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## **A Quest for Explaining the “Ceremonial Space” of the Organizational Account of School**

The account of the organizational life of school is a “polyphonic” world of multiple meanings. It’s a complex account of histories, events, actions, people’s strategies and explanations, life stories, and all the other variables relating to the dynamics of school organization. Contradictions and dysfunctions in school life, just as the regular or constant happenings, are integral parts of the life account of school. Those realities contribute in forming the logic of functioning in school just like ‘absence’ is as powerful as ‘presence.’ Life accounts of performing actors in the school: their actions; life events; their process of knowledge production, use, and transfer; presence and absence of certain life styles; how they celebrate the subtle episodes of their journey; and multitude of other elements that are intensely coupled with their unique lives are the true ingredients that determine the form of the organizational account of school life.

Interaction between these variables and resulting organizational patterns are one source which makes the organizational account of the school life more complex and build a “ceremonial space” (Foucault, 1970, p. xix). Another critically important source of the complexity and the associated ceremonial space is the virtual structures people have created through their interpretations to rationalize their actions. Using interpretation as a method of inquiry or as a transformative craft we can transcend the popular levels of knowledge relating to the organizational life of school and explore a variety of very subtle organizational realities of the ceremonial space of the organization. Multiple

meaning constructions of these unique, subtle, diverse, and complex organizational realities construct a world of harmony in “difference”: a “polyphonic” world as Bakhtin (1973) saw in *carnival in Dostoevsky’s poetics* (Sidorkin, 1999). In this paper, I have selected several themes emerging from some of those meaning constructions for discussion. These themes are based on a number of conceptualizations that provide intellectual space to examine the critically important aspects of the ceremonial space of organizational life.

To see the polyphonic harmony in the ceremonial space of organizational life of school multiple meaning structures have to be constructed and interpreted. Both construction and interpretation of meaning structures are parts of the same process in the context of seeing and appreciating this harmony. Such a process can become an integral part of the aesthetic dimension of the organizational life of school (Samier & Bates, 2006).

### **Structure in school is “Rooted in a Ceremonial Space”**

Structure in school is “rooted in a ceremonial space” (Foucault, 1970, p. xix). It is ceremonial because the space is full of complexities, strange elements which are unknown to the naked eye, secret stories, surprises, and unexpected directions of actions. As Foucault (1970) points out, some narratives lead to a thought without space, and also to different words and categories that do not represent any life or place. However those are

*rooted in a ceremonial space, overburdened with complex figures, with tangled paths, strange places, secret passages, and unexpected communications. There would appear to be, then, at the other extremity of the earth we inhabit, a culture entirely devoted to the ordering of space, but one that does not distribute the multiplicity of existing things into any of the categories that make it possible us to name, speak, and think (Foucault, 1970, p. xix).*

The life-account of the school organization is a narrative of a process of constant grouping and isolating, analyzing, and matching different components. In this process the fundamental question is about classifications, coherence, and the space in which we do those classifications. We need, as Foucault (1970) sees, “carried along by the proliferation of qualities and forms” (Foucault ,1970, pp.xix-xx) in the process of making classifications and interpreting them.

However, as he points out, one who is not consciously prepared might well group together certain similar figures and distinguish between others on the basis of some differences. All similitudes and distinctions are the results of different operations and how we apply criteria to make those. Also, such different operations and criteria determine the way we understand order. Foucault (1970) points out,

*Order is, at one and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way they confront one another, and also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression (p. xx).*

At one end of thought there are the fundamental codes of a culture. At the other end there are both scientific theories and philosophical interpretations which explain “why order exists in general, what universal law it obeys, what principle can account for it, and why this particular order has been established and not some other” (p.xx).

However as Foucault (1970) explains, between these domains there is another unseen domain. It’s a domain which challenges the human understanding. It’s obscure. It’s confused. No simple form of analyses captures the intricate details and associated deeper styles of thinking. This domain has an order. It’s ceremonial space. The inner details of

this domain have the power to order themselves (Foucault, 1970). This is the domain which makes structure a meaningful system of knowledge. ‘Disorder’ in organizations may be a complex system of unexplored multiple ‘orders.’

The challenge for us in studying organizations is to identify the spaces where order is created and understand all the subtle forces behind how it is created in those spaces. This challenge becomes more complex, when fundamental codes of culture and both multiple scientific theories and philosophical interpretations play a critical role in explaining order.

Structurality in school: the extent to which people’s life in school is governed by multiple structures, results from what Foucault (1970) sees as “a *positive unconscious* of knowledge: a level that eludes the consciousness of the scientist and yet is part of scientific discourse, instead of disputing its validity and seeking to diminish its scientific nature” (Foucault, 1970, p. xi). Referring to history of science Foucault (1970) argues that at the level of scientific consciousness history of science describes “the processes and the products of scientific consciousness” (p. xi). However, at another level history of science “tries to restore what eluded the consciousness: the influences that affected it, the implicit philosophies that were subjacent to it, the unformulated thematics, the unseen obstacles; it describes the unconscious of science” (Foucault, 1970, p. xi).

This is what he refers to as “positive unconscious” of knowledge. The ceremonial space of the school can accommodate this positive unconscious of knowledge with “the implicit philosophies, unformulated thematics, and the unseen obstacles” (Foucault, 1970, p. xi). Facilitating learning and providing leadership to the process of knowledge production and utilization which is the central mission of the school cannot be conducted

in an environment where everything is simplified and reduced to the level of extinction of the beauty of human “difference,” just to satisfy the demands of administrative convenience. Instead, it should be nurtured in an environment of a ceremonial space where people transcend the rational boundaries of the obvious. Such a space “would be that which ..... puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable .....” (Lyotard, 1979/1984, p. 80). School organization needs to create a broader “ceremonial space” which often should generate specific spaces within which people can celebrate their ideas and actions, build new meanings of the subtleties of the world of “difference” in our schools.

**“Shifting Emphases with Utmost Coherence of Thinking” makes organizational space ceremonial:**

Structures of action can be created to generate power to shift emphases while maintaining a high degree of coherence. Such power makes organizational space more ceremonial. Modern school organization needs to build multiple spaces for its members to think and act in multiple ways and also it should provide spatial opportunities for the members to “play” around different themes, change and shift their emphases frequently in different directions. Abandoning the divisions of disciplines or “single-discipline studies” (Foucault, 1970, p. x), and, “instead of relating the biological taxonomies to other knowledge of the living being,” (Foucault, 1970, p. x) Foucault (1970) has “compared them with what might have been said at the same time about linguistic signs, the formation of general ideas, the language of action, the hierarchy of needs, and the

exchange of goods” (Foucault, 1970, p. x). Foucault (1970) has created a ceremonial space of study through “shifting emphases but with utmost coherence of thinking.”

The body of themes he investigates into, the themes about living beings, different matters of languages, and economic life of people are even though considered to be “too exposed to the vagaries of chance or imagery ..... they are expected to provide evidence of a state of mind, an intellectual fashion, a mixture of archaism and bold conjecture, of intuition and blindness” (Foucault, 1970, p.ix). This is the basis of the order in structure Foucault (1970) sees in his area of analysis. The complexity everyday we are faced with in education is the beauty of our craft. A structure with multiple spatial opportunities with a high degree of intellectual integrity can generate “an intellectual fashion, a mixture of archaism and bold conjecture” (Foucault, 1970, p.ix). School organization should cultivate an intellectual fashion of bold conjecture to shift emphases while maintaining coherence. The internal capacity of the school organization to identify the real educational needs and build multiple explanations of them is reflected in how far the structure can generate power to focus on a variety of things simultaneously and accommodate even quite contradictory but constructive viewpoints of different individuals.

### **“Difference” as a key element of ceremonial space in Collective account of the Organizational Life of School**

Studying the collective account of school is an exercise of interpreting the multiple realities of the school’s organizational life by transforming the complex organizational account into different levels of understanding without losing the original

forms of multiple realities. In this exercise one important step is to transform the organizational narrative into a form where, among other elements, contradictions and dysfunctions can also be identified. As Dosse (1997) points out Derrida was “more interested in failure and dysfunction, rather than in the regularities or the invariants of structure” (p. 20). Derrida’s position was: “.... that no extrastructural order existed; everything is structure and all structurality is an infinite game of differences.” (Dosse, 1997, p. 20). Writing ‘difference’ as ‘differance’ with an ‘a’ in place of ‘e’ Derrida introduces a new line of thinking on the concept. Derrida’s position points at a more dynamic ‘structure’ with multiple meanings of ‘difference’ (Dosse, 1997). As Dosse (1997) explains, drawing from Derrida, the concept of difference is one of the best tools to be used in deconstruction. It has the meanings of “.... deferring, of putting something off, (and) ... differing, pointing to that which is not identical .... Difference also played on reintroducing the absent movement in the idea of structure” (Dosse, 1997, pp. 33-34). Derrida saw within difference that there are forces and elements of internal contradiction where you can find within them both their identities and also the potential for effacing their own identities (Dosse, 1997). If you stick to the traditional meanings of structure, the concept of difference “ ‘is incompatible with the static, synchronic, taxionomic, ahistoric motifs in the concept of structure’ ” (Dosse, 1997, pp. 33-34). “Difference” as Derrida used it is a central conceptual tool for us to expand the thinking on the organizational life of school.

Nostalgic attachment to ‘difference’ is an essential ingredient we see in most of the intellectual accounts of some thinkers. They have created a ceremonial space around them through this nostalgic attachment. For example, Foucault (1970) saw similarities in

some of the basic concepts of very different disciplines. He argued, for instance, that classical empirical sciences such as general grammar, natural history, and analysis of wealth share a common conceptual structure. Organizational account of school should also generate opportunities for multiple thought processes. Foucault was thoroughly involved in such multiple thought processes. In some of his writings he argues as a philosophical historian, developing highly innovative historical methods, for example, an archeology of discourse; at another level, he discusses a genealogy of power relations or a problematization of ethics. In another dimension he explains social phenomena as a historicist philosopher. He offers different theories of knowledge, power, and the self. They are deep in thinking and mutually supportive (Gutting, 1994). When these dimensions are put together his work can be seen as a “new comprehensive understanding of human reality supported by new methods of historical analysis” (Gutting, 1994, p.2). Just like in personal intellectual biographies we see these multiple thought process, the collective account of school needs to be significantly characterized by multiple thought processes. Then only such collective account reflects more of the ceremonial properties of the organizational space.

Foucault developed a new method, both historical and philosophical (Gutting, 1994). This method goes beyond structuralism and hermeneutics. His focus was on both interpretation and analysis. It is interpretive analytics. In his books he did “a pragmatically guided reading of the coherence of practices” (Gutting, 1994, p.3). “The Order of Things describes the episteme of the classical age.....” (Gutting, 1994, p.3). The Birth of the Clinic and The History of Madness “share the common ground of the history of medicine in the nineteenth century” (Gutting, 1994, p.3). Foucault’s books



hardly refer back to his previous writings. One reason for this is that each of his books creates a specific tone. If we attempt to find connections between these books we may end up in distorting his original thinking. In his analyses on different disciplines, for example, psychiatry, medicine, classical history, and other social sciences, his goal was to develop liberating alternatives to different thinking patterns which others thought as inevitable conceptions and practices (Gutting, 1994). “.... Disciplines are precisely the dangers from which Foucault is trying to help us save ourselves” (Gutting, 1994, p. 4). Just like Foucault transcended the arbitrary boundaries of disciplines, to understand the ceremonial space of the organizational life of school, we have to transcend the arbitrary hierarchical boundaries of organizational structure.

He conceptualized how common structures are created by different entities and processes. For example, he abandoned the divisions between disciplines. He saw between different systems of knowledge

*a network of analogies that transcended the traditional proximities: between the classification of plants and the theory of coinage, between the notion of generic character and the analysis of trade, one finds in the Classical sciences isomorphisms that appear to ignore the extreme diversity of the objects under consideration (Foucault, 1970, p. xi).*

Diversity, multifacetedness, multiple causality are central to the collective account of school. The world of difference has to be intellectually captured by the organizational structures in school and meaningful networks have to be built among different organizational components. For example, examination of change process in school should not be reduced to a narrow format. Such examinations need to address continuity of change and its whole scope. The examinations of change should also not lead to one single point, and it should not be attributed to one reason or a particular set of reasons.

Specificities and differences should be respected in examination of change. Problem of causality is another area relates to change. It is not easy to determine what caused a certain change. Articulation of change is so complex and diverse in composition. That's why Foucault describes the transformations without dealing with causality.

Ceremonial space of collective organizational account represents continuous process of structuring, a continuous process of creating order out of the identities and differences of a multitude of components in a limited physical space. In this process of structuring, different multiple patterns of action have to be identified and explained in order to provide organizational opportunities for the growth of new meaningful actions. Structure is a process of constant grouping and isolating, analyzing, and matching different components. Foucault (1970) argues that when we make a classification, when we say “that a cat and a dog resemble each other less than two greyhounds do, even if both are tame or embalmed, even if both are frenzied, even if both have just broken the water pitcher” (Foucault, 1970, p. xix), on what grounds, he questions, we can make such classification with complete validity and certainty? He further questions, “on what ‘table,’ according to what grid of identities, similitudes, analogies” (Foucault, 1970, p. xix), do we sort out so many different and similar things? So the question is about the nature of this coherence. Foucault argues that this coherence is not determined by any theory. It is not imposed on us by any set of contents which can readily be perceived. It is a question of “..... grouping and isolating, of analyzing, of matching and pigeon-holing concrete contents; there is nothing more tentative, nothing more empirical (superficially, at least) than the process of establishing an order among things ....” (Foucault, 1970, p. xix).

However, as he points out, there should be a

*‘system of elements’ – a definition of the segments by which the resemblances and differences can be shown, the types of variation by which those segments can be affected, and, lastly, the threshold above which there is a difference and below which there is similitude – is indispensable for the establishment of even the simplest form of order (Foucault, 1970, p.xx).*

As Foucault (1970) points out, the order of the school organization should relate to a meaningful organizational coherence between diverse elements and it should emerge from a master rationale which resembles the natural relationships between the differences.

### **Interpreting Absence and Silence as components of the ceremonial space in the organizational life of school**

Two major areas of organizational life or the collective account of the school are absence and silence related to individual action. Organizational account reflects “a ‘virtual order’ of transformative relations” (Giddens, 1984, p. 17) where both ‘presences’ and ‘absences’ count equally and also ‘intersection of presence and absence’ create different patterning of actions of all the members of the school. In discussing Derrida’s contribution to the thinking on structure, at one point Dosse (1997) writes about Derrida’s childhood. There he says,

*Derrida was born ..... in Algeria, in a Jewish milieu, although he was never completely immersed in a truly Jewish culture. ‘unfortunately, I do not speak Hebrew. My childhood in Algiers was too colonized and too uprooted.’ And yet he always felt, and cultivated, a certain foreignness with respect to the Western tradition. His exteriority was not, however based on an Other, on another place, but on a lack, a place that was nowhere and that he had left at age nineteen, an outside space that dimmed any glimmer of a foundation (Dosse, 1997, p. 17).*

The idea about the ‘outside space’ and the way it has influenced Derrida’s life is a meaningful metaphor to develop a deeper view on organizational account of school.

Some meanings behind the actions of the members of school organizations are only be understood in the contexts of such ‘outside spaces’ and those outside spaces are key components of the ceremonial space.

Some scholars’ thought processes are loosely coupled with the popular forms of expression. There is a certain absence of a popular socially constructed forms in some writings. Wittgenstein (1953) writes in his “Philosophical Investigations” that he didn’t organize his thoughts in the form of a standard book. He wrote them as remarks. He writes: “.....my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on any single direction against their natural inclination. ....this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction” (Preface, Wittgenstein, 1953).

This is another instance of absence we have to take into account in constructing and interpreting meanings relating to the organizational account of school life and the ceremonial space in this discussion. Absence of popular forms doesn’t mean that there is no form behind the actions of some people.

Understanding a certain people through communication, to Illich (1969), is learning the silences, words and sentences are composed of, and which are meaningful than sounds. He talks about these silences, “.... silences must be acquired through a delicate openness to them (native speakers). Silence has its pauses and hesitations, its rhythms and expressions and inflections; its durations and pitches ..... ” (Illich, 1969, p. 46). Silence creates the need for a whole new system of interpretations and understanding. It’s something very challenging in organizational life to understand the inner rhythms of silence. Illich (1969) discusses how, in most cases, silence takes different forms. Some of them are “.... silence of indifference, the silence of disinterest

which assumes that there is nothing I want or can receive through the communication of the other. ....”(pp. 46-47). Then, he goes on to say, “The man who shows us that he knows the rhythm of our silence is much closer to us than one who thinks that he knows how to speak (Illich, 1969, pp. 46-47).

### **Tacit Nostalgic Closeness between organizational Parts and the ceremonial space in organizational life**

In understanding the collective or organizational account of the school we should transcend the mindguards we have imposed on our imagination and should also do away with the self-censorship on our interpretations. There is a tacit nostalgic closeness between the entities in school even though they are distant in our accustomed ways of thinking. Peoples’ interpretations and how they have been developed, perhaps, would transcend our usual habits of thinking. Foucault (1970) writes, “We are all familiar with ..... the sudden vicinity of things that have no relation to each other; the mere act of enumeration that helps them all together has a power of enchantment all its own ..... (Foucault, 1970, pp. xvi-xvii). This “sudden vicinity” of different parts can be understood through interpretations. Interpretations are developed by structuring. Structuring mind continues to find diverse patterns in the life-world by creating groups and identifying diverse similarities. Sometimes, different objects or signs would seem like they are impossible to be arranged into a coherent pattern. However, the capacity for accommodation and appreciation of multiplicity of objects and qualities can be built into structure. Multiple patterns, multiple ways of using and interpreting space, seeing order among fragmentations, seeing connections among entities labeled as unconnected, seeing

multiple identities of different entities, and identifying diverse similarities among both concrete and abstract entities should be our role in understanding the collective account of school.

Structures can be created by experiencing order. As Foucault (1970) argues experiencing order itself is another system of inputs to ceremonial space. Experiencing order can even take the forms of a process of representation, a process of building propositions, or a process of articulation. These operations, with time, can become embedded into structure. An analysis of the organizational account of the school takes us to the deeper layers of organizational structure. In those deeper layers we find a multitude of different rhythms and broader accounts. Those are ceremonial layers of organizational space just like Foucault (1972) saw in his analysis of history:

*Beneath the rapidly changing history of governments, wars, and famines, there emerge other, apparently unmoving histories: the history of sea routes, the history of corn or gold mining, the history of drought and of irrigation, the history of crop rotation, the history of the balance achieved by the human species between hunger and abundance (Foucault, 1972, p. 3).*

The success of the school depends, ultimately, on the quality of our interpretations of those underlying rhythms and subtle accounts of structure. Phenomena of rupture, discontinuity, and interruptions in structure are also related to those underlying rhythms and subtle accounts. In disciplines such as history of ideas, history of science, history of thought we need to focus on the nature of unity in different time periods in civilization. Especially, attention should be drawn to phenomena of rupture, of discontinuity as well as unities in those periods. Underneath all continuities and clear homogeneous manifestations of how people thought, underneath single forms, disciplines we would find multiple incidence of interruptions. Like in history the vast knowledge we could

generate through interpretation by interpreting organizational forces such as ruptures and interruptions we can capture the complexity and the beauty of the ceremonial space of organizational space.

### **Insiders' Knowledge and the ceremonial space of Organizational Account**

By using the concept of 'habitus' Bourdieu (1977) has opened up another dimension of the ceremonial space of the organizational account of school. He defines 'habitus' as systems of dispositions which generate both action and structure without being subjected to extensive rules or adapted to objective goals. More importantly, these systems are, he argues, collectively orchestrated, but without being subjected to the orchestrating action of a particular agent or agents. Further, by the concept of habitus, "he meant a system of acquired, socially inculcated attitudes, a 'matrix of perceptions, evaluations, and actions' " (Dosse, 1997, p. 303) which is major part of insiders' knowledge or practical knowledge of the members. Using the concept of 'habitus' Bourdieu (1977) transcends the dichotomies built in the theoretical thinking about structure. Bourdieu (1977) opens up a new wave of thinking on structure by using his thinking on practice to surpass the dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity (Margolis, 1999, Pinto, 1999). He escaped the objectivity of early structuralism and developed conceptualizations to place 'subject' in the scheme of thinking related to the concepts of structure and action.

In relation to insiders' knowledge of practice Bourdieu (1977) saw objective limits of objectivism. He argued that scientific activity arises from practical privilege. Practical privilege governs scientific activity. It governs scientific activity without it being recognized as a privilege, and leading to an implicit theory of practice. Investigating the world of anthropology he argued that anthropologist's relationship with the object which he studies "contains the makings of a theoretical distortion" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.1). The reason is that since anthropologist is the observer in a particular situation he is excluded from the real system of social actions. He does not have a permanent place in that system which he observes, and also he does not intend to have a permanent place there, and as a result the kind of relationship he develops with the object of study leads him toward making a "hermeneutic representation of practices, leading him to reduce all social relations to communicative relations and, more precisely, to decoding operations" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.1) . In the relationship between the anthropologist and the object 'virtues of distance' are exalted, and some principles of maintaining distance become a key characteristic of this practice. Exalting such distance which is secured by externality, as he argues, becomes an epistemological choice in this particular situation the anthropologist faced with. Anthropologist becomes an "impartial spectator" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.1). Bourdieu argues that then this situation becomes, as Husserl saw it, "condemned to see all practice as a spectacle" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.1). This is the same challenge we face in understanding the complexities of the organizational account or the structure in school. Central question is about how we can see the multiple realities of practice within the school structure, the true layers of the ceremonial space.

The life experiences of teachers are the most important sources behind the



insiders' knowledge in school and they play a critically important role in constructing the ceremonial space organizational life of school. Intellectual biographies of individual teachers mainly characterized by the unique life scripts of their practical knowledge build a magnificent "polyphonic" world of dialogic culture in school. To illustrate this point I use the memoir "Teacher Man" (McCourt, 2005) as one example. "Teacher Man" is about Frank McCourt's thirty-year teaching career. In this memoir "in bold and spirited prose featuring his irreverent wit and heartbreaking honesty, McCourt records the trials, triumphs and surprises he faces in public high schools around New York City" (Book Cover, McCourt, 2005 ). His life experiences and what he learnt from them were the greatest source which made him ready to be a good teacher. He writes, "if I knew anything about Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis I'd be able to trace all my troubles to my miserable childhood in Ireland" (McCourt, 2005, p.1). He was passionately involved in the subject he taught. McCourt (2005) writes,

*..... you'll feast on ..... English and American literature. What a time you'll have with Carlyle and Arnold, Emerson and Thoreau. You can't wait to get to Shelly, Keats and Byron and good old Walt Whitman. Your classes will love all that romanticism ..... You'll love it yourself, because, deep down in your dreams, you're a wild romantic (p.5).*

He writes about the importance of mastering the virtues you have, whatever they are or how simple they are. McCourt (2005) writes, "now I think it time to give myself credit for at least one virtue: doggedness. Not as glamorous as ambition or talent or intellect or charm, but still the one thing that got me through the days and nights" (p.2).

His writing shows the mastery knowledge he had about his students. He writes about one of his classes, juniors: "..... teachers come, teachers go, all kinds, old, young, tough, kind. Kids watch, scrutinize, judge. They know body language, tone of voice, demeanor .....

.... They just absorb it over eleven years, pass it on to coming generations” (McCourt, 2005, p.12).

In most cases teachers’ actions are driven by the nature of multiple bonds built between the students and them. Describing one such experience relating to teacher-student solidarity McCourt (2005) writes about a sandwich fight students had in his class. It ended up the teacher, McCourt, eating the sandwich. Then Principal came to the class. McCourt writes,

*My students smiled till they saw the principal’s face framed in the door window. .... Petey whispered, Hey, mister. Don’t worry about the sandwich. I didn’t want it anyway.*

*The class said, Yeah, yeah, in a way that showed they were on my side if I had trouble with the principal, my first experience of teacher-student solidarity (Mccourt, 2005, p.17).*

McCourt (2005) draws our attention to the nature of the disconnect between the concern for children and the well-planned purposeful lesson. He writes,

*It was clear I was not cut out to be the purposeful kind of teacher who brushed aside all questions, requests, complaints, to get on with the well planned lesson. That would have reminded me of that school in Limerick where the lesson was king and we were nothing. I was already dreaming of a school where teachers were guides, mentors, not taskmasters (p.24).*

The problematic in studying some of these insiders’ insights and their explanations, and interpretations in the collective account of school partly relates to objectivism. The function of objectivism is to engage in a process of constructing social world as a system of objective relations. Objectivism rejects the role of individual consciousness or the role of the will of individual plays in this process of constructing organizational structure. However, one precondition for any science of practice is people’s practical mode of knowledge and the accompanying theory of practice. “The theory of practice puts

objectivist knowledge back on its feet by posing the question of the (theoretical and also social) conditions which make such knowledge possible” (Bourdieu, 1977, p.3).

Objective analysis of practice in the familiar world is not a substitute for understanding subjectivity, but it serves as a means to explore the limits of objective exploration. It helps us to escape from the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism in which the social sciences are trapped. If we are prepared to inquire into the mode of production and functioning of the practical mastery, then, it opens up objectively intelligible practice and also it creates an objectively enchanted experience of that practice. For that to happen, we need to subordinate all operations of scientific practice to a comprehensive inquiry of practical knowledge of people and examine the ways to raise it to higher levels of knowledge by building new explanations and interpretations. Such a process would construct new meanings of the intricate dynamics of the ceremonial space account of the organizational life of school and also such a process would unravel the fascinating mysteries of that space.

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