since moral autonomy consists in the return of the moral law to the rational will, which, whoever, cannot be regarded as a basic premise of human existence. Rationality itself is not fully developed from childhood, but requires special learning processes and pedagogical support for its development. According to Kant, moral action is not possible without the use of reason. Since Roth defines the capacity for self-reflection as a spiritual autonomy, for him it is a prerequisite for morality. Kant’s thesis states that without the assertion of a basic autonomy, humans cannot take any moral action. Every attitude would then be imposed and influenced by educators and society. Roth, on the other hand, perceives the capability to think independently as the result of diverse learning processes that cannot occur without pedagogical help. Thus one could claim that man acquires autonomy from his nature, but its actual presence requires special educational endeavours. Spiritual autonomy can be equated with the term maturity.

6.3 Maturity as the capacity of one’s own thinking

Kant provides the following definition: “Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance” (Kant, Vol. 6, p. 53). Thus, the Kantian concept of maturity alludes to the ability to think for oneself, to recognise and evaluate reality with one’s thoughts. Why is nonage, as perceived by Kant, considered to be self-imposed? He declares: “This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance. Dare to know! (Sapere aude!) ‘Have the courage to use your own understanding,’ is therefore the motto of the enlightenment” (Kant, Vol. 6, p. 53).

The reasons for remaining in a state of nonage lie in human comfort. Laziness and cowardice do not allow them to trust their own thoughts and hinder the development of maturity. Many

people even find this questionable or dangerous, as Kant often highlights the difficult and uncertain path of advancing in one's own thinking or taking responsibility. Sometimes instances appear to be overpowering and discouraging. In National Socialism, for instance, the practice of maturity presented a threat to life.

On its own, thinking means maturity has not been applied yet. Kant clearly acknowledges that thinking cannot take place without a social connection. He emphasises the importance of being able to communicate one's own thoughts publicly and recognises the fruitfulness of scientific disputes. He is highly sceptical of the opinion that the freedom to think should be preserved by all means. At any rate, in the absence of social reference, thinking seems to atrophy. Kant reveals the following:

“Of course, it is said: the freedom to speak, or write, could be deprived by a higher authority, but the freedom to think is not to be taken by them. However, how much and with what accuracy we would probably think, if we do not speak in community with others, with whom we share our thoughts and who share their thoughts with us” (Kant, Vol. 3, p. 280)! Sharing one's thoughts publicly is therefore banned by the state as it is considered to be a grave danger to think in general and an utter hindrance to maturity.

“So it can be said that that external violence, which snatches people away from their freedom to communicate their thoughts publicly, also takes away their freedom to think— the only treasure that remains for us despite all the burdens of the bourgeoisie, and through which, despite all the evils of this state, advice can still be given” (Kant, Vol. 3, p. 280).

The use of reason must not proceed in a lawless, anarchic way, in which otherwise the freedom of thinking would be replaced by arbitrary actions. The act of thinking must take place under regulating laws “because without some form of law, nothing, not even the greatest nonsense, can play its game for a long time” (Kant, Vol. 3, p. 281). The law gives reason to itself. When it does not, there is the possibility that it will fall under foreign law. The proper law of reason is universality.

“Using your own reason, means nothing more than asking yourself with regard to everything that you should accept: do you find it feasible, the reason why you accept something, or the rule that results from what you have accepted in order to make it the general principle of your use of reason? Anyone can test themselves like this” (Kant, Vol. 3, p. 283)

Maturity as the capacity to think for oneself appears to be, according to Kant, a case of intentional educational help from others. Kant does not deny the possibility of achieving self-enlightenment of single individuals, yet he endorses that enlightenment in the community is more effective. In this instance, the “those who are able to think for themselves” could be the role models for others. For Kant, mutual conversation is a representation of the dialogical use of reason. In conversation, the thinker is not completely dependent on himself— he can compare, improve or clarify his thoughts with others. With the help of others, there is an opportunity to acquire the ability to think for oneself.

6.4 Socrates 'decision-making tools

Socrates was convinced that the truth was accessible to the thinkers who tested their perceptions. He tried to provide a safe way (method) that would lead to knowledge. He assumed that the world of human perception, in spite of all delusions, also contains the truth. So the search for a common point in the opinions of different people seemed to him to be the sure path to knowledge, and in this commonality he saw the “truth”. Moral life, account to him, depends on the insight into what is good. Virtue stems from knowledge, and whoever knows what is good also wants what is good. A virtuous life is directly contingent upon the knowledge of what is good. Goodness is what is useful to people and what benefits their well-being. Yet whoever knows what is good for him will, according to Socrates, want nothing other than that; whoever causes evil, does so out of ignorance. Man acquires virtue (moral competence) by being taught what is good; virtue can therefore be taught. Socrates believed that everything in the world is for the benefit of man, which is why the world must be configured by a divine reason.

Everyone should consider the following points before making a decision:

- 1) We must not let our feelings influence our decisions. Rather, we must examine the question that is being posed and let the arguments alone guide us. We should try to acquire the real facts and keep our heads clear. Questions can and should be resolved by reason.
- 2) We cannot rely on what people generally think about it; they can be wrong. We have to try to find an answer that we ourselves consider to be correct. We must not let others do our thinking for us.

3) We should never do what is morally wrong. The only question we have to answer is whether our behaviour is right or wrong, not what will happen to us, what people will think of us or how we feel about what has happened. (Rehmke 1959, p. 29)

6.5 Educational goal of maturity

An education that leads to maturity should contribute to developing or improving people's thinking ability. In this respect, Kant refers to the Socratic method of developing reasoning skills. This aims to stimulate the interlocutor to think for themselves by asking questions. The one posing the questions attempts to activate the other's reasoning abilities so that they gain knowledge, and they are not ruled by external factors. A fundamental requirement for this is taking the student seriously for their own sake. Yet Kant does not wish to apply the Socratic questions to all spheres of children's lives.

"In many respects, reason does not need to be exercised by children. They do not have to reason about everything. They do not need to know the reasons for what they are supposed to do as well-behaved individuals, yet whenever it concerns their duty, they must be aware of them. Nevertheless, one must ensure that one does not impose rational knowledge onto them, one must bring it out of them" (Kant Vol. 6, p. 737).

So no one can act out of a sense of duty without acting sensibly. If children grow accustomed to acting through external measures, this cannot be attributed to their duty since the autonomous use of reason has been replaced by heteronomous means. Kant describes moral education in the following manner:

"This moral culture depends not upon discipline, but upon maxims ... Discipline results in a mere habit that will disappear over the years. The child should learn to act according to maxims, the equity of which he sees for himself" (Kant Vol. 6, p.740).

6.6 Maturity and the state

Kant recognizes that the independent use of reason can conflict with the state order. The state often demands conformity and submission. Therefore, choices of action do not emerge from one's own thinking, but from state regulations and laws. How can the order of the state be

combined with individual thinking? Kant differentiates between the public and private use of reason:

“But by the public use of one's own reason I understand the use that anyone as a scholar makes of reason before the entire literate world. I call the private use of reason that which a person may make in a civic post or office that has been entrusted to him” (Kant Vol. 6, p. 55)

The functioning of the state order would be called into question if individual members proved to be obstinate. Thus, the private use of reason may be restricted with regard to the whole. The person, however, then no longer has complete spiritual autonomy. Only the scholar has to be free at all times. No individual should be forever under the tutelage of another. “Such a contract, whose intention is to preclude forever all further enlightenment of the human race, is absolutely null and void, even if it should be ratified by the supreme power, by parliaments, and by the most solemn peace treaties” (Kant Vol. 6, p. 57).

The freedom to criticize, to motivate, to blow the whistle on abuses and to initiate improvements must be present, otherwise any and all changes would be prevented. If this freedom is restricted by state measures or laws, intellectual maturity can no longer be realized to its full potential. Kant recognizes people as the bearers of the moral law. They deserve respect and dignity. This is likewise true for children. Their emerging personality should be respected. The educator should provide possibilities, according to the age of the person being educated, for their own use of reason. This can occur by asking critical questions. If, in the exercise of their individual functions, an individual is faced with contradictions to one's own thinking, it is their duty to apply their own thinking in the public use of reason. If the difference between the expectations of the office and personal thinking is too great, the office must be abandoned as it can no longer be administered with a clear conscience. A moral problem presents itself when someone expresses the opinion of an institution, even though it contradicts their own reasoning. The chance for improvement and progress is only granted if the state institutions are prepared to listen to criticism and allow room for improvement. The capacity to think for yourself also includes positive self-determination. The way to approach this is through dialogical examination of the thinking of others.

In every person there is an entity that checks their actions and thoughts. This is conscience. This is the only matter towards which each individual should, ultimately, have a sense of responsibility.

7 Dialogical principle

7.1 Dialogical principle and pedagogical responsibility

Every newborn child is physically and mentally incapable of surviving alone. They take a lot of time to reach a state of independence and maturity. The educator provides his assistance as long as the individual cannot do without him. The objective of this assisting relationships the child's maturity. In this way, the sense orientation of education can be determined: it reaches its ultimate goal— being educated— in stages and it likewise includes its own termination. The adult should possess all the strengths and skills to be able to take responsibility for determining their own life. The intrinsic intention of educational activities is to render itself obsolete. The concept of education as perceived in National Socialism, however, places all people in a state of permanent immaturity. The true standard of pedagogical actions, namely the removal of influences related to immature individuals, is altogether lost.

Pedagogy should be about protecting people's lives and accompanying them into the future. "For the child should not only survive and vegetate, but also experience happiness, contentment, comfort and meaningfulness in addition to maintaining biological existence" (Danner 1985, p.223). Thus, the superiority and power of the educator become an obligation, an appeal to their sense of responsibility; they "... are the condition of possibility that makes them responsible for the child." (Danner 1985, p.264)

Humans alone can act responsibly. In contrast to animals, they are essentially determined by their own thinking and not by instinctive behaviour. Taking responsibility is a purpose that determines the very essence of human beings. Only they can see the connections and use them as a benchmark for their own actions. Everyone who acts should be guided by moral standards, since this is an entity that assesses people. This entity can only demand something from a person if what is being demanded is justified. That is why it is important "to respect others and to protect them from harm, thus, also to protect their property and possessions" (Danner 1985, p. 75).

This "moral duty" is actually an "obligation of conscience". In the particular conscience of the acting person, there are always time-dependent determinants presents because it is precisely here and now that the valid social ideas have been internalised. However, there is a "moral law" which a priori precedes all social conditions, and which can be attained by men both through reason (according to Kant) and through faith. With the help of this "inner faculty", they can hear the "language" of the "moral law". People cannot dispose of themselves and of others

if they want to act morally. The “moral law” disposes of them, the demands of which can be “heard” with reason and “accepted” with faith. The “moral law” does not, however, contain concrete content. In this instance a further challenge arises for pedagogy that goes beyond the awakening of a moral consciousness. Accordingly, the educator has to take responsibility for encouraging the pupil to make something out of themselves “that he can show himself and demonstrate to his own consciousness” (Derbolav 1959, p. 30). The responsibility of the educator involves having to decide for oneself what exactly needs to be done in an educational situation. But the student must also be expected to bear some degree of “responsibility” for becoming a human being, which should, ultimately, become entirely his. “Responsibility is ... also the establishment of values” (Danner 1985, p. 201).

Taking on different duties does not necessarily mean submitting to arbitrarily determined norms, rather, it is the freedom to recognise values and to pursue them yourself. The road towards that is paved by the formation of a conscience. It does not happen when the subject thinks alone, instead, it is always related to the reality and to other people. Education can thus be understood as a dialogical occurrence. Educators and those to be educated are in a relationship with one another and enter into a pedagogical dialogue. The adolescent should not become an adapted subject, rather, they should help to shape the world critically and communicatively.

Part of the basic understanding of a dialogical life is that the individual cannot be without others. Everyone lives according to the conditions and expectations of their time and space. This also applies to schools. Anyone who hopes to find a space for educational activity there must bear in mind that social demands will likewise be placed upon them, with which they will have to become engaged. These demands can be accepted or rejected. Getting oneself involved in social expectations in the dialogical understanding does not mean any blind loyalty to the regime if the political system proves to be an inhumane entity.

There is an overarching ethical responsibility in every society. It decides whether the orders and guidelines serve the greater good of human manifestations or not. Nobody is a completely self-sufficient subject with regard to thinking and acting, on the contrary, there is an I that can be distinguished from and confirmed by You. Therefore, decisions can only be made responsibly in dialogues with others. Martin Buber claims that “Love is the responsibly of an I for a You” (Buber 1962, p. 88). Neither those who live in isolation from others, nor those who have slipped into anonymous collectives can take responsibility for others. It is only the

dialogical sense of self that opens human behaviour to an ethic that allows the I Person to be Me and the You Person to be You.

The responsibility of the educator lies in the idea that through their actions and their language, they create the possibility to allow communication and interaction to occur without any repressions. The pedagogical relationship to the student must be kept free from authoritarian influences of the adult on the pupil. This is precise where the dialogue occurs, creating an atmosphere that allows the other person to independently articulate and justify their own thoughts. It should be possible to talk to each other without fear.

The education of students towards a sense of responsibility is aimed at making them capable of engaging in dialogue. He too must recognise the others as conversation partners. With the help of dialogue, a world of compassion that is free of repressions can be made possible anywhere. Just as the adolescent has learned that there is no place for the suppression of the thoughts and actions of others in dialogue, so he too must stand up for a world that gives every person the freedom to live communicatively and interactively in relation to others in such a way that every form of inhumane exercises of power are prevented.

7.2 Educational dialogue in theory and practice

It is the hallmark of dialogical pedagogy to avoid any confining one-sidedness and to comprehensively interpret educational and learning occurrences. Since the whole human existence is educable and formable, there is already a pedagogical dialogue long before the reasoning that awakens in the students allows them to argue and interact. According to Derbolav, the educational process of human beings takes place in three steps: the beginning of all human behaviour is an action that results from a direct contact with the world. In the process of “handling”, the adolescent encounters their world even before they commence to reflect on it. This state of affairs changes with the “advancement towards understanding”. Now there is the possibility to “objectify” what has been experienced thus far. The resulting distancing from the world offers the pupil a chance to gain an understanding of their own being and ability, as well as to recognize matters as “things”. The objective, however, is that through the knowledge that has been acquired in the meantime, the student will find their conscience, whereby the “return to acting out of mediated responsibility” is initiated. Buber also makes a similar observation: “So the individual finds nature, where, as a child, he had played without thought, in the purest joy and from which he has now moved away to come to himself, in

human form and at a higher stage of development, and in such a way that it enables him to complete his own being” (Buber in: Mendes-Flohr 1979, p. 186). This describes the overall framework that contains purposes of pedagogical dialogue and which, simultaneously, brings up the question of respective educational responsibility for the educator. The pedagogical dialogue is only possible if it is accompanied by humane actions, which is evidenced in the love of the I for the You, from the You to the I. This is the only way that an atmosphere of trust can be created. If human life, in all its manifestations, is oriented towards dialogue, then educational dialogue must correspond to all human modes of being. In this sense, responsible action is possible.

The pedagogical dialogue should not, however, spare the child from having “negative” experiences with the world and with people. It should be made clear to the student: you cannot have everything; the world does not turn around you, quite on the contrary, you have to learn to accept the other and others even when it “hurts”. It fundamentally contradicts dialogical behaviour that the ego engrosses the other or others. Similarly to the ego, the other and others have the right to be themselves, even if that is against the interests of the adolescent. The pupil should learn to allow himself to be limited by things in the sense of appropriate action.

When dealing with others, respect for fellow human beings has to be demonstrated. These are the indispensable preconditions for a life “together”. Derbolav insists that toddlers should be integrated into a “temporal and objective order”, “which is painfully felt by the impulse nature of the child as a discipline” (Derbolav 1971, p. 59). Pedagogy can help to cope with such “negative experiences”. Allowing oneself to be limited by things or by customs and conventions that have been established by others offers a delightful restriction to the original will for freedom. The educator, who is experienced in dialogue, must help the child to reach the “intermediate zone” of freedom and attachment. The resulting conflicts may perhaps be experienced all the more intensely in the early stage of childhood as there is still a lack of rational management of the problem.

If the educator finds the right balance between “habit” and “love” in dealing with the child, then “being-of-its-own” and “togetherness” are not experienced as an irreconcilable juxtaposition, but as a connection to a humane life. In the dialogical understanding, freedom never consists of an ego in solitude. Rather, it is far more the case of what Buber describes: “One is inclined to understand freedom... as the counterpoint to compulsion. Yet the counterpoint of compulsion is not freedom, but interconnectedness ... freedom in education, that is the ability

to be connected” (Buber 1925, p. 795). Then, however, educational dialogue must not allow any subjective arbitrariness, it must enable those seeking freedom to find such a bond that is expressed in “being with one another”, without having to give up their own being. This leads to a behaviour that shows signs of being self-conscious. Human lives with others always comprise a bond with others. The educator responsible for the educational dialogue must allow for a means of dealing with unavailable things and fellow human beings.

Likewise, the equators are not always able to immediately satisfy every need that may arise. The child must be expected to be able to withstand the resulting tensions and insecurities. By accustoming themselves to it, it is self-evident that they grow in an environment with the normative requirements of life, and they learn self-denial. In this way, selfish lust for power that threatens “togetherness” is overcome. The pedagogical dialogue can never be aimed at the individual subject alone. Rather, it should be ensured that there is always the possibility of forming a connection. Anyone who does not require the immature child to be obedient to things and the social environment, who acts irresponsibly because they wish to stir up that selfishness in adolescents lacks a sense of humaneness. Pestalozzi declares the following: “Obedience and love, gratitude and trust united reveal the first seed of conscience ... the first shadow of the feeling that not everything in the world is there for his sake (i.e., the child’s sake) ... and ... the second feeling that the world does not exist for his sake either” (Pestalozzi 1964, p. 132). Education can be regarded as ethical when the first fundamental experiences and later ones of trusting oneself in regard to things and fellow human beings can be made in an encountering dialogue. The educational dialogue should be based on the experience of a “feeling of us”. This remains the criteria for education even if the student learns, to an increasing extent, the way in which to use his intellectual powers so that the opportunity to act autonomously presents itself. “The person becomes aware of himself as one who participates in being themselves, as one who is with us and as one who is aware of being” (Buber 1962, p. 121).

All learning generally serves to raise the person’s awareness. This process does not take place without complications because the learner has to take a step away from their previous comfort zone in social dialogue in order to take the risk of stating “I think”. An educator “draws” the adolescents towards developing their own thinking, as it were. The pedagogue is responsible for paving the way for the child from his previous life to an independent one. Nevertheless, from a dialogical perspective, the person never breaks the “togetherness” and loses himself in the process. He is always his own person, acting as himself. The person who

reaches a consciousness through a knowledge of the world and of himself cannot accomplish the necessary acts of learning without any help from others. The pupil learns by means of the willingness of the teacher to accommodate him with the teaching. Buber calls this interrelation between teaching and learning dialogue the “contact” between the learners and the teachers. “Contact is the keyword of education. It means that the teacher should not interact with the pupil from one brain to the other, from a developed brain to an incomplete one, but from one being to another, from mature to developing being, they must really come face to face, which does not mean that the direction should be from top to bottom, from chair to workbench, but the interaction should be real, an exchange of experiences, the experiences of a fulfilled life with those of unfulfilled ones... (this is how a) real mutual dialogue occurs, whereby the teacher may lead and control, but they must also enter into this dialogue directly and impartially with their own person. But this conversation should continue into silent coexistence... That is what I call the dialogical principle in education” (Buber 1966, p. 93f).

The dialogical principle would never allow the teacher to relieve the pupils of “thinking for themselves” through false attempts at domination “from above”. It is clear that the teacher has an advantage over the learner in terms of reflected experience and thus knowledge. In no way does this legitimize undialogical behaviour. Both share the same life and are never finished with their respective experiences. Both meet each other in an exchange of their spiritual possibilities. For the educator, this dialogue is linked to a need to work through their own experiences, to really look through them, to share them with their interlocutor and to discuss them in such a way that they can gain an orientation for navigating life from it. The pupil should get involved in the word of experiences, they should critically examine what has been recognized rationally and live the “truth” responsibly. If the education allows this dialogue, they provide the student with the opportunity to protect themselves against indoctrination by others.

7.3 Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility of the educator resides in the fact that he should provide testimony of the “good” in words and deeds to himself and others, but this must not be done with the intention of manipulating or indoctrinating. The “responsibility of the educator” is closely related to the “education towards accountability” of the adolescent. At every stage of the pedagogical dialogue, the teacher must strive for the pupil to take responsibility for the formation of the will.

The one being educated should learn to answer— ultimately before God— for his actions, to come to an agreement with others about it and to gather all his will from the conscience that is being formed. According to Paulo Freire, an individual who does not dare to handle his thoughts and actions responsibly remains a conformist who is dependent on others. Freire wished to protect people from the danger of merely adapting to existing circumstances. This is especially inhumane when the rulers practice oppressive violence in a society, as was the case under National Socialism. Pedagogical dialogue alone makes people free to think and act for themselves. “It is only dialogue that requires critical thinking that is also able to generate critical thinking” (Freire 1977, p. 76). The dialogue is the condition of possibility for every pedagogical action that sees its purpose in releasing the helping force for a humane life through “togetherness”. “The thinking subject cannot think alone; it cannot reflect on the object world without the participation of other subjects in the act of thinking” (Freire 1974, p. 71).

What is actually human can be seen in people’s dialogical behaviour. The hallmark of an inhumane society is one where those in power not only refuse dialogue with others, but also manipulate, indoctrinate, and suppress in an anti-dialogue manner. According to Freire, there is therefore no possibility to providing people with a freedom to their humanity than allowing them to lead a dialogical life with others in the world. All else degrades human existence to an adapted, controlled object. Engaged in dialogue with one another and with the world, teachers and students are “critical fellow researchers” who reject any form of manipulation. Everyone involved in the learning process has have an ethical responsibility towards real life and their learning partner.

According to Bollnow, the purpose of educational dialogue is to enable adolescents to be “ready for a real conversation”. Educational lessons ensure this when the ability to acquire judgment is developed through dialogue. Bollnow perceives people as the essence of reason, which is attested by language since for him language and conversation are expressions of reason. Learning to talk is an inherently dialogical process. The educator must develop a strength in students “which overcomes all inhibitions of laziness and cowardice and pushes him to dare to speak freely and responsibly, to expose himself in words and to stand firmly by his word” (Bollnow 1979, p. 113).

Dialogue does not aim to force an adaptation to what is already found. “The decisive mission of education is to give people independence from all these anonymous or consciously

organized influences... and to enable them to do so independently and to take accountability for their own positions” (Bollnow 1983, p. 113).

The educator bears responsibility for whoever initiates the dialogue. The truth shows itself for those who are ready to take on “questionable aspects” and look for new answers with others. The “education towards accountability” is analogous to the “responsibility of the educator”. The student should likewise learn to use words responsibly, to allow himself to be questioned as he engages in dialogues with others, and to seek the truth of a humane life. According to Buber, the “I” and the “You” are able to find the common *logos* in dialogue and take responsibility with the help of transcendental reason. For Freire, the entire educational process is oriented towards a valid value that would transcend the phenomenal world and that is linked to the idea of humanity. It is only from this point of view that inhumane power structures in society can be comprehended. This results in an obligation for everyone to actively participate with others in changing and abolishing inhumane conditions. The consciousness acquired through thinking is not the private property of the individual, rather, it has to be proven in social dealings with others. Ultimately, the students should find their way towards a conscience by relying on the knowledge that has been acquired.

The dialogical principle stands in contrast to the collectivist approach according to given norms. Geißler sees the responsibility of the educator as follows: “The art of teaching consists... not, above all, in informing, but in the arousal of interest. Since where interest has developed, the spontaneous ability of independent attempts to find a solution is most likely to become active” (Geißler 1984, p. 16). This “arousal of interest” only occurs when the student is provided with a chance to think about the ethical perspective. Only then does it become possible to consciously assume ethical responsibility. If the young person has looked through study contents by relying on his intellect and he judged them with reason based on his own values, then he has completed independent learning. In this way he becomes a responsible I-Person. He has come to the understanding that every life with others is concord with a matter of assuming a personal acceptance of ethical responsibility, and that there can be no humane life without being bound to the value of humanity.

Buber distinguishes between “two basic ways of ... influencing people: in the first instance, one wishes to impose his opinion or attitude on the other so that the latter would believe that the mental result of the action is their own... understanding” (Buber 1962, p. 281). This is the attempt to exercise control over the other. Buber distinguishes between such “Propagandists”

and a “challenging educator” who believes in the “primordial power that has dispersed itself among all human beings in order to grow into a peculiar shape in each one; he believes that this growth only needs the help given in the encounters that he also provides” (Buber 1962, p.282). This is also what Habermas means in relation to “discourse free from domination”. The pedagogical dialogue enables “each of these individuals” to see themselves as “a unique, single person”, namely as a “bearer of a special task of being that can be fulfilled by them and them alone” (Buber 1962, p.282). What is meant in this respect is that dialogues have the purpose of enabling the conversation partner to be experienced as an aid in reassign one’s own self-actualising forces. The veneration of “togetherness” with the world should be at the centre of our dealings with one another. The pupil discovers himself in the other, with whom he can begin the dialogue towards a humane life. It is the duty of the educator to guarantee that the young person gets a clear awareness of his being in the world because without the appropriate knowledge the path to maturity is blocked. Conscious action is not possible without being aware of what needs to be done right here and right now.

7.4 Formation of the conscience as a pedagogical undertaking

According to Pestalozzi, the “first seeds” of the conscience become manifest in the resulting impulses of love and obedience, of trust and gratitude within the educational atmosphere of the “living room culture”. Likewise, the teaching and learning dialogue does not solely lead to an increase in cognitive knowledge. It is always about an awareness of the conscience. In what way can the cognitively acquired knowledge bases enable action orientations?

The conscientious actions of those involved in education are always exposed to the expectations of a given society. Every culture has developed its value systems, and the associated society expresses the values in laws.

The conscience also receives impulses from the expectations of its time and space, although it must evaluate them critically. From time to time every person feels morally compelled to move from theoretical consciousness towards conscious action. There is an evident connection between knowledge and conscience. The knowing ones have not become “educated people” yet. Only those who use their knowledge for meaningful actions live in accordance with their conscience. Initially, people are responsible for getting a clear understanding of beings in all their appearances in nature. They don’t, however, take on

ethical responsibility by simply stating or by adapting themselves, but by asking further questions that uncover the very reasoning of things.

8 Society and the values in the pedagogical interplay

8.1 Normative education under the Nazi dominion

Can the pedagogical theory and practices of the “Third Reich” even be considered “education”? The views expressed at the time invalidated standards that had previously been applied to pedagogical relationships— the idea that it was concerned with the child’s well-being, that education should always provide a good influence. Under Hitler’s rule, the will for seamless recordings, control, and the political instrumentalisation of the emerging generation dominated. It was about selection and exterminations. Certain sections of the population were to be involved in the exercise of domination; others were envisaged for subordinate work. Many were considered undesirable and fell victim to marginalisation or annihilation. In Himmler’s “Some Thoughts on the Treatment of Alien Populations in the East”, it says:

"A fundamental question in solving all these problems is the question of schools and thus the question of sorting and selecting the youth. For the non-German population of the East there must be no schools above the four-class elementary school. The goal of this elementary school should solely consist of simple arithmetic up to a maximum of 500, writing personal names, teaching that it is a divine commandment to be obedient to the Germans and to be honest, hardworking, and good. I do not consider reading necessary" (quoted in Klessman 1980, p.178).

Celebrations, marches, songs and poems were supposed to generate “devout dedication” that would prevent own thoughts and inquiries. The supervisory bodies of “conscience” and “common sense” were completely or partially eliminated. Solemn contemplations at social evenings and roll calls prevented one from questioning the individual or societal meaning of one’s own life. In contrast, it promoted “feelings of identity” with fantastical worldviews of a hierarchical community that is guided by the superior will of the leader. The promoted feelings of identity were happily experienced in the varied activities of the BDM— sports, gymnastics, singing and marching, all kinds of missions. The actual problem of youthful identity development had to be suppressed, such as the development of a realistic outlook on life, which is what the adolescent should concentrate on while studying and working.

The tendency to constrict the perception of reality and the elimination of rational impulses that are associated with this, which can lead to political servitude, had not been understood as education in the sense which it was customary up to that point in time. The girls’ willingness to work in day-to-day political affairs of the time, such as the “*Winterhilfswerk*”, in harvest

operations, and in long-term service commitments was immediately exploited. The extracurricular education of young people in the “Third Reich” was a practice that departed from ideas that many had associated with the term “education” since the 18th century: that there must be a phase in human life during which one prepares for the future role as an adult not only in one’s own interest, but also in the interest of the further development of society and one is therefore exempt from exploitation. The assignments of girls and women involved a procedure in which youthful enthusiasm was not used to promote these young people themselves, but rather for political purposes.

8.2 Norms and values of education

In every society, certain values, which should be passed on to the youth, take centerstage. During National Socialism, these were courage, perseverance, and camaraderie, among others. Women were encouraged towards frugality, domesticity, motherliness, and industriousness. Many of these qualities are no longer in demand today. Other values prevail. Indeed, how does a change in values come about?

Nobody can educate without evaluating. Every teacher or educator has guidelines that determine what to strive for and what to reset, what to prefer and what to replace. It is often the case when people live together that disagreements occur about fundamental norms and the hierarchy of values. An uncertainty with regard to values leads to uncertainty in education. Education presupposes decisions. Those who educate must know what they want. What is needed are value settings that enable consistent value judgements to be made in changing situations of coexistence.

The ability to provide a good education, as well as its success, essentially depends on the value system of the community to which the educator and the pupil belong. Every system of values has ideological and moral foundation. It can only convey a sense of orientation if these principles are unambiguous and relatively permanent. Any reorientation presupposes that the previously applicable order is examined critically. The same is true for National Socialism. We have to ask ourselves what was inadequate, one-sided and harmful in the ideological, moral, and educational ideas of the time. What has been overlooked, disregarded or missed? In order to answer these questions, there must be standards for assessing ideas and events. But standards such as the physical and mental “health of the person” or a “life in peace and freedom” are also co-determined by ideological and moral core beliefs. In the “Third Reich”,

feelings, myths, faithfulness, and the will to power were glorified. After this time, a reevaluation was necessary in a number of respects.

People's value orientations are dependent on emotional bonds. Brezinka notes a few points that should be taken into account when teaching the importance of values:

1. Man is not purely a rational being. He has powerful organic drives that can be used for better or for worse. He is, by nature, unfinished and malleable, vulnerable and in need of learning. That is why he needs instruction and discipline in order to be able to acquire inner stability.

Man is dependent on external stability for inner stability. He needs a community with strong forms of life. He must encounter good morals so that he can become and remain morally good.

The inner stability depends on whether as a child the person experienced permanent comfort in a small group. It develops from the emotional bonds with the mother and other loved ones in the family and their immediate vicinity. By loving them, their ideals also become his ideals.

Inner stability can only derive from and be maintained through the recognition of authority. Initially this is the authority of loved ones, but later it should also be the authority of a supra-personal institution, a valid doctrine and morality, an honourable tradition.

Reason and science alone are not sufficient for value orientation. Belief systems such as religions, myths, and worldviews (or ideologies) remain equally indispensable in modern society. There is a natural need to believe and to worship.

Knowledge of what is good is not sufficient to do good. One has to want the good. Moral life skills presuppose moral endeavours: self-discipline, renunciation of the bad and superfluous, concentration on the essentials, practice in doing good, asceticism.

Moral endeavours are typically only made when they are demanded or controlled by everyone in a manageable living community. In large groups with impersonal relationships, the moral willingness to make an effort remains negligible and the tendency to live at the expense of others and to exploit public goods is strong.

Education stands a chance at success to the extent that the above-mentioned conditions are fulfilled. This depends on ideological and moral decisions. The decisions about common ideals are fundamental (Brezinka 1986, p. 25f).

Even in a pluralistic society there is no coexistence without virtues. Virtues represent a readiness for morally good behaviour that is acquired through practice. They can only be accepted by children if they are helped by a moral education until they are well-practiced and capable of forming their own judgement so as to work by themselves independently. In doing so, the habit of doing good and avoiding evil at an early age must precede one's own decisions. Since moral endeavours are no longer influenced from the outside by demanding good morals from within by a strong conscience, many people in our contemporary society allow themselves to go so far in self-control as it is possible without triggering others. Aristotle was aware that "The right education towards virtue... is difficult if one does not grow up under the corresponding laws. For the vast majority obey compulsion rather than speech..." (Aristotle 1972, p. 303). In a value-pluralistic society, there exists only a minimum of external coercion. It can survive if the fundamental virtues on which the mental health of the individual and the cohesion of the whole are based are publicly recognised. A democratic-pluralistic society is more dependent on the political virtues of its citizens for its existence than a totalitarian community. Therefore, a sense of responsibility for the state as the guardian of the common good and the willingness to fulfil civic duties should be recognised as values. As with the state, with democracy, with the order of life "as with all things in the world: one must love them if one wants to preserve them" (Montesquieu 1967, p.136).

8.3 Educational objectives

In order to be able to meet the aim of education, one must know which properties belong to life-affirming people, particularly with regard to their special place in society and their time. What abilities and virtues should be developed? What knowledge and skills are required? What attitudes and conditions can keep people alive and at the same time ensure the continued existence of the community to which they belong? Educators need indications, guidelines or norms to be able to evaluate what they have to bear in mind, what they should promote and what they should combat. Such norms that provide a sense of orientation with regard to educational action are educational objectives. These are ideal concepts that teachers should realise insofar as it is possible. They are instructed to ensure that the students

come as close as possible to the personality qualities that have been established as ideals. Every educational activity is a means to an end. He who educates does something in order to achieve a certain effect, which he has previously set for himself as a purpose or objective, in the person he is educating. Educational objectives are therefore necessary preconditions for any education. In tradition-bound societies education does not need to be discussed too much. They do not require anything else from the children than what is required from everyone by the existing moral norms. If a pluralistic society is changing rapidly, then the break from traditions increases the uncertainty about educational objectives.

Educational goals presuppose decisions. These are made on the basis of convictions related to morality, religion, worldview, political attitudes, and the historical experiences of the main professionals. These valuation and decision-making bases can be inconsistent. How can one get clarity and certainty about educational objectives? How should one enforce the ideals that are recognised as being necessary? Nowadays parents make most of the decisions about the educational objectives of their children on their own, which was not the case in the past. On the whole, they live independently of given ties to their extended family, neighbourhood, community, class, professional associations, the church and the state. They are relatively free from strict moral control by recognised authorities, but they are also cut off from obligatory traditions that would include the fundamental educational objectives. Likewise, it is hardly possible to resort to personal ideals that are unquestionably applicable. Educators must decide this for themselves. Would you be prepared to take on this responsibility?

Children usually learn about the world first and foremost from and among their family members. They internalize the value judgements and norms by which their parents live. Their families are the samples and the most important cells in the state, but they cannot live by themselves from the perspective of morals and worldview. They depend on the culture of larger communities. The ideals that appear in families, to a large extent, also come from outside and must be shared and reaffirmed by a wider circle of people to be valid for parents and children. In most cases, people only follow those ideals in the long run that are supported by the examples and expectations of people they trust, as well as by the customs, institutions, and the order of life of a larger community. In a society where families were integrated into a religious or ideological group, they could also derive their educational objectives from them. If there are predominately special-purpose associations and interest groups in a state that make only very limited demands on the person, then there can be a certain dependence on the relatively volatile opinions of others. In such circumstances it is difficult for the parents to gain

a sense of clarity about the order of priority of educational objectives. Worldview, moral and pedagogical fashion trends can thus gain increasing influence.

“Educational activities take place in order to achieve specific purposes. Education is always a means to an end. A certain personality trait or an entire personality framework can be viewed as an end or an objective; ... What is intended or wanted in each case is usually referred to as the educational objective. An educational objective is a proposed psychological disposition (or an imagined framework of mental dispositions, i.e. the willingness to experience and/ or behave a certain way) that the person being educated wants, seeks, or is required to achieve. It is a manifestation of the proposed or desired state of the personality or an imagined and desired personality trait. Educational goals are therefore visions (imagined images, ideal images) of the personality or the qualities in the personality that someone attempts to bring out, promote or create through education” (Brezinka 1986, p. 99f).

Herbart draws the following conclusions: “A practical education is based on introducing the pupil into social relations that are worthwhile, but in such a way that moral rigour is a fundamental prerequisite. These relations must be immediately insulted whenever they deviate from the law” (Herbart 1919, p. 568). “Only when the thinkers act as one can reasonableness prevail; only when the best are one can the best prevail” (Herbart 1913, p. 246).

8.4 Shift in values

The values and value judgments of given people and groups of people can change within certain periods of time. Value judgements are processes that take place in the human consciousness. Values are standpoints, a decision for or against something. A personal hierarchy of the objects being assessed is created as early as during childhood from numerous experiences with the world, which is often called a “hierarchy of values”. It remains relatively stable over extensive periods of time. Changes in values are primarily understood as being a change in the priorities of this order. In every person there is also a negative hierarchy of values— an order of priority of the objects or matters that they aim to avoid, avert, or overcome. Over the course of life, revaluations, reassessments or devaluations can occur. When the hierarchy of values of many individual changes, the attitudes of the group change with it. Changes can also occur when the membership of a group has changed. A collective value shift in important areas. Affects the educational mission of the school as well as the

conditions for its implementation. An adolescent will recognize values when the people with whom he interacts affirm the set ideals as educational objectives, when they orient themselves according to them and demonstrate this in their behaviour. Without the consistency of the fundamental standards, without the stability of institutions, without customs and long-lasting ways of life, there will be disorientation. In the midst of all changes, people need something that remains relatively permanent: traditional cultural heritage, tradition, fixed lifestyle norms.

Brezinka perceives a change in values as the following: "A shift in values is a collective term for very different phenomena. One cannot take a stand with regard to a change in values per se, this can only occur regarding certain specific manifestations of a change in values. These would include changes for the better and changes for the worse. What counts as either one or the other depends on the valuation standard. Let us consider, for example, the changed attitude towards the desirable number of children. Anyone who primarily has the threats of overpopulation in mind will respond positively to a shift towards one-child and two-child families. Those who, on the other hand, are mainly concerned with the danger of the ageing of our people, of the collapse of eldercare and the repression of people with higher birth rates, will evaluate this change negatively and demand countermeasures.

Values and value judgements belong to the core spiritual area of every person, to the centre of their personality. They are related to the conscience, beliefs, ideological confessions. They are... protected under constitutional law" (Brezinka 1986, p. 127f).

Regarding the shift in values that affects schools, he declares the following: "What determines everyday school life, in addition to the official educational objectives of the school laws and the official teaching objectives of the curricula, are the unofficial educational objectives of the teachers, parents, and social groups to which they belong, as well as the ideal personalities as envisioned by the students. These unofficial objectives and ideals belong to the individual ethos of people, to their attitudes. They are, in this sense, personal, yet they are not purely private; rather, they are shared by other members of the community to which the individual belongs. They correspond, at least partly, to the norms that are considered to be valid in these groups and which group members are obliged to obey. They depend on the morality, the custom, the way of life, the naive images of people and society of the group. This is the area in which shifts in values occur, which affects the school. The educational activities of the parents and teachers are primarily determined by their self-evident, naive personality ideals. They adopt concrete norms of industriousness and role models, guidelines, paradigms to

initiate from the moral culture of their communities. The personality traits that are actually the result of education in a society, and not merely the education that it claims to impart, are really valued and rewarded in community life: the moral educational objectives that are supported by the faith and social sanctions of one's own community. The quality thereof determines what will become of the legal educational mission of schools in practice. Also with regard to the educational objectives, the morality of the people is far more potent than the laws of the state –“ be it in a good or bad direction” (Brezinka 1986, p. 129f).

“In our differentiated, large society, the small communities that claim, protect, and control the people as whole (such as the family and the community) have declined and weakened. Everyone belongs to several groups that only make limited demands on them and who are satisfied with certain partial services. From a moral perspective, no more is required than is necessary for the special purposes of each group: the eagerness to learn in a school, work efficiency in the enterprises, conviviality in society, ... obedience to the laws of the state. Each group yields to its members in all areas of behaviour that appear to be immaterial for their specific tasks. Morally, ideologically, and politically it allows anything that does not directly threaten the fulfilment of its own intentions. The necessary group-specific abilities and virtues are therefore assured. But who pays any heed to the personal integration of the partial duties and partial worldviews, to the unity of ethos and worldview, to the identity of the person, to the individual meaning of the whole? In the past, this was covered by the religious and ideological communities. Who, among the people who are far from this, is supposed to rise to this challenge today? The reports of shifts in values, about the advancement of ... egoism, a sense of entitlement, and a fear of commitment can... serve as a reminder” (Brezinka 1986, p. 130f).

A democratic legal state mainly differs from a totalitarian system in that it refrains from imposing a worldview, a hierarchy of values, and a morality upon its citizens, as was the case in National Socialism. The education of children is, first and foremost, the right and duty of the parents. The fundamental ideological and moral attitudes of the adolescents are normally formed in the families and in state-free childcare outside of the family. (For this reason, Hitler wanted to see young people in National Socialist associations and organizations as early as possible in order to be able to easily indoctrinate them away from the parental home.) For attitudes to develop, a child needs comfort in the communal life of a small group with reliable emotional ties, good examples, moral standards and a wide scope for action. Schools can merely provide an important addition to this. The legal educational objectives need to be

supported by a fundamental social ideal, which is endorsed by as many citizens as possible, so that the life of the individual, as well as the coexistence of all, can be a success. An ideal does not remain rigid for everyone and forever. Like all values and norms, it is subject to change. “A shift in values is, in and of itself, not negative, it depends solely on whether value settings change for the better or for the worse. Even in our time there is change in both directions. Above all else, today we need the virtue of wisdom, the wise use of our reason to distinguish the good from the bad, the beneficial from the harmful, and the essential from the inessential” (Brezinka 1986, p. 136).

8.5 Value and dignity of the individual

Anyone who did not conform to the National Socialist humanistic ideal was banished or eliminated. This affected the disabled, criminals, gypsies, Jews, and opponents of the system. “Unworthy life” should be eradicated. The danger of political abuse gives the term “euthanasia” a new dimension.

8.6 Relationship between the norm, borderline cases, and exceptions

If killing a person is permitted by law under certain conditions, then first the borderline case of a norm is turned into a norm and, secondly, there is, in principle, a possibility to allow further exceptions to the general prohibition of killing. The borderline case of a norm is present when, under certain circumstances, there are serious doubts as to whether the application of this standard still corresponds to its meaning or if it is contradictory. This is the case when the prohibition of killing in our society is justified by the notion that humans are not allowed to turn other humans into disposable objects, but the scale of a life-sustaining, medical and technical effort enables the patient to become an object. If the prohibition of killing is justified on the grounds of the general commandment of humanity “inhumane” suffering could also be considered a borderline case of the prohibition of killing. At first glance it would seem plausible to correct the norm according to the borderline case. For this purpose, it can be formulated in such a way that the borderline case either clearly falls into this category or it is clearly beyond its scope. Moreover, the borderline case can be defined as a class of its own and a corresponding special standard can be created for it. Both options, however, are delusory due to the fact that the corrections would normatively deal with the borderline cases that gave rise

to them, but instead new borderline cases appear on the edge of the newly determined norms. It is the very essence of norms that they have borderline cases, since they themselves are based on the demarcation of one class of cases from another class and they are formed by generalizing cases, by disregarding their peculiar circumstances.

Thus, every norm, as it is based on one delineation, is a certain antinomy of the continuum of reality. One consequence of this is that there is no clear borderline between the cases that belong to a certain norm and those that are excluded from it, on the contrary, a borderline area is extended within which the individual cases should, in some respects, be assigned to the norm and, in other circumstances, they should not be attributed to the norm. People cannot avoid borderline cases of norms; they are not able to create an order within which it would be capable of coping with all situations in life. It is therefore suggested that the "Caritas" should pass judgement in the cases where a sustainable normative decision cannot be made. It can also cope with the normatively unsolvable case, but it cannot change the norms themselves. If the law were to be changed in such a way that the borderline case of killing a doomed patient who suffers greatly would be exempt from punishment, the borderline case could become a normal case. At the edge of this new regulation, however, new borderline cases would appear. Under certain circumstances, these would make a killing seem possible, even though this would still be clearly excluded from the point of view of the borderline cases that currently exist. Once an exception is expressly permitted, in addition to the original question of whether the norm has been violated, another legal question arises, namely the legal description of the reasons for this exception. In this manner, it is not improbable that a decision no longer needs to be made between a rule and an exception, but it would now concern the relation between two exceptions.

The killing of "unworthy life" runs counter to human dignity, which underlies the Declaration of Human Rights. Human beings do not attain their worth through the functions that they perform in society. They are not valuable because they achieve something at work, because they contribute to economic process, or because they are indispensable to society in any other way. Beyond all these relations, they are of immeasurable value to themselves, even if they are no longer matter in social terms, if they are handicapped, lonely, old and helpless; when they can no longer be of any use and no longer bring joy to anybody. This conviction of intrinsic human dignity forms the basis of all constitutional and civilized states. The assistance that is given to the moribund is, in a proper understanding, a form of life assistance, help provided at the last difficult stage of life. Death and dying are not interchangeable terms. Death means an

end, a state; dying, on the other hand, is the path that a person has to walk in the last phase of life until death. A number of psychological processes conceal a personal event that can be experienced in a variety of different ways. In this light, if desired, help could also be given to ensure the moribund endure through the process of dying with dignity.

9 Individual life and freedom

9.1 Man as God's creation

The notion that life consists of all of its elements is summarized in the understanding of man as God's creature. The phrase "nobody can give themselves life" finds its theological conception in the confession of "God" as the creator of life. The phrase "man must receive life" is equivalent to the idea that God "created" me, that is, the recognition of being God's creature. The phrase "the life received must also be accepted by man" can lead to the statement "I believe", provided that faith expresses an attitude of trust and acceptance, which also includes the relative nature of my own life, which I cannot act upon and which I nevertheless have to claim.

But what does it mean that man has his life from God, given the obvious fact that he owes it to his parents? The theological perception of this concept, which can also be reduced to the biological level, aims to ensure that one takes responsibility for life, for one's own life in every case, regardless of the specific and particular genesis. The independence of life as a given life based on the specific way it has become thus, for instance, through my parents, through my socialization, through history and society, is the starting point for the idea that there is a concrete ethical responsibility. It is captured in a binding manner when it can be said that life is, regardless of whatever else can be said about its genesis, given "by God". Thus the life that is born is, in spite of being dependent on the decision of the parents, to conceive and give birth to a child; therefore it is its "own" life. As is the case with questions that men pose above themselves, the ethical question makes the man as God's creature an issue in such a manner that it should be seen as the relationship of the creature to the creator. Man as God's creation is the man whom God wills, i.e., he who grasps his true and complete destiny as his true nature. His creational identity is contained in this relationship. In it he is free when freedom is defined as a life in harmony with oneself. Freedom in the theological sense is then the reality of one's own life in accordance with God's sense of creation. Man is bound to this freedom in his lifestyle. He is addressed as a person. Ethics implies the concept of a human being as an individual subject. The freedom of the person defines humanity as the relationship of a community with God.

9.2 Freedom and dignity

This relation allows human beings to be distinguishable from the existing world. Personality is an elementary characteristic of human dignity. As per the Christian concept of freedom, the reality of God belongs to the dependent and, from an empirical point of view, thoroughly miserable human being. Therefore, personality as the individuality of a person does not designate a sum of qualities that he inherently possesses; it does not consist in the ability that allows one to dispose of oneself as a thing. Christianity transmits the knowledge of dignity of the human being who, considered in and of himself, is a transitory and sinful human being; but as such he is, unmistakably, a single concrete person, God's creature. The assertion that man is God's creature is not aimed at man as a species, but at the individual in a personhood that is equivalent to the idea of God. The personality and individuality of the given person serves as an expression of the sense of freedom of the creature. In dealing with other people, action is given precedence. This therefore also draws a line for all action, a benchmark for political, social, and moral programs for shaping the world. The dignity of the individual person therefore establishes a protection of all human beings from the "world", i.e., freedom becomes identifiable as the limit of one human being's disposal of others. In the context of creational freedom, this limit is a necessary subject of human self-limitation in relation to one another, as well as in relation to the environment. Sociality is a further element in addition to individuality and personality. Nobody can exist alone and by themselves. The ethical sense of sociality explicates the relationship to God, which is declared in men as creatures, in the mutual dependence of people on one another, as a mutual acceptance. The mutual recognition and acceptance of people in sociality therefore has its elementary norm of love as a form of freedom that addresses the true nature of people. In relation to these fundamental structures of creaturely nature, freedom can be defined as a self-activity. The expression "self-activity" essentially means that all action is characterized by self-determination. If self-activity as a moment of freedom demonstrates that I am conscious of myself in all my activities, then, to be precise, that must mean that I am conscious of the fact that I can only be myself in my relationship with God and in the mediation of other human beings.

9.3 Sense of freedom in individual lives

In the notion of life as a received life, there are elementary obligations. We understand these obligations as the interaction between the interdependence and freedom of a life owed. It is

true of this particular life that it enables individual freedom, since man is not given life in general, but his “own life”; it is distinguishable from other lives by the fact that it can only be lived by myself. Your own lifestyle is indefensible. Even when it has to fall back on the vicarious life of others, this only applies to specific and limited functions. That is why this own life is free in the elementary sense that it can only be lived in its individuality by the particular person to whom it was given. A shaping of the world that would be appropriate to man cannot be one that ascribes him life possibilities in an abstract way from outside and takes his own life away from him. It must be realized through a personal conduct of human life and, in this respect, it is free to comply to its fundamental law. This, however, is not the freedom of absolute autonomy, but the freedom of a life owed and received, the freedom of an individual reality of life.

9.4 Nature of life

Nobody can give themselves life. Actions can only take shape as concrete responsibilities and as specific implementations within the limits of a life given to man. The issue of the Christian way of life is not what is possible and what can be done in general, but what can be justified in a given life. In this way, it is made clear that all that is willed and ought is mediated by the nature of giving life. The fact that life is given is therefore not only the fundamental requirement for individuals, but also for groups, communities, historical and social systems, and eras. Dietrich Bonhoeffer described this fundamental situation of ethics as follows:

"The question of what is good always places us in a situation that can no longer be reversed: we live. Not only what is good in and of itself, but what is good under the assumption of the life given and what is good for us as living beings is our main question" (Bonhoeffer 1938, p. 112).

9.5 Receiving and accepting one' s own life

If the phrase "Nobody can give themselves life" were to be rephrased into an action, then it would be "Man must receive life". It contains a criticism of the fundamental assumption of the Enlightenment that has become popular, according to which a person is only truly free if they own their life only to themselves. Yet man must first receive his life before he can dispose of it as his own. It is the life that is lived in a certain way that, as it is received, obtains an

elementary binding nature. Man does not find himself in a situation where he first ponders and considers whether he wants to commence his life in the first place, or when or how he can do so. This thought enables the way of life to be understood as a mission that is determined by the life itself. It is the condition of possibility for man to be susceptible to the content and intention of moral laws and moral commandments.

The life that is received must also be accepted by the human being. It is about the standpoint on one's own life. Certain questions arise, such as the following: Why am I like this and not otherwise? Why am I not someone else? There is an option to refuse to be who you are or to try to be somebody else. The search for another life or for life in general accompanies action in many instances and creates a permanent restlessness and willingness to take a look behind the curtain of human living conditions. The need to accept one's own life is an essential part of the way of life, the biography of a person. The distinction between one's own life and life in general means that man is neither identical to himself in terms of who he believes himself to be naturally or historically, nor does his identity consist in the notion that he is everything he wants to be. Rather, this distinction means that he can carry out his purpose in life alone, in his own, individually determined way; he has to accept himself as a unique subject. This distinctness constitutes the concept of responsibility and does not necessarily entail the separation of one's own life from life in general.

9.6 Giving life

The interest of ethics lies in human action. The structure of action is arranged in life as it is given to man. Nobody should live for themselves because nobody lives by themselves. Through active enforcement, one's own life always determines and affects the lives of others. Living one's own life implies the ethical requirement to live a life for others. That is the fundamental principle of doing good. One's own life should be lived for the benefit of others. If, in the ethical standardization of the human organization structure, one sees something along the lines of a basic commandment of a life for others, then one can say, "We encounter this fundamental commandment in two discernible forms: as an "inner" commandment in harmony with our own life; and as an "external" commandment, as a requirement that is placed on the agent from outside and influences him from the outside.

One can speak of an "inner" commandment if the actor is able to recognize the need for a life for others for the same reason that he recognizes the idea of being given his own life makes

it a life owed. It is through the assertion of one's own life as a life owed that one's own way of life is brought into the service of the supra-individual purposes of action, which is achieved in doing good for the benefit of others. An ethical qualification of action as "granting life" must allow room for others to participate in the shaping of life. One's own actions are subject to the requirement to place oneself in the service of the greater good. The good that is to be done represents a part of the world of life and it must provide space for others to live. The assessment and correction occur by measuring one's actions against rules. Rules of action do not mean merely the "rules of the game" that can be fixed at will. Rather, "rules" as an expression attempts to indicate that action takes place in a community of life where people are dependent on one another. With regard to the world of life, human actions are met by an elementary commitment, that of trust. The one being entrusted with life is obliged to whoever grants life. If one were to ask about the expectation of certain actions in terms of trust, then one can claim help with life. The relationships of people imply that they were preceded by trust. Trust expresses the need to rely on others.

The expectation that arises from the actions of others is, initially and substantively, the expectation that the other will not harm me, in fact, he will do what helps and benefits me. Meaningful action depends on this very expectation of trust. Action is therefore the perception and creation of trust. Action is not an absolute activity, but an activity in the community of life. For the acting person, trust consists of the appeal to allow themselves to be determined by the life entrusted to him, by the trust placed in him. Trust becomes concrete in the expectation that everyone will get their rights. In this respect, trust is associated with justice. In its fundamental principle, justice is a concrete form of trust. The creation of a community of people in accordance with the fundamental principle of trust is a community based on law. This opens the way to an understanding of the conception of elementary human rights as the implementation of a sense of community. Regarding the ethical approach that is developed here, the understanding of human rights does not go back to a natural right that human beings have for themselves, which is protected from society as their personal property. Rather, the original understanding of human rights indicates that people have expectations of life in terms of the actions of others, the fulfillment of which they feel they are entitled to as their right. The concept of human rights is based on accepting one another in order to do each other justice. The internal and external norm of action can be found in this acknowledgement.

9.7 Acceptance of the lives of others

The lives of other people should be accepted. This acceptance encompasses the dimension of discord, separation, conflict, and contrast between people. The experience of evil can be traced to relationships between people, namely in the refusal to accept one another. The good, on the other hand, aims at developing an insight into the notion that all action is related to a life that is owed and therefore due. A good life is one in which the ability to act is in complete harmony with the fundamental principle of human action. The acceptance of other people should not be made contingent upon the idea that the other does justice to me, acknowledges me or serves my life. In this context one can refer to love, to charity. Love means creating a space for others to live in, for others to be in an environment they need for a good life. In such a world there is no “unworthy life”.

9.8 Accountability and religion according to Buber

For Buber, pedagogy is not a problem area to be treated theoretically, but a reality, an entitlement that has to be answered. The point of departure and the prerequisite thereof is the irreconcilable difference between human beings and fellow human beings. Buber refers to an “ontic otherness of the other” (Buber 1962, p. 222). In this interrelation between you and me, the concept of responsibility takes centerstage: this difference cannot be repealed, but it can be bridged through questions and answers. Responsibility means the ability to withstand the questions of the other: “To speak to a trusting person about what has been entrusted to them in such a manner that loyalty and disloyalty come to light, but the two do not have the same rights since the reincarnated loyalty may overcome disloyalty— this is the reality of responsibility” (Buber 1962, p. 222).

The quote refers to the religious origin of this thinking: God, as the one who trusts, has entrusted his creation to man. By rising to the demands of creation and fulfilling his service, man perceives his responsibility, which in this case turns out to be a “responsibility for the world” (Buber 1962, p. 803). The dialogical structure of the form of address and answer not only characterizes the interpersonal relations, but also becomes the structure of reality in general, which, as a divine creation, asserts the entitlement of the creator. In this understanding, religion is no longer an area of experience removed from life, but “plainly everything lived in its possibility of dialogue” (Buber 1962, p.187).

In this manner, everyday action, understood as the answer to the demands of the situation, also possesses a religious meaning. Responsibility has its point of origin in the understanding of the demands that present themselves in a given situation and at a given time. "Every specific hour in terms of this world and fate that is assigned to a person is the language of the attentive" (Buber 1962, p.189). Whoever perceives this view of the situation can no longer handle it the usual way, on the contrary, they have to get involved, respond to it, and in so doing, take responsibility: "The attentive one is expected to withstand the creation that is taking place" (Buber 1962, p. 189). Creation is a process that has not come to completion, one that continues to bring forth something new. The human response to this process has to be rediscovered in every situation and is to be answered at one's own risk. "The hour that comes for him, the biographical and historical hour, has to be withstood by him as it is, with all its worldly content, with all its contradictions, which may seem like absurdity, without weakening the force of the difference contained in it" (Buber 1962, p. 245).

It is precisely the absurdity of the situation that does not serve as an exemption from responsibility; it also relates to what the individual has not chosen or wanted, what is given to him, which responds to its difference. Responsibility cannot begin at a self-imposed starting point; it must also include what is foreign and provided. The reason why the individual can bear responsibility is not due to man's power to preserve the world, but due to God's creation. In all its incomprehensibility, reality does not lose its origin. By trusting this, the situation is only perceived in its entire reality because human response and responsibility acknowledges God's presence even in the incomprehensibility of the situation: "Smearing is forbidding, you are not allowed to choose what you agree with... you should answer 'Him'" (Buber 1962, p.235). In this respect, responsibility is not only possible, but irrefutable. The appropriate answer may be found "also in opposition to what is happening" (Dejung 1971, p. 36).

Buber believes that the answer, which is appropriate to the situation and, at the same time, superior to it, will result in true immediacy. The irreconcilable tension between you and me can only be overcome by dialogue. The individual's reference to an unconditional truth—God— makes them the responsible subject for this truth. In itself, reality is dialogic; responsibility has a role in it. Responsibility cannot be separated from this dialogical reality without deteriorating into pseudo-responsibility: "In fact, responsibility is only present when there is an authority to which I should answer" (Buber 1962, p. 191). For Buber, this authority is ultimately the You of God that pervades all reality and that poses irrecusable questions. If responsibility is to be removed from this context, then the person remains responsible for

themselves and does not expose themselves to the questions of the other. It then remains that “the pseudo responsibility for pure reason, an idea, a nature, an institution, for all kinds of illustrious spectres, for everything that is essentially not a person and therefore not really like father and mother, like lord and master, like spouse and friend, like God, can be held accountable” (Buber 1962 p. 222f).

Buber’s concept of responsibility attempts to guide people towards a new interconnectedness. This “means that a responsibility shared with many genders is replaced by a very personal one” (Buber 1962, p.796). If responsibility becomes a criterion for action in education, action must not override the interplay of questions and answers; action must be integrated into the relation between You and I. For where there are no questions and answers, where the relationship between You and I is absent, the constitutive conditions for responsibility are likewise nonexistent. Actions become disoriented and arbitrary. The growth of the adolescent is inextricably linked to the action and person of the educator. The educator works by entering the relationship as a person, by being responsible in this relationship. However, the educator is not only responsible for themselves, but also for the world in which he exists and to which he relates. Action that is directed towards You enables the student to demand an answer from the ego. Thus, education becomes a participation in the child’s life. If responsibility is present in this relationship as consistently as it is according to Buber, then the equality of the partners must be fundamental, in view of the fact that both, as persons, are capable of addressing and answering.

Equality also exists in the shared purpose of finding direction and orientation. In the latter case, the educator can only rely on gate image of God as the spitting image of his actions. Buber claims that his basic model of dialogue also encompasses the area of public action: “A reduction to the private is incomprehensible— the address and the reply can only be heard in the undiminished masses of lived life, only by including the participation in public life can this be addressed” (Buber 1962, p.263). Responsibility and responses are likewise required in public life, and political action is also subject to the criterion of responsibility. Buber criticizes the “political means”— “The real evil in politics is the political means that prevail in it as it does everywhere else: to win other people over by imposing oneself onto them. But it is possible, and necessary, in public life (as elsewhere) to use the religious means instead of the political ones: to win the other over by developing them” (Buber 1962, p. 1093). Thus, the individual cannot become a victim of the situation.

10 Man and freedom

10.1 Man in search of freedom

Nietzsche speaks of a “freedom from what” and a “freedom for what”. People can become free from state absolutism, from censorship, and from interventions of police violence, from the arbitrariness of the administration of justice, from attacks on individual inviolability. These points concern “external freedom”. In the following section, “inner freedom”, which is also referred to as “morality”, will be examined in more detail. Karl Holzamer establishes the determination of human free will on the following facts:

2. Human beings are gifted spiritual beings, which, as a holistic unit, binds and works through the material extension of reality in the centre of the immaterial reality of the ego.

The inner forces of this reality also include aspiration, which is, in its most conscious form, willpower.

Only that which has been (logically) recognised beforehand can be consciously willed (*Nihil volitum nisi cognitum*).

What confronts knowledge as a thing (a state of affairs) encounters aspiration (wilfulness) as a good (value relation).

Motive is what we call the concept of consciousness through which something known is related to the will as a good. The consciously anticipated realisation of a potential (possible) good must also be included in the definition of a “motive”.

An act of free will is excluded if the ego is offered only one motive in the conception of consciousness or if the motive is the conception of the absolutely endless good (God) himself. Since we do not know any direct vision of the absolute in our earthly existence, this second theoretical condition for a “committed” will is practically irrelevant.

In the negative demarcation, we must also exclude from the predicate “free” all those acts and “decisions” that are a manifestation of a habitual process. We then consciously imagine the possible realisation in terms of the motive, but we habitually follow the motive that we already followed earlier to that we only chose freely. Then (as a habit) the motive determines us as the cause, and not our ego as the motive. In my opinion, most actions that run as a motive through consciousness and are not already pure reflex or unconscious instinctual occurrences are habitual processes.

Thus, for the problem of the “freedom of will”, only those inner acts remain in which our consciousness is presented with several motives as a choice, which are, for comparison, often competing with one another.

... Since man is a bodily natural being, both the condition that overarches the entire inner life, as well as the implementation of the inner decision in external activities is classified as being part of the usual natural law. In other words, for the occurrence of the motives that are immanent in consciousness and for the realisation of the decisions that have come about, there is a bond or determination, as it is given for every living being. ...

Free will reveals itself to us, according to this innermost self-experience, as the selection carried out solely by our core person, of a certain motive from among the several that we then follow. Free will is the “setting of the course”, independent of external causes or other motives, which our ego spontaneously undertakes between the multiple tracks (“motives”). The tracks are laid (determined); the one that will be taken is “indeterminate”, i.e., solely dependent on the arbitrariness of the ego. It cannot be “taken” at will, but only within the network of motives that are offered. That is why freedom is not unlimited or absolute, but relative. Yet for another reason, according to this evident self-experience, we can only speak of a relative freedom: we experience ourselves once again in our ego, in our innermost existence, as “induced”. The “what” of the inner act of taking a standpoint is caused or conditioned, the “how” of the standpoint is not caused and necessary. ...” (Holzamen 1951, p. 131 ff).

It becomes apparent that “very often (externally) one cannot do what one has internally decided *sua sponte*” (i.e., freely). This freedom is actually sacrosanct, even if there is an external coercion and rape. The internal freedom is only called “moral freedom” if it is a spontaneous expression of saying yes to what a person should morally do. Man has a right to the latter alone (because it corresponds to a duty), whilst arbitrariness only exists as a possibility, but it does not involve any law.” (Holzamen 1951, p. 136).

Nobody can help us when we have the courage to take responsibility and make the final decision. Nevertheless, we will know— as creatures that can “want”— in our human existence that is created and aligned with a divine being, to which we have to answer, we must be responsible. The term “moral freedom” means freedom of choice. Human existence is only complete with human cooperation. We can assert or deny our being, promote or inhibit it, follow the voice of our conscience or disregard it. Saying yes to one’s conscience, answering God’s call— this is moral freedom. In addition to impulse and instinct, every person has a

leeway for making their own choices, which, at the same time, incarnates their cultural development and cultural decay as possible outcomes. In contrast to animals, humans alone can selectively and decisively intervene in the course of their own lives. They can promote what is inherent in them or allow it to atrophy. Man is free to choose and decide internally (even if he lives in external bondage) between good and bad. That is his dignity and his risk. It is reserved for him to be able to become “inhuman” by using his freedom to negative ends. We can “sin” and thereby become guilty. Guilt presupposes a free decision. “Moral freedom” is only possible when we positively realise our true nature, when we affirmatively contribute to the divine plans and order that can be recognised in history, in society, and in our nature as human beings.

10.2 Education towards freedom

Can and should pedagogy educate towards “freedom”? What is meant by “freedom”? Uncertainty and confusion about the urge for freedom are spreading because, in the opinion of Manny, it forms a part of the essence of freedom that everyone is permitted to imagine what they want. The great contrast between the two halves of the earth persists in the name of freedom. Everyone sees the oppression of the other, be it as monopoly capitalism or as totalitarian conformity. Many see the chance for freedom contained within themselves, be it as the end of all exploitation or as personal liberty. What freedom actually is results from the requirements imposed upon people. A comparison between humans and animals demonstrates how central the problem of freedom is to human existence. The facticity of decision constitutes the real reason for the special status of human beings in the realm of the living. Whoever recognizes the essence and meaning of man in the idea that he is always called to decisions and responsibility will not be able to separate the element of freedom from man’s self-perception.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer states: “Responsibility and freedom are mutually corresponding terms. ... responsibility is the freedom given to human beings in connection with God and one’s neighbour alone.” (Bonhoeffer 1949, p. 193) Hence, the concept of the bond is indispensable for the complex state of affairs of freedom. The essence of the bond does not come to fruition as a mere opposition to freedom. They do not exclude one another, they challenge each other. According to Spranger, freedom can never mean the complete arbitrariness of wanting and the non-binding nature of doing. It would be a disordered freedom, which Hegel refers to as

“empty freedom”, which would lead to dissolution and deterioration. Freedom always refers to the transcendent. It is only experienced in its reconnection (re-ligio). It has its roots in religion: where I am completely myself, that is, where I experience myself freely, I am no longer merely myself. According to Jaspers, those who are completely self-determined experience the most absolute need in the face of transcendence in the hand of God. The sense of freedom is the openness of the human being so that he can break free from lower ties and prepare himself for higher ones. This means being touched and touching the spiritual. It is the perception of the truth in its inalienability that makes people human in the first place. Thus, freedom can only be “freedom with higher ties” (Spranger). Hence, we should not first have to ask “be free from what”, rather, “be free for what”? Freedom is spiritual commitment. The tension and dynamics of being claimed in the relationship between freedom and commitment permeates all the states of human existence.

10.3 Freedom of the individual in the community

There are two poles to the vitality of any community: the individual's desire for freedom and the entitlement of the state to bind. Without community, human life and culture are just as impossible as our existence is without freedom. Whenever a social image is constituted, political powers are required. Often there is a tendency among individuals or groups to increasingly take control and dominate over others. It is therefore easy to make a unilateral claim on absolute commitment so that it can be said that “You are nothing, your people are everything”, or that “Good is what is useful to the people.”

When there is a lack of freedom in a collective, this may result in levelling, standardisation, anonymity, and a loss of individuality. Personal responsibility and humanity are gradually being lost. Neither the men of the masses, nor the masses of men bear responsibility.

The freedom of the individual, on the other hand, demands self-determination and independence from others. This desire bears the seed of degeneration when it is isolated. If the individual still holds power in their hands, the temptation to abuse this power is great, and the concerns and rights of others are disregarded. Thus, man is used as a means to increase the absolute power and self-importance of the ruler. The man of boundless freedom becomes a monster.

Every member of the “community organism” has to sacrifice a part of their personal freedom due to the general public and their neighbour, since, similarly to the collective, it needs to keep in mind that it is not an end in itself, on the contrary, it should serve the welfare of its members.

There is a fruitful tension when the freedom of the individual binds itself by taking care of the other, when the community grants an individual freedom and lets the person become human. For the state, this means that it has to stop at the rights of man as a person. All of this can be acknowledged in the right manner if the horizontal movement from person to person recognizes its dependence and it derives from the vertical relation to God. The human relationship, ultimately, extends in three directions because God, the Creator, must not be eliminated from the relationship with his creatures. The way to you goes through the way to God and from God. Only then will there be a “liberation towards a community”. In addition to all the claims to determination, every human authority must not overlook its self-commitment: it is aware that it is bound to a higher authority, it is ultimately also a tool that serves an overarching order of a common cause and of divine commandment. This rules out mere arbitrariness, which always seeks to become an authority. Order and obedience are important elements of education. They are the fundamental components of a correct understanding of freedom. Educational authority once again attains its legal claim from the reality of the matter of parenting and teaching; for authority par excellence is rooted in a responsibility towards things, people, and God.

Since freedom also includes the possibility that the agent can fail, the educational situation is always a risk. It knows failure, and the limits of all educational efforts become obvious. The right implementation of freedom presupposes that one can listen to one’s inner voice. The toddler exercises his strength in affectionate and cautious participation. He must be able to experience, in a loving and careful way, where the area of his own volition ends and the will of the other begins.

In the dimension of thinking, human beings free themselves from their dependency on instinct, impulse, and affect. If concepts are formed, judgements are made, and conclusions are drawn, the thinker experiences himself spontaneously and internally to a higher degree, despite any ties to correct, normative thinking. Whoever makes use of reason and understanding becomes free. Educating towards a sense of feeling always entails the act of leading towards objective differentiation and self-criticism. Catchwords and slogans are

“demystified” by a perceptive and critical mind. Uncontrolled floods of emotions and blind fanaticism are contained. Independent thinking is not compatible with “mass existence”. However, a lack of creative force, ease and cowardice can impair the ability to think independently.

Freedom is profoundly experienced in responsibility when I am able to give or refuse an answer to an appeal and demand. Responsibility and freedom make themselves heard in a man’s conscience. A sense of personal responsibility is awakened whenever responsibility is given to a young person. A statement made by the Evangelical Academy in Bad Boll stated “From the Bible we learn that it is only the person who is and becomes free that is lovingly accepted by others, may, as the beloved, be who is. The person is free, who knows himself as being accepted by God’s love. And only man can educate towards freedom as he meets the other in love and thereby helps him to be himself, this individual man, this person.

Mere command and enforcement authority, as is the case with pseudo-authority, are not entirely able to awaken a sense of freedom. They only create subservients or opponents, but do not contribute to the formation of an alert conscience. With the appearance of the man of the masses, communities degenerate into “apparatuses”. The individual becomes depersonalized and deteriorates into a standardized functionary. Personal relationships are directed towards pure expedience.

Sometimes attempts were made to attribute the “successes” that were observed during National Socialism to the “overwhelmed conscience” of the individual. The entire responsibility of personal decisions was placed on the individuals, which, in the end, they could not bear alone, which meant that there was no other way or way out existed other than that of totalitarianism, self-betrayal, and enslavement. Yet the question remains: can another, can an institution take over the responsibility that is attributed to me? A community with others is particularly vital when it comes to serious decisions, but in the end, I am alone before God with my decision.

Since in the gospel we are given the promise and certainty that we are accepted by the love of God, we are therefore allowed to educate towards freedom. We are free and can educate towards freedom because we know we are "caught" in the Word of God. It is from him, not from us that freedom will grow in the human heart. It is freedom for God's Word, freedom towards God's Word and freedom through God's Word.

10.4 Freedom and self-fulfillment

"But one thing can be said for sure: wherein the meaning of existence cannot, under any circumstances, be located. It does not lie in the self-fulfillment and self-realisation that has recently been discussed, on the contrary, man is not there in order to fulfill and realize oneself; insofar as self-fulfillment and self-realisation are important in human existence, they can only be achieved *per effectum*, not by intention, only to the extent that we surrender ourselves to the world and to the challenges and demands that materialize in our lives from it, only to the extent that we are concerned with the outside world and the objects, but not with ourselves or with our own needs, only to the extent that we have tasks and fulfilling demands, which have meaning and realize values, so that we may fulfill and realize ourselves" (Frankl 1972, p.75).

11 Concluding remarks and final thoughts

- ad chapter 3: Individual education should focus on human reason, critical analysis of points of view, tolerance, responsibility and the ability to self-check. Only then it is possible for adolescents to develop an autonomous morality.
- ad chapter 4: Identity formation takes place, when a person has access to different groups in society and can accept several roles. The aim is to achieve the most possible capacity to act in that society, in which an individual lives.
- ad chapter 5: Youth identity must be seen as temporary. It can only be developed in dialogue between educator and the young individual. This process takes as long as possible until the personal, autonomous identity is achieved.
- ad chapter 6: A morally good decision is to be traced back to the personal, free and reasonable will that belongs to the essence of man. Only the individual decisions in freedom and responsibility are possible. Such a possibility is called "maturity".
- ad chapter 7: Every form of dialogue is free from repression and compassionate. This is the only way to develop an autonomous conscience and respect for fellow human beings.
- ad chapter 8: In a democratic and pluralistic society there is no morally good action without virtues. They should be ensured by law. Education to virtues and "good" decisions can never be achieved by indoctrination.
- ad chapter 9. Every human is an individual person as well as a social being. Man is dependent on others. This mutual responsibility develops natural limits for individual freedoms.
- ad chapter 10: Moral freedom means to make a choice to the best of one's knowledge and belief. That is to opt for the good. Freedom and responsibility belong together and are justified in the attachment to others.

The National Socialist state was a men's state. The women were therefore assigned a subordinate status. The process, which was already advanced, of integrating women into

public life on the basis of equality had suffered a setback. Public life, politics in the broadest sense, was seen as world of men alone. There they are liable for all capabilities and all decision-making authority. In this area a women could not and should not be the partner of a man. Here she had to submit. She was permitted to seek her calling in the area of private, domestic life that was assigned to her. There, and in her function as the mother of the people, women were able to act independently and responsibly, and they were therefore granted a political importance that should not be underestimated. They were politically important insofar as the mothers lead the foundation for the political education of their children.

Since the man claimed all the decisive positions for themselves and, whenever possible, also occupied them, they were able to make decisions singlehandedly in most areas. The women should be completely dependent beings, subordinate to the men in all relations and only independent to a very limited extent whenever the home and family were concerned.

National Socialism made use of a special gender philosophy. Women only received special recognition in their biological functions as mothers. All other missions and rights derived from this biological function. They shared a common feature: their serving for the family and the house, for the community and the people. The objective task of all forms of education of girls and women was to establish and secure the recently attained power of the National Socialists and not the personality development of the individual.

The National Socialist state was only interested in well-trained housewives, but not in women with a higher education. Women were denied the opportunity and necessity to seek self-discovery beyond the family. A low level of education seemed the optimal guarantee that women would submit to their position; they were not even allowed to become aware that it was not they who chose this place among the people, but that it had been assigned to them by men. Well-educated women were seen exclusively as possible competitors to men, not their equal partners. By mystifying and mythologizing women and motherhood, girls and women were deceived about the loss of their civic and professional opportunities. Nevertheless, political and economic circumstances made it impossible to completely renounce a female workforce. A total exclusion of women from the work process would have had unforeseeable consequences for an industrial nation.

In a world such as ours that is based on the division of labour, it is no longer conceivable for women to be limited to the house and family. Nowadays women have fought for their place in economic and working life that can no longer be reconciled with the demands of National

Socialism. If a society grants women equal rights in all areas of life, it must not be content with a mere verbal concession, it must actively initiate the process of integrating women into public life. Yet this process cannot commence without an awareness of the situation of women and a consequential change in consciousness. As long as this has not happened, part of the National Socialist education of girls and women remains unresolved.

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