# Reflexivity and the process of maturation of students in a work-based learning programme

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis presents the outcomes of a five-year ethnographic research project of a work-based learning programme, the BA in Social Pedagogy (hereafter, the BA), which was provided in partnership with a university by a residential school for vulnerable children and young people (hereafter, the School) to its workers. The aim of the research was to develop an understanding of how the organisational fields of the School influenced learning practices and identities of workers undertaking the BA (hereafter, students). Two theoretical frameworks, of Pierre Bourdieu and Margaret Archer, were applied consecutively in the analysis of collected data.

Bourdieu's theory of practice, applied first, allowed an investigation of the conditioning by the School's organisational fields of students' dispositions and actions, as well as of a function of the BA in the mechanism of social reproduction of the School's communities. Limitations of Bourdieu's theoretical framework in examining students' personal transformations in the course of their work and studies prompted a turn to Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development. Re-analysis of collected data indicated that the expansion of the BA curriculum triggered and then sustained cultural and structural changes in the School. Such changes created enabling conditions for the process of maturation of students, with the BA educational practices and School work practices facilitating this process.

This research project contributes to the field of applied sociological studies. Firstly, it develops an explanatory theory of processes at a work-based learning programme and its hosting institution. Secondly, it demonstrates that Archer's theoretical framework presents methodological and analytical advantages, compared to Bourdieu's theory of practice, for the investigation of social phenomena both on the level of an institution and on the level of individual actors, in particular when the institution undergoes cultural and structural changes and the individuals are progressing in their maturational development.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis presents ethnographic research of a work-based learning programme in Social Pedagogy leading to the award of Bachelor of Arts (hereafter referred to as the BA), which was run by a residential school for vulnerable children and young people (hereafter referred to as the School) in partnership with a university (hereafter referred to as the University). The aim of the research was to develop an understanding of how the organisational fields of the School influenced learning practices and identities of workers undertaking the BA (hereafter referred to as students). The research was funded by a grant of the Economic and Social Research Council[1].

Participants in the research were students, tutors, teachers and former directors of the BA. Over a period of three years I observed programme sessions, collected students' assignments and conducted interviews with participants. The setting of the research was the School campus, where students lived, worked and studied.

## 1.1 The School and the BA

The characteristic features of the School were a communal way of life and work and a holistic approach to care and education of vulnerable children and young people. Both the communal organisation and culture and the holistic approach stemmed from the ideas of anthroposophy, a spiritual doctrine of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. Care workers and pupils lived in large households, called house communities. The School included also school classes, craft workshops and a farm, all situated on a large country estate. Most of the care workers in the house communities were young people on a gap year between secondary school and university, who worked in the School as volunteers. Some of them, after having spent a year in a house community, were enrolling on the BA, a four year long part-time vocational programme, delivered by experienced School workers and University staff. The curriculum of the BA study combined taught modules and work-based practice, grounded in anthroposophical knowledge and what students and their teachers and tutors called 'mainstream' approaches in social pedagogy and care. For the duration of their studies students remained workers in the School and members of their house communities.

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## 1.2 My background and research progression

This thesis presents insider research. I have been living and working in the School for twenty five years. Though I did not study for the BA and was not associated with the BA in any role, I followed the development of the BA from its accreditation in 1997 to its cessation in 2014. During my years in the School I lived in various house communities, which included BA students. While witnessing their life and work, I asked myself a question whether by undertaking an academic study they were developing a critical stance towards the organisational structure and culture of the School. The latter stemmed from anthroposophy, which I viewed as being based on a spiritual belief and therefore incompatible with scientific knowledge. I was curious to learn how students could combine anthroposophic knowledge with academic knowledge in their studies and apply them in their work. My interest in this topic prompted me to undertake, as a part of my study for a Master's degree, a small scale research project about an organisational discourse in the School. As an outcome of that project, I made a conclusion that the identities of the BA students were in the process of continuous construction throughout their studies with a gradual shift from the 'apprentice' subject position to the 'university student' subject position. I suggested that these two subject positions were conflicting with each other, and that the clash between them led some students to adopting a critical stance towards the School.

A proposal for this research utilised my Master's degree project. The proposal was framed by the broad objectives of investigating learning cultures of the BA and the mediation by students of the effects of organisational fields on their learning and construction of their identities. Despite that, at the start of the research I focused on finding instances of critical discourse of students. The outcomes of the first round of observations and interviews provided no substantial evidence of students' critique and an indication that the BA learning culture was part and parcel of School's organisational culture. I turned to Bourdieu's theory of practice and methodology of field analysis (e.g. Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 1990b) and formulated a set of research questions for investigating organisational fields of the School and positioning of students, teachers and tutors within these fields. In my analysis, I discerned two processes within the School: a process of inculcation by students of dispositions of organisational fields and subsequent metaphorical explication of these dispositions in their study, and a process of transfer of students' dispositions to newcomers in the routines of communal life and work. The two processes combined into a mechanism of social reproduction of house communities and of

maintenance of the economic capital of the School. In my analysis, the social reproduction was the main function of the BA, which remained unrecognised by School workers.

In the first year of the research, the University suspended the admission of new students to the BA, due to changes in Government regulations. This caused a reduction in the number of students in the School, which strongly affected the house communities. BA tutors and teachers worked on transforming the BA into a full-time programme, put by the University as a condition for re-accrediting the BA. An intervention of a powerful group of house coordinators (leaders of the house communities) brought these efforts to an end and led to the cessation of the BA. This event exposed the dominance of the organisational field of house communities in the School and its resistance to change. The developed Bourdieusian analysis led me to a conclusion that the learning culture of the BA was strongly conditioned by the organisational fields of the School and affected by the interest of School workers in maintaining the status quo in the house communities and the organisation as a whole. The developed analysis allowed me to overcome my narrow focus on critical views of students, but my critical perspective on the School and the BA was reinforced.

While analysing positioning and trajectories of individual students in the organisational fields, I realised that their assignments and interviews contained rich reflexive accounts of their work and life in the house communities as well as reflections on their personal development in the course of work and study. From the literature, I knew that Bourdieu's theory of practice, based on the inseparability of structure and agency, was not conducive to analysis of individual psychology and personal transformations (Sawyer 2002). This limitation of Bourdieusian analysis prompted me to turn to Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development (Archer 1995; 2000; 2003; 2007; 2012).

Re-analysing collected data within Archer's conceptual framework, I realised that my critical bias towards the School and the BA was constraining my analysis by foregrounding my analytic account over the accounts of research participants. Archer's theoretical framework, based on realist ontology and methodology of analytical dualism of structure and agency, assigns causal power to people's reflexivity and makes their reflexive accounts a primary object of analysis without privileging the researcher's perspective. Such a shift in my epistemological approach to collected data and a turn to Archer's conceptual framework allowed me to examine how in the course of their work and study students mobilised and diversified their reflexivity and developed personal and social

identities. The developed analysis led me to a conclusion that students' work was pivotal in this process. I also concluded that ideational pluralism of the curriculum and reflective educational practices were defining elements of the BA, which enabled and facilitated the process of maturation of students.

Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and 'histories of emergency' (Archer 1995) offered conceptual apparatus and a methodology for analysis of changes in the School that took place after the initial accreditation of the BA. In my analysis, the BA triggered and sustained cultural differentiation in the School and then loosened its structure, which allowed students to select and personify organisational roles in a manner expressive of their personal identities. This enabled students to make progress in the process of maturation. Thus, Archer's conceptual framework, rooted in the principle of analytical dualism of structure and agency, allowed me to develop an explanatory theory of processes in the School and the BA both on macro-level of cultural and structural systems of the organisation and on micro-level of socio-cultural interaction. Turning to Archerian analysis facilitated a change in my subjective motive for undertaking this research from a pursuit of a critical agenda in relation to the School and the BA to an interest in students' agency and its interplay with the culture and structure of the School. The latter motive matched closely the aim and objectives of the research as they were formulated in the research proposal.

My interest in student's reflexivity was sparked by my own reflexive deliberations about my positioning in the School as a member of its management team and of a community of long-term co-workers and as an academic researcher. While undertaking the research project for a Master's degree, I recognised that my reflexivity could not neutralise completely my bias set by my position in the organisation and by my prior knowledge and experience. I realised that as a social actor interpolated by the organisational discourses I did not stand outside the discursive field of the School. This led me to adopting a critical standpoint in relation to the School and the BA, which allowed me to develop an understanding of the position of a research participant who struggled to construct a similar critical standpoint.

Starting this research, I strived to de-familiarise myself with practices in the School and to articulate taken for granted beliefs of School workers and norms of communal work and life. Bourdieusian analysis was instrumental in this respect but it led me to delineate my position as an outside observer of practices and events in the School. This was an illusion which I gradually overcame, first, by applying Bourdieu's notion of a second

epistemological break with the presuppositions inherent in the position of an outside observer (Bourdieu 1977) and, then, by developing an analytic account based on Archer's conceptual framework.

In accordance with a realist epistemological stance, which I came to occupy, there is no possibility of attaining an objective knowledge of the world as this knowledge is inevitably interpretive and provisional, produced from a subjective standpoint. Nevertheless, knowledge can be more or less correct. The criterion of its correctness is how effectively it represents what really exists and is actually occurring (Maxwell 2012). Applying this stance to my research, I was asking myself the question of whether my material dependence on being a School worker and my relationships with the fellow members of the School's community led me to overlook important phenomena in the data and alternative ways of making sense of it. My abiding concern throughout the research was to find a conceptual framework that would explain the reality I tried to understand. Below, I argue that in this respect Archer's framework offers a better explanation than the Bourdieu's one. It also directed me to the realist epistemological stance which allowed me to reconcile my two positions and roles, of a social actor in the School and of an academic researcher.

## 1.3 Presentation of the research

In the thesis, I present an account of the research, which follows the evolution of my understanding of the BA, briefly outlined above. I chose this way of presentation, because from the realist perspective (which I came to occupy while progressing with my analysis) ideas developed during research are related to each other not only by their similarity or difference, but, also, by contiguity, i.e. by their actual succession and co-existence in time (Maxwell 2012). The two relations, of similarity/difference and of contiguity, are evident in the conduct of the research: the first led me to change a theoretical framework of analysis and see the advantages of the Archerian analysis, compared to the Bourdieusian one; the second helped to avoid rupture between the two stages of the research and to see the object of my research from the two analytical viewpoints. Therefore, presentation of the ideas, which I developed during the research, both through their comparison and in their succession allows for better understanding of the research and its outcomes.

In the thesis, I provide an aim and objectives (pp.19-20) which were specified in the application for an Economic and Social Research Council grant and which then guided my research throughout its seven-year period, and two sets of research questions, which I

formulated in terms of the two theoretical frameworks applied in the analysis of collected data (p.64 and p.113).

## 1.4 My argument

In the thesis, I develop an explanatory theory of processes at a work-based learning programme, the BA, and its hosting institution, the School, and of the links between curriculum and educational practices of the programme, work practices of the institution and the process of maturation of student-workers. I argue that Archer's theoretical framework presents methodological and analytical advantages, compared to Bourdieu's theory of practice, for the investigation of social phenomena both on the level of an institution and on the level of individual actors, in particular when the institution undergoes cultural and structural changes and the individuals are progressing in their maturational development.

## 1.5 Acknowledgements

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# 2 Rationale for the research

In this chapter I provide a rationale for the research by presenting an overview of work-based learning and by outlining the original research proposal, submitted to the Economic and Social Research Council.

## 2.1 Work-based learning in higher education

The BA in Social Pedagogy programme, an object of this research, was developed and accredited in 1997. It belonged to a particular class of higher education programmes which are established by higher education institutions in partnership with industry. They began appearing in the UK in the 1980s and became known as work-based learning programmes. The defining feature of these programmes is their curriculum, which is derived from the needs of workers and employers and includes workplace projects. Over the last thirty years, work-based learning programmes evolved from accredited in-company courses to individualised negotiated programmes, based on tripartite agreements between individual students, educational providers and employers (Seagraves et al. 1996; Nixon et al. 2006; Lester and Costley 2010; Moore and Workman 2011; Basit et al. 2015).

In the academic literature and policy documents, the term work-based learning broadly refers to learning that arises directly out of workplace concerns in the course of normal work activities of learners, undertaking their work tasks and performing their work roles (Lester and Costley 2010). Learning may take place outwith the immediate work environment but involves work tasks and projects, which learners reflect upon. The term work-based learning overlaps and is used interchangeably with other terms, such as workplace or on-the-job learning and work-related or work-relevant learning (Nixon et al. 2006; CEDEFOP 2015).

Lester and Costley (2010) point out that much of work-based learning is at a low level academically and is ephemeral in nature, but there is a substantial proportion of it which involves higher-level skills of critical reflection, self-management and self-direction. This learning can be recognised and enhanced with the involvement of a higher education institution. It is in the latter, narrower sense that Garnett (2004), cited by Moore and Workman (2011, p. 68), defined work-based learning as

> a learning process which focuses university level thinking upon work (paid and unpaid) in order to facilitate the recognition, acquisition and application of individual and collective knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve specific

accredited outcomes of significance to the learner, their employer and the university.

The curriculum of work-based learning programmes has been characterised as process-driven and student-centred, derived from the content of work, as well as from students' current knowledge and experience (Nixon et al. 2006). The implications of the 'work as a curriculum' approach (Boud 2001) prompted some authors to conceptualise work-based learning as a trans-disciplinary field of study, which sits outside the framework of subjects in higher education with its own set of norms and practices (Portwood 2000; Costley and Armsby 2007b; Gibbs and Garnett 2007).

Work-based learning is viewed as a practice in higher education which is driven by the interests of learners, employers and educational providers (Penn, Nixon, and Shewell 2005; Nixon et al. 2006; Moore and Workman 2011; Lester and Costley 2010; CWBL 2017). Many of the programmes are based on collaborative approaches to course design and delivery. A negotiation process is embedded in the programme development and delivery: prior to the accreditation of the programme, all its elements (curriculum, learning outcomes, assessment, financing, staffing, enrolment and student support) are agreed between an educational provider and an employer, and, prior to embarking on their studies, students draw up learning agreements with their employer and educational provider. Lester and Costley (2010) discerned four main components of such 'negotiated' work-based learning programmes:

- individual, or part-individual and part-group, study programmes, agreed by students, their employer and the educational provider;
- recognition of previous formal and informal experiential learning of students, both for an academic credit and as the starting point of the programme;
- workplace projects and practitioner research, backed by appropriate forms of student support provided by academic tutors and work-based mentors;
- academic assessment, normally referenced to generic criteria representing the relevant academic level, ranging from foundational degree through to professional doctorate.

The central component of a work-based programme is workplace project activities, which can be incorporated into self-standing modules of an undergraduate or postgraduate programme or constitute a piece of research leading to the award of a doctorate. Lester and Costley (2010) argue that the majority of work-based projects can be conceptualised as

research. To develop students' skills of workplace inquiry, even an undergraduate programme may contain a module on research methods (Costley and Armsby 2007a). Because of the strong orientation to practitioner enquiry and research, work-based learning programmes do not fit into the category of taught university programmes. Therefore, work-based learning programmes generally require different educational practices than those which are appropriate to taught programmes or conventional research degrees (Stephenson, Malloch, and Cairns 2006; Boud and Costley 2007).

Authors of a report, analysing existing practice and research in work-based learning (Nixon et al. 2006) concluded that due to limited research in work-based learning higher education sector practitioners do not fully understand how different factors related to individual learners and to their organisations (e.g. a learner's background, nature of their current role and relationships with their organisation) impact on learning in the workplace. Authors of an overview of research projects undertaken by work-based learning practitioners within the Lifelong Learning Networks programme (Shaw, Rout, and Wise 2011) noted that though there is a gradual, piece-meal evolution in the design and delivery of work-based learning programmes as academics gain a better understanding of the needs of work-based learners, there is a need to share the results of various educational practices, pieces of action research and natural experiments in work-based learning, using them to challenge current assumptions about work-based learning in the academia. Lester and Costley (2010) in a review paper about practice and value of work-based learning suggested that in order to realise its benefits to individuals and organisations more widely, there is a need to approach it in a sophisticated way by taking into consideration organisational cultures and dynamics as well as individual learners' motivation, aspirations and potential for development within and beyond their current work situations.

Thus, both the existing university practice of work-based learning and academic inquiries into it, conducted prior to the commencement of this research, indicated a need to undertake ethnographic research of work-based learning programmes with a dual focus on organisations and on individual learners, aimed at investigating how organisational cultures enable or constrain learning in the workplace and how individual learners mediate the effects of organisational cultures, while progressing with their studies.

## 2.2 Research proposal

The proposal for this research, originally titled 'Learning cultures at work-based learning: mediation and dialogic construction of identity', arose out of a large-scale research project

in Further Education (James and Biesta 2007) and a small-scale research, undertaken in the School (Smith and Chepelin 2009).

The proposal applied a new theoretical perspective on learning, developed by Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2007a; 2007b; 2008). Over the past three decades research on learning has expanded its focus from individuals and cognition to the social contexts and practices in and through which learning takes place, which led to viewing learning as participation in social practices, situated in a community of practice (e.g. Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). One of the challenges for the approaches to learning with the conceptual lens of participation in social practices is to account for the reciprocal relationships between individuals and social contexts (Rainbird et al. 2004). Combining insights from socio-cultural approaches to learning with ideas from Bourdieu and pragmatism, Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2007a; 2007b; 2008) responded to this challenge by developing a cultural approach to understanding learning-in-context, comprised of a cultural theory of learning and a theory of learning cultures. Those authors claimed that understanding learning culturally overcomes the dualism between the individual and the social perspective on learning. This approach, which was utilised in a large-scale study of the formation and transformation of learning cultures in Further Education (James and Biesta 2007), saw learning cultures as the social practices through which people learn and aimed to understand how learning cultures permit, promote, inhibit or rule out certain kinds of learning. Learning, in this view, is not exclusively about the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values, but also involves the ways in which learners' dispositions are confirmed, developed, challenged or changed. The formation and transformation of learners' identity and subjectivity are therefore seen as an integral part of learning at work (Billett, Fenwick, and Somerville 2010).

To characterise the relationships between the individual agencies of work-based learners, tutors and teachers and the vocational and academic fields in which they operate, the researchers of the project in Further Education (James and Biesta 2007) applied the concept of mediation, developed in the Activity Theory of Vygotsky (Vygotsky 1986; Wertsch 2007). Vygotsky posited that human action is mediated by psychological tools of the inner speech and thought, which are products of cultural symbols, internalised by individuals in the course of social interaction. The researchers combined Vygotsky's approach with Bourdieu's concept of habitus (i.e. a collection of durable, transposable dispositions, accumulated by individuals in the course of life) to account for the relationships between individual agencies, learning cultures and social fields at the

research sites. They noted that their approach to mediation is close to Archer's view of mediation of the power of structure and culture through social agency. On the level of individual actors, the mediation takes place via reflexive internal conversation and external deliberations, in which individuals plan their actions and make genuine choices in terms of structural, cultural and social contexts (Archer 2003).

The proposal for this research utilised the approach to learning and learning cultures, outlined above. The proposal cited outcomes of a small-scale research project, undertaken in the School, which revealed a complex and dynamic site that provided rich qualitative data (Smith and Chepelin 2009). This research indicated that identities of BA students were in the process of continuous construction during their studies with a gradual shift from the 'apprentice' subject position to the 'university student' subject position. The research suggested that the clash between these conflicting subject positions led some of the students to adopting a critical standpoint towards the School and the BA. The research found that these students, by expanding the horizon of their critique, were able to construct a standpoint on the periphery of the organisational and educational discursive fields, which had a profound effect on their work and study. In the proposal, it was suggested that this process involves dialogic speech as a mediational tool between an individual and a field (Wertsch 1991; 2007).

In the proposal, the overall aim and objectives of this research were formulated as follows:

Aim:

- to enhance understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of learning cultures of a work-based learning programme with particular attention to the process of mediation by students of the effects of organisational and academic fields on their learning.

Objectives:

- to determine the characteristics of learning cultures and the dynamics of their formation and transformation over time from the standpoint of a cohort of care workers and their work-based tutors;
- to explore the ways in which different configurations of organisational and academic fields impact on learning cultures, both positively and negatively;
- to examine the discursive repertoires of students and tutors on presence of semiotic tools that mediate between organisational and academic fields and individual agencies;

- to study the dialogic mediation in the construction of students' identities and the role of this in the formation and transformation of learning cultures;
- to generate research-informed principles for the formation and transformation of learning cultures in work-based learning.

The proposal was accepted by the Economic and Social Research Council and the specified research project was conducted from October 2010 until September 2015.

# 3 The cultural context of the partnership between the School and the University

On the basis of available academic literature, this chapter sets up the cultural context of the collaboration between the School and the University in establishing and running in partnership for seventeen years a work-based learning programme, the curriculum of which comprised to a large extent an anthroposophical applied discipline of curative education[2] and other anthroposophical knowledge and practice. After providing a brief outline of anthroposophy and its place in the history of what is known as Western esotericism, I give an overview of the relationship between anthroposophy and academic science. The chapter concludes with some evidence of a growing interest in academia to practical applications of anthroposophy in the sphere of education.

## 3.1 Anthroposophy and its place in the history of Western esotericism

Anthroposophy is a name that Austrian philosopher and occultist Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) (Leijenhorst 2005b) gave to his teaching which he delivered in numerous writings and lectures in the early 20th century. The works of Steiner are considered an all-encompassing worldview, rooted in classical German philosophy (Traub 2013) and Western esotericism (Leijenhorst 2005a; Ahern 2009). Anthroposophy postulates the existence of objective spiritual reality, accessible to human experience through inner development. According to Steiner, anthroposophy is 'a path of knowledge that connects the spiritual in man and the spiritual in the cosmos' (cited in Leijenhorst (2005a)). Steiner claimed that anthroposophy is not a revealed religious doctrine, but a spiritual science which is a key to understanding the spiritual dimension of reality and a means of bringing about spiritual transformation of daily human life. Both the understanding and the transformation can be achieved by the followers of anthroposophy through developing faculties of perceptive imagination, inspiration and intuition by practicing meditative exercises, given by Steiner.

Leijenhorst (2005a) discerned six key topics of Steiner's anthroposophy:

1. Occult physiology.

[2] The BA was accredited under the title 'BA in Curative Education'. It changed the title to 'BA in Social Pedagogy' in 2011.

Steiner described several physiological systems which served different purposes in his doctrine: the three-foldness of body, soul and spirit; the four-foldness of physical body, etheric body, astral body and I-ego; the seven-foldness of seven life processes of breathing, warming, nourishment, secreting, maintaining, growing and maturing; and the twelve-foldness of twelve human senses of touch, life, movement, balance, smell, taste, sight, temperature, hearing, speech, thought and ego. In the tri-partition soul mediates between the perishable physical body and the eternal spirit of Self, which after death reincarnates in a new physical body and is the bearer of karma. Four-foldness links human beings to the external world: the physical body – to the mineral world; the etheric body – to the plant world; the astral body – to the animal world; I-ego – to hierarchies of spiritual beings. In the course of a single human life and in the course of the evolution of mankind, the I-ego works on the three bodies and transforms them into three souls: sentient, intellectual and spiritual, which in their turn could be cultivated by means of spiritual exercises and moral conduct into three spiritual sense-organs. It is through these sense-organs that spiritual reality is perceived.

Steiner expounded the three-foldness into three soul activities of thinking, feeling and willing, which have an organic basis in three regions or systems of the human organism: the region of the head or nervous-sense system (the seat of thinking), the heart-lung region or rhythmic system (the seat of feeling) and the metabolic system (the seat of willing). The tri-partite division of human activities into thinking, feeling and willing is the basis of the pedagogy practiced in Waldorf Schools. The seven-foldness and twelve-foldness of human organism are the foundational ideas of curative education.

2 & 3. Planetary evolution and Christology.

According to Steiner, the human physiology developed over eons in which the earth and the planetary system went through several phases, and, in the course of the present Earth-phase, through several epochs, including the present ‘post-Atlantean’ epoch. The latter is again subdivided into several ‘culture-epochs’: Indian, Persian, Egyptian, Greco-Roman and the present one which started in the middle of the 15$^{th}$ century. During the previous two and the present epochs the development of the sentient, intellectual and spiritual souls has taken place.

Apart from his esoteric perspective on the history and human evolution, which has much in common with older theosophical accounts, Steiner developed an esoteric doctrine of Christianity which separated anthroposophy from theosophy. According to Steiner, prior to

the event on Golgotha mankind had fallen prey to the two-fold forces of evil, which nurture in human beings, on the one hand, a sense of self and of liberty, and, on the other hand, cold materialist intellect and will for power and domination. In Western esotericism these forces are represented respectively by two spiritual beings, Lucifer and Ahriman. Steiner describes the task of Christ, the spirit of the sun, through incarnating into a body of Jesus to transform and redeem the two-fold evil. The Death and Resurrection of Christ provided a remedy for the decay that set in through Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences. From that moment on, humanity and earth in general have been able to make a U-turn, finding a new way up towards the New Jerusalem, the *telos* of the planetary evolution.

4. Reincarnation and karma.

Steiner attempted to integrate pre-modern ideas about reincarnation and karma with his doctrine of Christianity. According to Steiner, the necessity of the I-ego to reincarnate on earth stems from its task in the planetary and human evolution. In this sense, Steiner claimed that everything that happens in human life has purpose. Karma, the law of cause and effect that connects the present life with the previous ones is formed in the period between death and the new incarnation. Karma is subject to direct intervention by the spiritual hierarchies in people's daily lives. According to Steiner, the influence of Christ on human karma after the Resurrection is crucial, as it transformed the old karmic laws of retribution for past sins into the new possibilities which opened up to each human being on the path of one's own and earth's gradual purification.

5. The spiritual path.

Steiner claimed that his teaching is the outcome of his spiritual research, based on his innate clairvoyant capacities (Leijenhorst 2005b). Nevertheless, Steiner frequently warned his followers that his pronouncements should not be venerated as revelations and insisted that a systematic spiritual path that leads to knowledge of the higher worlds is open to all. In his works and lectures Steiner gave meditative exercises, in particular those intended for the First Class of his School of Spiritual Science, which could be used in order to develop the spiritual organs of imagination, inspiration and intuition. According to Steiner, the conditions for obtaining the spiritual knowledge are no less important that the meditative practice. Thus, the development of a faculty of objective thinking is meant to prevent a disciple of anthroposophy from drifting off in a mystical fog of vague spiritual feelings, while side-exercises, given by Steiner, stimulate a disciple's emotional and moral stability. The disciple is expected to seek advice from a teacher-initiate and compare his visions to

those of his teacher and other initiates. Steiner insisted that the safe guidance by the experienced occult teacher cannot be completely replaced by independent meditative practice.

6. The anthroposophical movement.

After the end of the First World War, Steiner turned to applying anthroposophy to various fields of practice. A number of practical initiatives were started by his followers after Steiner responded to their questions with lectures which became their guidance for developing particular fields of anthroposophical practice. Thus, in 1919 at the request of Emil Molt, director of the Waldorf-Astoria Tobacco Company, Steiner delivered a series of lectures on school curriculum and pedagogical philosophy (Steiner 2004) to the teachers of the first Waldorf school; in 1924, prompted by a question about the karma of children with special needs, Steiner gave a series of lectures on *Heilpadagogie,* curative education, in English translation, (Steiner 2014) to a group of teachers and doctors, some of whom started the same year the first anthroposophical centre for such children.

At the so-called Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 in Dornach, Switzerland, Steiner founded the present General Anthroposophical Society, which later was centred in the purposefully built Goetheanum. This event is still very important to contemporary anthroposophists as they believe that Steiner laid a spiritual foundation of the Society in the form of the Foundation Stone Meditation which links tripartite human being with the spiritual hierarchies and the Trinity.

During the Nazis regime, the Society was banned in Germany but survived in Switzerland, and after the Second World War grew and expanded the reach of anthroposophy by forming national anthroposophical societies in many countries. Practical applications of anthroposophy, such as Waldorf education, curative education, anthroposophical medicine, biodynamic farming, eurhythmy and others, as social initiatives of various forms (schools, colleges, communities, enterprises, banks, art studios and dance companies) proliferated around the world and became an integral part of cultural and social life in many countries. The practicians of applied anthroposophy can be viewed as informal members of the world-wide anthroposophical movement.

Since the1990s, there has been an increase in academic research on Western esotericism, with anthroposophy being considered as one of its modern developments. Scholars, such as Faivre (1994; 2000) and Hanegraaff (e.g. 2005a; 2014b; 2014a), advanced this field of

research, which, according to Hanegraaff (2005b), is centrally important to the historians of religion and culture, because it investigates the development of what the author termed as the grand polemical narrative, or discourse, from its origins in antiquity until modernity. Hanegraaff (2005b) argues that it is in the terms of this discourse and against the constructed identities of the succession of 'paganism', 'Gnostic heresy', 'fetishism', 'magic practices' and 'occult superstitions' that the mainstream Western culture has been constructing its own identity up to the present day. In this two-millennium old debate, anthroposophy and contemporary occultist movements are the most recent occupiers of the polemical position that opposes to that of the Academy, which since the 16th and 17th centuries rests on the ideas of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment.

Hanegraaff (2005b) describes how throughout the history of the grand polemical discourse, actors reified complex arguments to simple oppositions and used strategies of prohibition (and often persecution) and ridicule to exclude the opposing side from the discourse, while presenting the latter's views and practices as dangerous, immoral, irrational or erroneous. Thus, in modern times, the ideas of anthroposophy were invariably presented in the academic and public spheres as irrational and false, and the attitude of ridicule was used as a highly effective polemical strategy. There were also attempts, in particular in the public media and on the Internet, to present anthroposophy as dangerous and immoral, with Steiner being accused of racism in view of his concept of evolution and the idea of 'culture-epochs' (Leijenhorst 2005a, p. 86). Hanegraaff (2005b) notes that, in response to polemical attacks, modern occultist and esotericists sought to defend their position as based on a superior all-encompassing world view with ancient roots, and to self-consciously define themselves in opposition to religious and scientific orthodoxies.

Hanegraaff (2005b) appeals to his colleagues in the academia 'to step *outside* [the polemical discourse] and to analyse it from the neutral point of view' (ibid., p.249, italics in original). In the author's view, such a move to a position of 'agnostic' neutrality (Hanegraaff 1995) would allow making both historical and contemporary ideas and actors of the discourse objects for scholarly investigation, without any restrictions on academic research out of respect for tradition or authority. This would lead to diverse ideational and social phenomena and patterns to come into view and to being investigated. In the next section, I present some evidence indicating that this appeal coincided with the surge of interest among academic researchers to one of the practical applications of anthroposophy, Waldorf education.

## 3.2 Relationship between anthroposophy and academic science

Leijenhorst (2005a) points out that Steiner had the same ambiguous attitude towards modern science as many other occultists of the 19th and early 20th century: he viewed science as an Ahrimanic threat to humanity and at the same time claimed that anthroposophy, as a spiritual science, follows the scientific methodology of grounding knowledge in empirical observation. But, since Steiner's object of observation was super-sensible, he stepped outside the established scientific framework (Schieren 2011).

In the academia, there has been an unequivocal view of anthroposophy as a pseudo-science. Thus, in the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, anthroposophy figures only once, in the entry that describes demarcation criteria between science and pseudo-science (Hansson 2017). Categorised in the entry as one of the pseudo-sciences, anthroposophy arguably fails to satisfy a 'minimal necessary criterion of science' as 'a systematic search for knowledge whose validity does not depend on the particular individual but is open for anyone to check or rediscover' (ibid, p.23).

To the question 'Is anthroposophy science?' Hansson (1991) gives a negative answer for the reasons that its method of verification of knowledge depends on the authority of initiates and that the results of Steiner's research contradict conventional science. Hansson also notes that only a small part of the corpus of anthroposophical knowledge has been contributed by anthroposophists other than Steiner. It is Steiner's books and recorded lectures that are dominant sources for anthroposophical studies. While there is an obvious parallel of such a method of acquisition of knowledge with learning from textbooks and lectures at schools and universities, there are two crucial conditions, imposed on students of anthroposophy, which are at odds with academic study: first, they must continuously restrain an inner tendency to analyse and criticise what they read or hear during their studies; and, second, there are strict limits to what knowledge should be accessible to non-initiates and individuals on various stages of initiation. Hansson (1991) concludes that such conditions make the anthroposophical method of acquisition of knowledge inherently unreliable and incompatible with methods of modern science.

Anthroposophists themselves acknowledge that the critical issue confronting anthroposophy is the relationship between anthroposophy and science. Schieren (2011) notes that while the social integration of reformist anthroposophical approaches into various fields of practice has been relatively successful, anthroposophy continues to be regarded by the general public and academics alike as an obscure body of spiritual teaching

and has scarcely any standing in universities and academic life. In the author's view, the academic verdict that anthroposophy belongs to pseudo-sciences hinders its influence upon social and cultural life.

Schieren (2011) acknowledges that what he calls the 'originator of knowledge' problem (ibid., p.91) prevents anthroposophy being considered by the academia as a legitimate body of knowledge but insists that Steiner's early philosophical work 'The philosophy of freedom' (Steiner 2013) contains epistemological foundations of a phenomenological method of 'inner observation of thought' on which Steiner's method of spiritual research is based. The author concedes that the task of legitimising such an epistemological standpoint and method of research among academics is a long-term project and suggests an interim solution to anthroposophists: to look at the areas of application of anthroposophy with a view to validate them scientifically. The author argues that in the context of a particular scientific discipline, the anthroposophical approach could be considered not in terms of its foundational principles but according to its local relevance. This, in the author's view, would allow anthroposophists and those academics that are open to anthroposophy-based practice to move away from the question of whether or not anthroposophy is a science to the question of how it can be used scientifically.

One of the areas in which such progress has been made is Waldorf education. In the last two decades, there has been a increase world-wide in academic research on Waldorf (Steiner) education (Gidley 2010) and an expansion in some European countries of Waldorf teacher education into Higher Education.

Thus, in 2005, researchers from the University of the West of England produced a report about Steiner schools in England (Woods, Ashley, and Woods 2005), which was commissioned by the Department of Education and Skills. The methodology of the research combined a literature review of published to date empirical research on Steiner education (28 publications from 1992 onwards); interviews and meetings with key national actors from the field of Steiner education and teacher training; a survey of 21 Steiner schools and 184 teachers; and case studies of seven selected Steiner schools. The report contained the research findings and wide-ranging recommendations to the Government and the Steiner education sector, namely, on mutual sharing between Steiner and maintained (i.e. state-funded) schools; on Steiner schools entering the maintained sector; on openness towards Steiner education's different approach to assessment and pedagogical practice; on promoting understanding of Steiner education and its foundational philosophy

(anthroposophy); on finding ways to enabling the Steiner schools' collegial system of leadership and management to work effectively in a maintained system; and other recommendations. The content of the report testifies about the openness with which the academic researchers approached Steiner education and anthroposophy. Three years after the publication of the report, the first state-funded Steiner Academy was opened in Hereford.

The above report and the literature reviewed in it point to the increase in interest to Waldorf education in the academia since the 1990s. Such an increase perhaps provided an opening to accrediting anthroposophy-based Waldorf teacher training courses with universities. In some countries such publicly-funded Higher Education programmes have been in existence prior to that time. Thus, the Rudolf Steiner University College in Oslo, Norway, has offered a BA-study in Waldorf Education since 1983; certified Waldorf teacher education programmes in the Antioch University New England, USA, have also been running for more than thirty years. In other countries, such developments occurred more recently. In the UK, Plymouth University offered from 1994 until 2009 a three-year programme of BA (Hons) in Steiner Waldorf Education. The programme closed due to the government's withdrawal of funding. In Germany, in 2010, the Science Council, the most eminent scientific body in the country, granted the highest level accreditation to the anthroposophy-oriented Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences, while the Educational Science Department of the University received a right to award doctorates (Schieren 2011). The Alanus University currently offers study programmes towards BA/MA in Waldorf Education and BA/MA in Curative Education. In Sweden, in 2012, the Waldorf University College, which has been offering Waldorf teacher training courses since the 1970s, became publicly funded under the supervision of the Swedish Higher Education Authority. In Finland, in 2002, the privately-funded Shellman University obtained an official status as an educational institution for free adult education. It offers state-certified programmes in Waldorf teacher education and BA in Steiner Pedagogy of Visual Art. The University Colleges in Norway and Sweden and the Shellman University jointly established the Nordic Research Network for Steiner Education. Since 2010, this Network in collaboration with the Alanus University publishes a peer-reviewed journal 'Research on Steiner Education'.

In conclusion, since the early 20$^{th}$ century, academia has been consistently rejecting a claim of Steiner and his followers that anthroposophy is a scientific discipline with its own epistemological standpoint and method of research. Nevertheless, in the last two decades

there has been a growing interest among academic researchers towards anthroposophy, in general, and to Waldorf education, in particular, as objects of research, and an increase in collaboration between anthroposophical educational institutions and universities, which led to the accreditation of a number of Waldorf teacher training courses as Higher Education programmes.

The above conclusions indicate that the collaboration of the School first with a College of Education and later with the University and the accreditation of the School's Seminar as a BA programme was not an isolated development but a constitutive part of a wider cultural trend in the academia and universities.

# 4 Design and implementation of the research

In this chapter I describe the research site, outline the original design of the research and explain why I needed to reconsider it when the research started. I provide details of data collection. This is followed by a case study of the BA learning culture, which I wrote after the first round of data collection. The chapter concludes with an outline of further data collection and analysis by applying Bourdieu's theoretical framework, presented in the following chapter.

## 4.1 Research site

### *4.1.1 The BA*

The BA was established and delivered for seventeen years by co-workers of the School and members of the faculties of two higher education institutions, in collaboration. The BA was accredited in 1997 with a College of Education, which a few years later merged with the University. After the merger, the School and the University drew a formal agreement about programme development and delivery and assessment of students' coursework and practice. The agreement assigned the primary responsibility for the modules of the BA to the University, including maintenance of academic quality and standards. The two parties of the agreement jointly owned the intellectual property of the programme. The agreement specified that the students undertaking the programme would be registered with the University as students and entitled to the rights and privileges accorded by the University to students. The agreement was reviewed and reaffirmed in 2007. It was dissolved with consent of both parties in July 2014, after the graduation of the last cohort of students, who had started the programme in 2010.

At the start of the research in 2010, the BA had four stages (see Fig. 4.1). The last Honours stage was developed for the 2011/2012 academic year but never realised, due to the decision taken by the University in August 2011 to suspend admission of students to stages one and four. The suspension remained in force until the cessation of the BA in 2014. In the 2011/2012 academic year, when the data collection started, there were 52 students enrolled to the programme, 29 of them from the School and 23 from other organisations (Table 4.1).

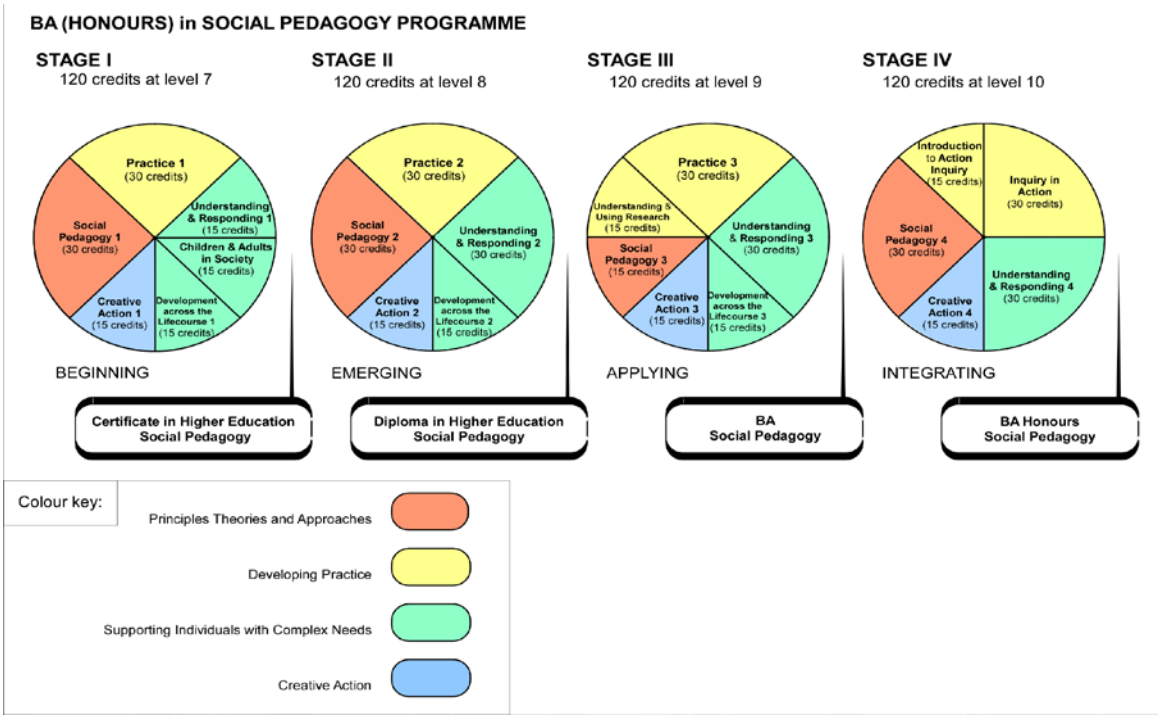


Fig. 4.1 Structure of BA (Honours) in Social Pedagogy programme (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section A, 2011, p. 6)

| Stage/Year of the BA | Cohort start year | Number of students from the School | Number of students from other organisations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stage 1, Year 2 | 2010 | 5 | 4 |
| Stage 2, Year 3 | 2009 | 9 | 11 |
| Stage 3, Year 4 | 2008 | 15 | 8 |

Table 4.1 Cohorts of BA students at the start of 2011/2012 academic year

Nationalities of students were diverse: about half of them were from the UK and countries of the European Union (Germany, Holland, Spain, Czech Republic and Bulgaria); others were from Brazil, Chile, USA, Israel, India, Thailand, Korea and Japan.

The School provided financial sponsorship to its students by paying university fees and covering study expenses. At the beginning of stage one, each student and his/her personal and practice tutors drew up a formal agreement, called Personal Development Plan (PDP), 'to ensure that each student's individual learning and development needs are addressed' (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section A, 2011, p. 5). The PDP included

- confirmation of the School's sponsorship of the student for the current stage of the BA;
- student's personal information, reflections and self-assessment, relevant to their study;
- student's learning goals and aims and self-assessed areas of strength and development;
- student's work tasks and responsibilities in the School and learning opportunities arising from them;
- personal needs and health concerns of the student;
- arrangements in regard to tutors' support and assessment of practice;
- a statement about confidentiality of information shared between the student and tutors.

(BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section B, 2010, pp. 52-60)

At the beginning and at the end of each stage, a student and tutors reviewed the student's PDP. After the end of stage review, tutors made a recommendation to the School management about whether the School should continue sponsoring their tutee for the following stage.

Each student had a training team, comprised of his/her practice tutor, personal tutor and practice supervisor. A practice tutor, or link tutor, supervised and supported the student at his/her workplace. A personal tutor provided academic and personal support to the student. A practice supervisor was assigned to the student during periods of work practice for coordination and assessment. Two tutors and a practice supervisor read the student's learning journal and had regular one-to-one meetings with the student: the practice tutor met with the student fortnightly and the personal tutor and practice supervisor weekly. Together, they met with the student five times during each stage of the BA: twice to review the student's PDP and three times to assess the student's practice, prior to the commencement of a practice period, in the middle and at the end of it. All tutors and practice supervisors were workers of the School and two other organisations which had students enrolled on the BA. In the past, all of them had completed either the BA or its predecessor in the School. At stage three, while studying the module 'Understanding and using research', students received tutorial support from University lecturers, who delivered this module.

The design of the programme followed from its work-based and part-time mode of study. The BA was four years long (five years with the Honours stage), which is one year longer than a full-time Bachelor of Arts course. During stages one and two, students attended programme sessions, held at the School, one day a week. At stage three, weekly sessions were replaced by six blocks of sessions, three to five days long, held at the University.

All the BA modular courses, except two, were taught by workers of the School and one other organisation, some of whom were appointed honorary members of the University faculty. University lecturers were taking part in the delivery of two courses: 'Development across the life course' at stages one, two and three and 'Understanding and using research' at stage three. Operationally, the BA was run by the Programme Administration Team (PAT). The PAT included two Programme Directors, three coordinators of the BA stages, and several BA teachers and tutors. All of them, apart from one Programme Director, who was a member of the University staff, were workers at the School and one other organisation, which had a second largest number of students enrolled on the BA after the School.

For many years prior to the BA, the School had been running an in-service training programme of weekly seminar sessions (hereafter referred to as the Seminar). At the Seminar, School co-workers studied curative education, an approach to care and education for children with special needs, based on the anthroposophical view of human development. The content of the courses of the first accredited BA programme was based on the curriculum of the Seminar. For a re-accreditation of the BA with the University, the courses were re-written to include academic disciplinary knowledge, whilst leaving the anthroposophical 'backbone' of the BA curriculum in place. Reading lists for most of the courses contained both anthroposophical and academic literature. The BA Handbook for students described anthroposophy as a worldview and a scientific approach that adds a spiritual dimension to the holistic understanding of the human being and human interrelationships (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section A, 2011, p. 4).

Each of the first three stages of the BA contained five or six taught courses and a period of assessed work practice (see Fig. 4.1). Four courses ran through all three stages: Social Pedagogy, Understanding and Responding, Development across the Lifecourse and Creative Action. Delivery and assessment of almost all of the courses required from students to apply the content of the courses in their work. For example, at stage one an assessment for the Social Pedagogy course was an essay in which a student reflected on

his/her observations and experiences at work in relation to the pedagogical principles, contained in the course. At stage two, a student presented a paper with reflections on his/her social pedagogical skills, backed by the evidence from work practice. At stage three, an assessment for the course was an oral presentation and a paper about a study of an individual with whom a student was currently working or worked in the past (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section B, 2010, p. 5; Section C, 2012, p. 10; Section D, 2012, p. 43).

Throughout the studies students were required to keep learning journals, making entries on a weekly basis and more frequently during periods of assessed work practice. Students were expected to use their learning journals as a source of material for all written assignments and practice reports (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section A, 2011, p. 26). Learning journals were also used at tutorials and practice assessment meetings.

Each stage of the BA, except stage four, contained a Practice module based on a period of assessed work practice. At stage one, the length of the assessed practice was 150 hours over 10 weeks; at stage two, 300 hours over 20 weeks; at stage three, 600 hours over 20 weeks. Students were involved in setting goals for practice periods at pre-practice meetings together with their training teams and then in reviewing their practice and assessing the attainment of these goals at the meetings in the middle and at the end of the practice periods. The work practice was assessed in the following five areas:

1. Care of the individual; provision of quality support to individuals with complex needs.
2. Observing, recording and care planning; organisation and management.
3. Communication, team working and collaborative practice.
4. Application of principles, theory and knowledge to practice; integration of theory and practice.
5. Reflection on personal and professional development.

(BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section B, 2010, p. 17; Section D, 2012, p. 26)

At the end of practice periods at stages one and two, students wrote concise reports with self-evaluations of their progress made in the areas one to five. At stage three, after the completion of a practice period, students wrote free-style assignments with self-evaluation of their personal and professional development, annotated to specific criteria in the areas one to four, and compiled portfolios of evidence of the claimed development from their work practice. At stages one and two, the Practice module was assessed as ‘pass’ or ‘fail’

and, at stage three, on a 21-point common assessment scale with six grades from ‘outstanding’ to ‘clear fail’.

There was one module that stood out in the BA curriculum and was popular with many students. It was the Creative Action course, running through three stages of the BA. The course engaged students in arts and crafts and in acting on stage. At stage one, students were introduced to a range of artistic activities and involved in observation of works of art. For assessment, students wrote assignments, in which they reflected on their experiences of creating artefacts and observing art in relation to their work practice. At stage two, the entire student cohort prepared and performed for an audience a play of their choosing. For assessment, students wrote assignments, in which they drew on theories about teamwork and reflected on their experiences of working together on the play. At stage three, students used arts and crafts to explore a chosen topic, related to intuition and ‘unconscious competencies’, which they had developed in their work. For assessment, students compiled portfolios of their own artworks and works of artists, related to the chosen topic, wrote reflective papers and reviewed artworks of two fellow students.

Submitting their assignments and portfolios, students followed a standard University procedure. The assignments were marked with the use of a Common Assessment Scale by the BA teachers and tutors and, selectively, by an external examiner, appointed by the University. Students were given feedback on their assignments within four weeks after submission.

### *4.1.2 The School*

The School was a well-established institution which had a long history of providing care and education for children and young people with complex needs (hereafter referred to as pupils). Pupils were accommodated in large households, which were referred to in the School as ‘house communities’ or ‘houses’. During school terms, they attended classes and therapeutic activities, worked in craft workshops, gardens and at the farm, which were all part of the School provision of care and education. Some of the pupils were boarders for 40 to 52 weeks a year; others attended it daily during school terms and for respite provision between terms.

The School was a charity (not-for-profit) organisation with about a third of its staff being voluntary workers (see Table 4.2). At the start of the research, half of the voluntary workers were young people from the UK and overseas, who, after having finished secondary education, were spending a gap year in the School. They were referred to in the

School as short-term or Foundation Year co-workers. After completing a year of voluntary work in the School, some of them enrolled on the BA, while remaining voluntary workers for the duration of their studies. All voluntary workers, both students and short term co-workers, were members of the house communities. About a third of the School staff, referred to as long-term co-workers, were members of a life-sharing community, founded on the ideas of anthroposophy. They and their families were accommodated on School premises and their living expenses were covered by the charity. The rest of the School staff were employees. They received salaries and lived outwith School premises. Table 4.2 presents overall numbers of School workers and numbers of workers per category from 2007 to 2014. Among the students of the 2008, 2009 and 2010 cohorts, the majority of those from the School were voluntary co-workers. Only three students were School long-term co-workers (two in the 2008 cohort and one in the 2009 cohort). There were no School employees among students of the three cohorts.

| | Voluntary workers | | Long-term co-workers | Employees | Overall number of staff |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Students | Short-term co-workers | | | |
| April 2007 | 47 | 47 | 66 | 73 | 233 |
| April 2008 | 51 | 41 | 65 | 73 | 230 |
| April 2009 | 46 | 44 | 64 | 62 | 216 |
| June 2010 | 40 | 47 | 64 | 63 | 214 |
| May 2011 | 42 | 46 | 66 | 61 | 215 |
| January 2012 | 22 | 60 | 71 | 60 | 213 |
| February 2013 | 11 | 71 | 77 | 62 | 221 |
| February 2014 | 5 | 69 | 77 | 75 | 226 |

Table 4.2 School staff, per category and overall in 2007 – 2014 (numerical data is compiled from administrative reports about the School staff)

At the time of the research, the School had eleven house communities, which accommodated pupils, short-term co-workers, students and some of the long-term co-workers and members of their families. Each house community was headed by one or two leaders, called house coordinators, who were long-term co-workers or employees. Daily care of pupils and household work in the houses were done by short-term co-workers and students. They were also assisting teachers in classes and craft masters in workshops. These tasks occupied them from morning till evening, with only one hour a day and one

whole day a week being available to them as their 'free time'. Students were released for one day a week to attend sessions of the BA and, in addition, were allocated time for self-study – between five and ten hours each week during an academic term. Most of the short-term co-workers stayed in the School for one year. The largest annual intake of new co-workers was in August, at the start of a school year, when up to eighty percent of care workers in each house community were newcomers. At that time, students could move from one house community to another with permission from house coordinators.

| Cohort start year | Number of students at the start of stage 1 | Dropout/intake during stage 1 | Dropout/intake during stage 2 | Dropout/intake during stage 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2003 | 12 | -1 | -1 +3 | -1 |
| 2004 | 14 | -2 +2 | -1 | -4 |
| 2005 | 12 | 0 | -2 +2 | -3 +2 |
| 2006 | 13 | -5 | -2 | -2 |
| 2007 | 18 | -3 +2 | -2 | -4 |
| 2008 | 16 | -1 | -1 | -5 +1 |
| 2009 | 7 | +1 | +1 | -1 |
| 2010 | 10 | -5 | -1 | 0 |

Table 4.3 Number of students from the School in 2003-2010 cohorts: at the start of stage one; dropout (-n) and intake (+n) of students during each stage (numerical data is compiled from the lists of student cohorts)

Short-term co-workers attended weekly sessions of an in-service training programme, called the Foundation Year course. Only after completing this year-long programme, could co-workers enrol on the BA. As Table 4.3 shows, the numbers of students at the start of stage one varied from year to year. Comparison of these figures with the numbers of short-term co-workers in Table 4.2 indicates that between 15% and 30% of short-term co-workers were enrolling on to the BA between 2008 and 2010. A dropout of students from the BA also varied from cohort to cohort. For the 2010 cohort it reached 60% of the number of students who started stage one. In contrast, the 2009 cohort lost only one of its members over four years. The loss of students was offset by annual enrolment of new students to various stages of the BA through the Accelerated Entry route. This route was open to long-term co-workers of the School.

At the point of graduation, a student would have spent no less than five years in the School. Graduates had no formal obligations to continue working in the School. Their retention varied widely from one cohort to another (see Table 4.4). In total, 54% of School workers, who graduated with the BA in 2004 – 2014, stayed on in the School after graduation, and 33% of graduates remained in the School longer than two years. Subtracting from the two 'Total' numbers the number of graduated long-term co-workers (14) reduced the retention rate to 46% and 22%, respectively. In other words, while about half of those graduates, who were voluntary workers at the time of graduation, stayed on in the School, half of them left the School within two years after graduation.

| Graduation year | Number of graduates from the School | Graduates retained by the School | | Number of graduates retained longer than for 2 years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | number | % from total number | |
| 2004 | 4 | 3 | 75% | 3 |
| 2005 | 12 | 8 | 66% | 5 |
| 2006 | 15 | 10 | 60% | 8 |
| 2007 | 12 | 10 | 83% | 6 |
| 2008 | 9 | 2 | 22% | 1 |
| 2009 | 11 | 3 | 27% | 2 |
| 2010 | 4 | 1 | 25% | 1 |
| 2011 | 11 | 9 | 81% | 6 |
| 2012 | 10 | 5 | 50% | 0 |
| 2013 | 8 | 2 | 28% | 0 |
| 2014 | 4 | 1 | 25% | 1 |
| **Total** | **101** | **54** | **54%** | **33** |

Table 4.4 Retention of BA graduates by the School (numerical data is compiled from the lists of student cohorts and of members of the School staff)

## 4.2 Design and implementation of the research

### *4.2.1 Selection of participants*

In order to investigate the impact of BA and organisational fields on student learning and identities throughout the period of their studies, the research was designed as a five-year project which incorporated a four-year ethnographic study of one cohort of students as they progressed from the beginning of stage one up to their graduation at the end of stage three.

In order to accommodate this, data collection was to commence shortly after the start of the project in October 2010 with the students of the 2010 cohort, who at that time were at the beginning of stage one. This original design had to be modified due to a one year delay in getting access to the research site and a small size of the 2010 cohort (see Table 4.1).

It took nine months after the start of the research to obtain consents from the BA Programme Administration Team (PAT), the School and two other organisations, whose workers were among the students of the 2010 cohort. There was a further delay, due to a review of the BA undertaken by the University in the autumn 2011, with the actual observations of sessions starting in December 2011. The one year delay in data collection was totally unexpected. I assumed that my position in the School would secure a quick approval of my research by the PAT and I was stunned by the level of scrutiny of the project by its members and by the deferral of the decision to the management of the School and of the two organisations. While the School management was forthcoming with the consent, the other two organisations were postponing their decisions for weeks.

The same power dynamic played up a year after the start of the data collection when I asked the PAT to consent to the use of students' assignment as research data. Again, the decision was deferred to the School and the two organisations. One of the organisations did not consent to using their students' practice assignments and portfolios as research data. Students from this organisation were told by the organisation's management group not to divulge any information related to their work with vulnerable individuals. In addition, I was requested by the management group to provide outcomes of the research concerning this organisation and the management group reserved a right to withdraw their consent to publication of these outcomes.

The management group of the second organisation told students from this organisation to seek permission of the group, if they wanted to make their practice assignments available to the research. The managers made it clear that obtaining such permission might involve them reading students' assignments. After students of the two organisations were notified about these conditions, imposed by the management groups, some of them withdrew from the research. Only one student from each organisation continued participating in the research. The imposed conditions made it impossible to maintain anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of the data provided by them. On practical and ethical grounds, data collection with the students from the two organisations was abandoned and the data previously collected from them was excluded from the analysis. The management

of the School, in contrast to the two other organisations, confirmed that practice assignments and portfolios of the School's students could be collected and used as research data.

The delay in starting data collection, the small size of the 2010 cohort and the absence of a new cohort of stage one students necessitated changing the original design and expanding data collection to all three remaining cohorts of students (see Table 4.1). The sampling of participants, which was originally planned to be purposive in regard to research objectives and restricted to one cohort, turned into opportunistic convenience sampling (Maxwell 2012) across the whole population of students, with students choosing whether to take part in the research, rather than being selected by me.

At the request of the PAT, I sent emails to all students, asking them to consider taking part in the research. I met with each of those students, who replied positively, at a one-to-one meeting, where I provided information and answered questions about the research, the process of interviewing and the use of interview transcripts and students' assignments as research data. I made it clear to the students that, even though the collected data would be anonymised, students' colleagues would likely to be able to identify them in the research outcomes. I asked students to give separate consents to be interviewed and to provide their assignments as research data, with an understanding that they could withdraw their consent completely or in regard to any part of the data, provided by them, until the end of the data collection period. Students notified me about their decision by returning their consent forms by post.

A half of students from the School consented to being interviewed and a quarter of them provided their assignments to the research, though the numbers varied across the three cohorts. In the 2008 cohort four out fifteen students from the School were interviewed and two of them provided assignments, in the 2009 cohort six out of nine students were interviewed and four provided assignments, and in the 2010 cohort four out of five students were interviewed and two provided assignments (see Table 4.5).

Prior to commencing the research, I intended to interview tutors and practice supervisors of each participating student. After the start of data collection, I approached a number of them, but only one practice supervisor agreed to be interviewed about his supervisee. All BA teachers whose sessions I observed agreed to be interviewed, as well as one former BA programme director. Two other former BA programme directors were interviewed for the

earlier research project, undertaken in 2007, and consented at that time that their interviews could be used as secondary research data.

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 present information about research participants and collected data.

| Participant | Collected data |
|---|---|
| **Anna**<br>2008 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community<br>24 years old at the start of the research<br>German | • 3 interviews at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3 |
| **Jane**<br>2008 cohort<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School,<br>House coordinator of a house community<br>32 years old at the start of the research<br>Dutch | • 2 interviews at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3 |
| **John**<br>2009 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Assistant of house coordinator in a house community<br>24 years old at the start of the research<br>German | • 1 interview at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding'<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Creative Action' |
| **Peter**<br>2009 cohort<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Member of a management team in a house community<br>27 years old at the start of the research<br>British | • 1 interview at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding' |
| **Lisa**<br>2009 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Teacher and a member of a house community<br>28 years old at the start of the research<br>Czech | • 1 interview at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding' |
| **Beth**<br>2009 cohort | • 1 interview at the end of stage 3<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the |

| | |
|---|---|
| Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community and teacher assistant<br>24 years old at the start of the research<br>British | Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding' |
| **Max**<br>2010 cohort<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Care worker in a house community<br>27 years old at the start of the research<br>Bulgarian | • 5 interviews at the end of stages 1, 2 and 3<br>• Self-assessment report for the Practice module at stage 2<br>• Assignment for the stage 2 course 'Creative Action'<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding' |
| **Ruth**<br>2010 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community<br>23 years old at the start of the research<br>British | • 4 interviews at the end of stages 1, 2 and 3<br>• Self-assessment report for the Practice module at stage 2<br>• Assignment and portfolio for the Practice module at stage 3<br>• Assignment for the stage 3 course 'Organisational development – Understanding and Responding' |
| **Student**<br>2008 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community | • 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **Student**<br>2008 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Craft master; member of a house community | • 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **Student**<br>2009 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community | • 1 interview during the second round of data collection |
| **Student**<br>2009 cohort<br>Voluntary worker from the School<br>Care worker in a house community | • 1 interview during the second round of data collection |
| **Student**<br>2010 cohort | • 1 interview during the first round of data collection |

| | |
|---|---|
| Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community | |
| **Student**<br>2010 cohort<br>Voluntary worker in the School<br>Care worker in a house community | • 1 interview during the second round of data collection |

Table 4.5 BA students who took part in interviews and provided data to the research

| Participant | Collected data |
|---|---|
| **BA practice supervisor**<br>Employee in the School<br>Teacher | 1 interview at the end of Max's stage 2 |
| **BA teacher**<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Former teacher<br>Delivered parts of the courses 'Social Pedagogy' and 'Understanding and Responding' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Former teacher<br>Delivered parts of the courses 'Social Pedagogy', 'Understanding and Responding' and 'Creative Action' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Senior manager<br>Delivered part of the course 'Understanding and Responding' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Therapy practitioner<br>Delivered part of the course 'Creative Action' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |

| | |
|---|---|
| Therapy practitioner<br>Delivered part of the course 'Creative Action' | |
| **BA teacher**<br>Co-worker of an organisation, which workers studied at the BA<br>Delivered part of the course 'Development across the Lifecourse' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Lecturer of the University<br>Delivered part of the course 'Development across the Lifecourse' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>Lecturer of the University<br>Delivered part of the course 'Development across the Lifecourse' | 1 interview during the first round of data collection |
| **BA teacher**<br>**Former BA programme director**<br>Retired long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Former member of a working group for initial accreditation of the BA<br>Delivered part of the course 'Social Pedagogy' | 2 interviews<br>Conducted in 2007 and during the first round of data collection |
| **Former BA programme director**<br>Retired long-term co-worker and a member of the life-sharing community of the School<br>Former member of a working group for initial accreditation of the BA | 1 interview<br>Conducted in 2007 |
| **Former BA programme director**<br>Former member of the College/University staff<br>Former member of a working group for initial accreditation of the BA | 1 interview<br>Conducted in 2014 |

Table 4.6 BA teachers, tutors and former programme directors who took part in interviews

### *4.2.2 Data collection*

To collect data, I used ethnographic methods of non-participant observation, semi-structured interview and document collection (Lofland et al. 2006; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

At the PAT meeting, where I finally got permission to start observations, I was told to refrain from participating in the sessions and not to make audio or video recording. At every observation, I made handwritten notes of proceedings and of verbal exchanges between participants. I transcribed my notes on the day of observation, complementing them with those details which I could recollect.

I was also asked by some PAT members not to attend a session, if any of the students objected to that. To reduce a chance of that, before starting observations, I made presentations about the research to each cohort of students. I obtained written consents for observations of sessions from all students and teachers with a clause stating that they were able to withdraw their consent at any time. Twice I was informed by a teacher that some students felt uncomfortable with my presence at the sessions where they were to make oral presentations. Twice teachers themselves declined my request to observe their sessions: the first time, out of concern that students would be impeded to share confidential information about vulnerable individuals they worked with and the second time without any explanation. In total, I made observations of 36 teaching sessions and seminars.

Interviews were conducted in different locations on the School campus. The majority of the interviews lasted between an hour and an hour-and-a half. On a few occasions, an interviewee felt that there was still more to say on the topics raised during the interview, and a follow-up interview was arranged. Prior to each interview, I prepared a schedule of topics to be covered and questions to be asked but was not constrained by them and conducted an interview as a free-flowing conversation. All interviews were conducted by me. In total, I conducted 24 interviews with students from the School and 14 interviews with BA teachers, a practice supervisor and former programme directors.

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (word for word). Making a transcription, I focused on what, rather than how, the interviewee said, leaving out such details as pitch of voice, intonation, pause, repeat, cough, laughter, sigh and hesitation. These features are important for analysing interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee and their ‘positioning’ during the interview (Davies and Harre 1990), or what is known in narrative analysis as ‘narrative work’ (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). The investigation of such dynamics of interview interaction was not conducted in this research because of the analytic focus on the participants’ meanings and reasons. Accordingly, in the transcriptions, all the above features, except longer pauses and laughter, were omitted. To make the transcripts more readable and understandable, free-flowing speech was

formatted into sentences. Such formatting is unlikely to have distorted the meaning of what interviewees said, because their speech was well-formed, as they had extensive practice in articulating their thoughts and expressing their opinions during seminars and tutorials.

Nevertheless, as Lapadat (2000) and Mishler (1991) pointed out, every transcript is an interpretation of what was said in the interview, or, more precisely, of what a transcriber hears in the audio recording. In this research, discrepancy between the transcripts of the interviews and what the participants relayed in their speech is unlikely to be substantial, because all the transcriptions were made by me, the interviewer, and because of my familiarity, as an insider, with the context of participants' life, work and study in the School. During the interviews, I was focusing on understanding interviewees' replies to my questions about what I observed at the BA sessions or read in their assignments, clarifying my questions and asking interviewees to clarify their replies. This reduces the likelihood that I misunderstood the interviewees during the interviews, misrepresented their speech in the transcripts and misinterpreted what they meant in subsequent analysis.

The transcripts were anonymised by substituting personal names with fictional names or generalised categories of people in square brackets, by replacing names of locations by words-placeholders in square brackets, and by removing personal information about individuals, other than the participants of the research. Some personal information about the participants was retained in the transcripts and used in the analysis with their explicit consent.

A collection of documents, used in the analysis, is comprised of students' assignments, practice reports and practice portfolios, and School and BA documents. I collected 26 students' course assignments, practice reports and practice portfolios, which were anonymised by students prior to their submission for assessment (see Table 4.5). The School and BA documents, collected with the consents of the School management and the PAT, are as follows:

- Lists of student cohorts from 2003 through to 2014;
- BA in Social Pedagogy Handbooks, Sections A, B, C and D from 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively;
- Handouts to students at the observed sessions and workshops;
- Administrative reports and lists of the School staff roll from 2007 through to 2014;
- School Business Plan from 2011;

- Selected internal correspondence between the School management, house coordinators and other School workers, relating to the process of re-accreditation of the BA between 2011 and 2014.

There were three rounds of data collection: December 2011 – June 2012, December 2012 – July 2013 and March 2014 – August 2014.

The first round was a pilot test of data collection strategy. It was meant to be guided by the research objectives (pp.19-20), but, in hindsight, it was strongly influenced by my implicit goals for undertaking the research (see section 1.2). This skewed the focus of my observation towards the instances of students' critique or disagreements with teachers. As in this period I neither made up my mind about a conceptual framework of the research nor formulated research questions, the interviews of the first round covered a wide range of topics in a rather superficial way. By the end of this period, I obtained assignments for the Practice module and practice portfolios from two students of the 2008 cohort. These assignments contained rich accounts of their work practice, which allowed me to have multiple engaging interviews with the two students and to produce the first piece of Bourdieusian analysis, presented in section 5.2. I applied such strategy of interviewing students on the basis of their assignments to the data collection in two subsequent rounds.

The second and third rounds of data collection were guided by the research questions, formulated on the basis of Bourdieu's three-stage field analysis (p.64). I made only a few observations of sessions during the second round, as I focused on obtaining assignments and interviewing students of the 2009 cohort, who were about to complete their studies. I based interviews with them, as well as with two students from the 2010 cohort, on what they wrote in their assignments for the Practice module and for the course on organisational development. Students' assignments helped me to raise issues, which were important to students, and to build relationships of trust and solidarity, based on understanding of difference rather than similarity between us (Maxwell 2012). Establishing such relationships were important for two reasons: first, because of the power difference between our positions in the organisation and, second, because students' assignments contained sensitive information about their health and wellbeing, the use of which in the analysis required their explicit consent. My decision to include such information in the thesis depended on two conditions: it contributed to the developed analytic account and it was known to the colleagues and tutors of the student. Thus, those in the School, who could identify the participants, would not find in the thesis any factual information about

these individuals unknown to them. This, in my view, justifies inclusion students' sensitive information in the analytic account.

In regard to the difference between my position and students' positions in the School, it could be suggested that students self-censored what they said at the interviews, because I, the interviewer, was a senior manager in the School, or because they feared that their views would become known to their colleagues, tutors and supervisors. This might have been the case during the first round of data collection due to a review of the BA undertaken by the University at that time (see p.59), but it was unlikely during the other two rounds for the following reasons. My position in the School was not in the line of management for any of the participating students and, therefore, it was unlikely that they perceived me as their superior. I assured the participants that the transcripts of interviews will be anonymised and would not be disclosed to anyone in the School. I explicitly warned them that it was possible that they could be identified as research participants by their colleagues in the published outcomes of the research, though that would happen long after they graduated the BA and possibly left the School. Therefore, such a possibility was unlikely to have affected students' disclosures. At the interviews, I positioned myself as a researcher, undertaking an inquiry into the issues that concerned the participants. As an insider, I could sense when the interviewees were circumspect in their answers. Such situations were few. On the contrary, they often disclosed details, which were not included in their assignments, and were forthcoming with their views about the School and their house communities.

The third round of data collection ended with the graduation of the last cohort of students and the cessation of the BA. The last interview was with a former programme director and a member of the College and University faculty about the initial accreditation of the BA. This interview prompted me to develop an account about the accreditation and cessation of the BA and then to apply Bourdieusian analysis to discern the function of the BA in social reproduction of house communities and maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School (see section 5.3).

A year after the completion of data collection I turned to Archer's theoretical framework and formulated a new set research questions (p.113), which guided my analysis of students' interviews and assignments presented in chapters six and seven.

### *4.2.3 Data analysis*

My approach to the transcription of interviews, outlined above, is consistent with thematic narrative analysis (Riessman 2008), which pays minimal attention to how a narrative is

spoken or written, on structures of speech a narrator selects, audience, context of the interview, narrative work and complexities of transcription. The focus of thematic analysis is on what was said or written by research participants. According to Riessman (2008), data is interpreted in the light of themes developed by a researcher, influenced by a prior or emergent theory, purpose of the research and the data themselves.

The above applies to the analysis of collected data in this research with one caveat: themes which I developed on the first stage of analysis were unique for each participant. From texts of assignments and full transcripts of interviews, I selected pieces of interest and combined them under unique titles. I kept the selected pieces related to each participant in a separate file in a chronological order of events or interviews with the person. On the next stage of analysis, I wrote accounts about research participants and events, using the selected parts of assignments and interviews and relying as much as possible on participants' own words and expressions. It is to these emic accounts that I applied concepts and categories of the two theoretical frameworks and developed etic analytical accounts, presented in chapters 5, 7 and 8.

From a realist perspective, Maxwell (2012) draws a distinction between categorising and connecting strategies in qualitative data analysis. Categorising strategies are based on relationships of similarity, resemblance and commonality between entities or events, which are independent of their proximity in time or space. Ontologically, relations of similarity are virtual relations, which exist only as ideas. Categorising strategies use coding techniques to establish a similarity-based ordering of data that replaces the contiguity-based ordering in the original empirical material. Connecting strategies are based on relationships of contiguity between entities, their parts or events, which presume a real linkage, influence or association between separate phenomena. Relations of contiguity exist in the world independently of our knowledge about them as emergent properties and actual causal mechanisms and processes. Both categorising and connecting analytical strategies reduce data: categorising analysis – by decontextualising it; connecting analysis – by selecting pieces of data to create a narrative, profile or case study. Maxwell (2012) notes that qualitative data analysis usually involves sequential use of the two types of strategies: at each point of the analysis a researcher either takes a categorising step, looking for similarities and differences in data, or a connecting steps, looking for actual connections between things and events.

In this research, the use of connecting strategies was prevalent, because of its original objectives to investigate the dynamics of formation and transformation of the BA learning culture and the process of construction of students' identities. From the outset of my analysis, I avoided fragmenting and decontextualising data. The selections of extracts of interviews and assignments and the accounts developed from these selections preserved associations, connections and chronology of events in the lives of research participants and in the history of the School and the BA. These connecting steps followed by a categorising move: applying Bourdieu's and Archer's concepts I found similarities and differences in patterning of the social space of the School (in Bourdieusian analysis) and in reflexive deliberations and actions of research participants (in Archerian analysis). In the following connecting step of Bourdieusian analysis, I established the actual mechanism of social reproduction in the School and the function of the BA in it. In the connecting steps of Archerian analysis, I discerned processes of social transformation in the School and personal development of research participants and established causal links between these processes and the BA practices and curriculum.

The use of connecting analytic strategies in this research led to the presentation of research outcomes in the format of case studies. I wrote the first case study after the first round of data collection. I reproduce it in the next section, firstly, because it provides a close-to-data description of the BA and, though incomplete, of the School, and, secondly, because it allows an understanding of why I turned to Bourdieu's theoretical framework to analyse structuring of the social space of the School. I use present tense in regard to the BA for at the time of writing it was still in existence.

## 4.3 Case study of the BA learning culture

Following observations of teaching sessions and interviews with teachers and students, it became evident that the BA learning culture is part and parcel of the organisational culture of the School. The reason for this lies in the history of the School: the BA is a successor of its long-running in-service training Seminar. Despite some substantial changes to the Seminar curriculum, which were made in order to achieve a University accreditation, the BA retained close links with the School, which hosts it, supplies students and provides teachers, tutors and one of the two co-directors. Below, I describe the BA learning and teaching practices, which, I argue, are strongly conditioned by organisational practices of the School.

The BA curriculum is a mix of taught courses, artistic activities and work-based practice. An orientation to work practice was prevalent at almost all observed sessions with teachers devoting much time at their sessions to soliciting from students the accounts of their experiences of work and life in the School and to recalling their own experiences. A teacher, who delivers parts of the course 'Understanding and responding' at stages one and two, said that he does not teach theory at his sessions but tries to help students to realise that they have the answers within themselves. He said:

> 'I am teaching those subjects, because I have my personal experiences and that's what I want to help students to realise: be in touch with your own personal experiences.'

An emphasis on learning from experience is a characteristic feature of learning and teaching practices at the BA. As the majority of students are young people, for whom the School is their first place of work, and because of their total immersion in the work and life of their house communities, such emphasis leads to foregrounding of the School organisational culture and work practices during teaching sessions.

Artistic activities of the course 'Creative action' are also oriented to students' work practice. For example, during a session on black-and-white drawing, students of the 2010 cohort were tasked to draw a portrait of a vulnerable individual from their house community. After the session, a teacher who led the class told me that he uses drawing as a tool for teaching students how to make observations of a human being and to be attentive to features, characteristic of various types of learning disability. The teacher stressed the importance for students to develop a skill of observing individuals in order to succeed with assignments throughout their studies. Indeed, students at stage three told me that for almost every assignment at stages one and two, they were required to make purposeful observations of vulnerable individuals and to write about their work, quoting their reflective journals. At stage three, an assignment for the course 'Social pedagogy' also involves a prolonged observation of a vulnerable individual.

At stage two, the course 'Creative action' involves preparation and performing a play by the whole student cohort. The BA Handbook describes this group project as learning to work in a team, supported by theories about group processes. It is also presented as involving students' reflection about their intuitive practice, - a theme, which is developed further as a specific topic of the same course at stage three. It is a widely held belief among

BA teachers that art activities help students develop creativity in their work with vulnerable individuals and merge their developing intuition with knowledge.

I observed acting being used also during one of the sessions of the course 'Development across the lifecourse'. A teacher, who is a producer in an amateur theatre, engaged students in enacting a short play about a group of refugees during the Balkan war in the 1990s. During the session, the teacher drew a parallel between the experiences of a refugee and of a person, going through a mid-life crisis. In an interview, the teacher said:

> 'It's been something that kind of helps students to think about [human development in the mid-life period] beyond their ordinary thinking, because their experiences, ones who are younger anyway, they are limited. It is narrative that is always more interesting, even if it is not a real narrative. You imagine that and it draws you and it's much easier than just to carry the facts.'

A similar argument was put to me by a teacher who delivered sessions on 'creative speech' for the course 'Creative action' at stage one. The teacher said that he brings storytelling and imaginative acting into his every session, because students are 'too young to reflect on their use of language', while 'reflection is something that comes later in life'. He stressed that acting helps students to become able 'to slip into a body' of another person and 'to feel more real compassion' with that person. This way of teaching at the BA reflects the organisational ethos of the School, which foregrounds empathy as a virtue of communal life and work.

At the observed sessions, there were other examples of teaching practices which involved evoking students' empathy. At a session on the topic of attachments in early childhood for the stage two course 'Understanding and responding', a teacher read out an emotionally-charged description of a birth of a baby with a disability. In an interview after the session, he said:

> 'I wanted to wake them up […] It's so far away from our experience of what it's like to have a disabled child born into your family. You have to say like this.'

The teacher said that at his sessions he strives 'to help students to realise their part in helping people with learning disabilities to become fuller human beings'. In his view, this is the aim of the BA. These words can also be regarded as an expression of a belief, shared by BA teachers and tutors, long-term co-workers of the School, which is based on the anthroposophic view of human being, developed in the works of Steiner (e.g. Steiner

2004). This view is articulated in a recently produced organisational document as the 'first essential', underlying all work in the School:

> 'The first essential is the recognition that each individual is a unique spiritual being, which is 'clothed' with an outer 'appearance' which may have additional support needs. It is the task of every [School] co-worker to reach beyond and touch this inner unique spiritual being and hence relate to that person in a dignified way' (School Business Plan, 2011).

The BA teacher, who is also a senior manager in the School, was one of the authors of this organisational document.

The taught courses of the BA curriculum are based both on anthroposophy, a spiritual doctrine of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, and on mainstream approaches. The latter is an umbrella term, used by teachers, tutors and students for all non-anthroposophical content in the BA curriculum. Anthroposophy is defined in the BA Handbook (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section A, 2011, p. 4) as 'a worldview and scientific approach that adds a spiritual dimension to the holistic understanding of the human being and human interrelationships.' The anthroposophical view of human being is considered by many long-term co-workers as a foundation of their approach to care and education of vulnerable children and young people. For many years this approach was taught at the Seminar. However, there were differences in the opinions of the interviewed teachers on the importance of anthroposophy for students. Thus, one teacher explained why anthroposophy as a spiritual doctrine was helpful to students:

> 'If you have an absolute conviction, more than a belief, conviction that that there is more to a disabled child or a person with challenging behaviour than their disability or behaviour […] that also gives you strength to deal with it'.

According to this teacher, anthroposophy forms a foundation for professional values and attitudes of 'social pedagogues', which are taught to students, and therefore it is indispensable in the BA curriculum. In contrast, another teacher was sceptical about the practical usefulness of anthroposophical knowledge for students' daily work. He said that even those students, who express interest in anthroposophy, do not use Steiner's ideas in their work practice. He pointed out that students get enthusiastic and write long entries in their learning journals about mainstream theories and approaches, which, he claimed, are more accessible and usable, than the anthroposophical ones. The same teacher questioned

whether students develop a coherent view on anthroposophy. He said that in all his years with the BA he was trying to encourage students to critique Steiner and anthroposophy but what he was getting from them was ‘a very honest view that it is all very confusing or a response like ‘Oh, I find it interesting’’. The teacher suggested that the number of anthroposophy-based courses in the BA curriculum could be reduced once a review of the BA conducted by the University has been completed.

The interviewed teachers articulated the diversity of opinions about anthroposophy in the School. This diversity reflects a process of cultural transformation of the School, which started when the BA curriculum was expanded beyond anthroposophy-based courses. This expansion led to mainstream theories and approaches becoming known in the School through BA students and graduates. Though many long-term co-workers still identify themselves as followers of anthroposophy, for most of them it is no longer an article of faith. Such ideological emancipation of School co-workers led to a number of organisational traditions and rituals being transformed or completely abandoned. But, the routines of life and work in the house communities remain largely unchanged.

Interviews with students revealed a wide spread of opinions about anthroposophical knowledge and mainstream approaches. Some students said that they enjoy studying anthroposophy and that it makes sense to them, while others admitted that they struggle with assignments for the anthroposophy-based courses and find it easier to apply mainstream approaches in their work. One student from the 2008 cohort said that a recent workshop on an anthroposophic theory of seven life processes made complete her understanding of it. She said that it was a demonstration by a teacher of practical application of the theory that was most helpful for her because she learns by putting things into practice. Another student from the same cohort said that he has reservations about the theory of seven life processes because, applying this theory, as he put it, ‘anything could fit anywhere and you can be correct with anything, if you have a good argument’. Several interviewed students from different cohorts said that they use both anthroposophical and mainstream approaches in their work practice and that this allows them to see vulnerable individuals in more depth. What matters to these students is that by applying a particular theory or approach in their work they can achieve some positive results, rather than whether or not it is based on anthroposophy.

All interviewed students emphasised the importance of their work to their studies. One student from the 2010 cohort said that theory makes sense to her only because she can

relate it to her work and life experiences. A student from the 2009 cohort went even further by saying that all he learns at the BA originates from his work. Another student from the 2009 cohort said that, for her, learning from experience is the only meaningful way to study about human beings:

> 'You need really see face to face and experience others, like living together … you need to see these people really close'.

This student also said:

> 'I think that people, who are not as much involved in the practice but only studying it, are not getting it. It's really a lot of theory stuff and you probably know everything about all of it, but you may still not know how to be with a Down syndrome lady that has her temper in the room.'

The foregrounding of practice and of learning from experience by the interviewed students reflects the fact that their work fully occupies their daily lives. For one day a week, students are released from their duties in house communities to attend lectures and seminars; and they are given between five and ten hours a week for self-studies. The rest of the time they spend in their house communities. This gives them a wealth of experience. A student from the 2009 cohort said that he learns about children the whole day, because 'living in a residential home gives you a way into their lives'. He said:

> 'There are many things in my mind and the course definitely helped me to bring them together and to give me a clear picture.'

Another student from the same cohort said that her study and work merge:

> 'When we are learning things I am thinking of situations when I could use it […] and also when I am here and situations happen then I am still thinking what we've learned in the class.'

Such fusion of work and study helps students avoid a clash between their roles as workers and students. All interviewed students identified themselves as co-workers, in the first place. Students of the stage three cohort said that having sessions at the University campus made them feel like real students and allowed them to switch off from their work. Most of the sessions at stages one and two take place on the School premises, while at stage three multi-day workshops are held at the University.

Each student has two tutors, a practice tutor, who is a house coordinator and a work supervisor of the student, and a personal tutor, who has a dual role of an academic mentor and a support person in the School. Students meet with their tutors weekly or fortnightly throughout the whole programme. Such an extensive tutor support may explain why during fifteen years of the BA there have been only a couple of cases, when a student dropped out from the BA by failing an assessment of an assignment or of work practice.

A teacher, who is also a personal tutor and a practice supervisor, pointed out in an interview that personal tutors are usually alerted by teachers and practice tutors at the first sign of a student failing in academic studies or practice and make sure that the student understand the situation and make steps to improve. He said that the views of personal tutors on their role 'have many colours and shades between a kind of a mentor figure and in some cases a soul friend'. He said that everybody in the University agrees that the overall tutor support of BA students is exceptional. He quoted a University lecturer who said that the BA has a 'Rolls-Royce model of tutor support'.

The teacher said that the generous support of students by their tutors has negative sides. One of them is excessive help, given by personal tutors to their students in writing assignments. To restrict this practice, the PAT ruled the previous year that a tutor should no longer read and give a student a feedback on a whole assignment before its submission. The teacher mentioned also that an assessment of practice can be particularly difficult, because both personal and practice tutors struggle 'to separate professional and personal'. The teacher said that the tutors' role as assessors of student's practice does not sit easily with the way of living in a community. A practice tutor lives with the student in the same house community for a number of years. A personal tutor supports the student throughout the years of study. This makes it difficult for tutors to form an impartial view on the student's practice and often brings an 'emotional element' at a meeting of tutors and practice supervisor at the end of a practice period, at which the assessment is finalised and announced to the student. The teacher brought an example of one of such meetings that was held recently, at which he was told by the student's tutors directly that the student was a really good student and therefore needed to have a good mark for practice. In the teacher's opinion, the process of assessment of practice has become much better after a position of practice supervisor was established a few years ago, and the responsibility for the assessment of practice was transferred from practice tutors to practice supervisors. The teacher noted that the assessment of students' practice is not an easy process as it requires from those, who are involved in it, a cultural change. He pointed out that tutors and

practice supervisors need ‘more training, so that they could be really competent’. Their competence, in his opinion, should include an ability to step back from their roles in the house communities and to exercise objectivity.

Another teacher, who teaches the course ‘Understanding and responding’ at stages one and two and marks students’ course assignments, said that he finds the whole process of marking assignments ‘unsatisfactory and incredibly subjective’. He said:

> ‘There I have to sit and write comments, which I know will have a huge effect on a person reading them. I would rather read assignment and then talk to the person who wrote it: What do you think? Do you think you’ve met criteria?’

Thus, the above indicates that BA tutors, teachers and practice supervisors struggle to exercise their BA roles in those aspects which clash with the ethos and practices of communal work and life in the School.

None of practice and personal tutors has volunteered to be interviewed about their tutees. They might have been concerned not to breach confidentiality of students’ personal information which is stipulated in their personal development plans. Interviewed students refrained from talking about relationships with their tutors, only expressing appreciation of tutors’ support.

Only once in all the interviews with students, a student from the 2008 cohort talked explicitly an issue of organisational power. The student said that during the module ‘Understanding and responding’ a small group of students, which she was a part of, decided to take as a case study what happened a year ago with one of the students of their cohort. This student was involved in an incident in his house community. After an internal inquiry into the incident senior managers requested him to leave the School. The interviewed student said:

> ‘We wanted to look at how he was asked to leave, how power was used […] I thought we would look into it and have interviews and talk about it […] because I want to be open, I don’t want to point fingers […] So, I wanted to understand it, and I felt that would give us the possibility to heal.’

But, she said, her group was not allowed to take this case for their joint assignment:

> ‘There was not a call from the people [in the School management] who felt strongly about it […] There was a conversation with my tutor that came back and said: ‘Don’t do it, not allowed’. And that is again exactly what I wanted to discuss.’

The student said that she was very upset by such prohibition because, as she put it, ‘this is the place that I love’. The other students of the cohort, who were interviewed, did not raise the issues of the dismissal of their fellow student and of the prohibition to take it as a case study. This fact indicates that there are some issues which are related to exercise of power within the organisation and that at least some students find it difficult or even impossible to address these issues in the course of their study.

The above analysis allows a characterisation of the learning culture of the BA as being part and parcel of the organisational culture of the School, with BA learning and teaching practices being strongly conditioned by organisational practices of the School. Gradual accommodation of organisational practices to the norms of academic assessment takes place within the School, though the practices and the ethos of communal work and life remain stable and largely unchanged. The inclusion of academic knowledge into the BA curriculum broke the dominance of the anthroposophic doctrine in the School, which led to ideological emancipation of School co-workers and transformation or abandonment of some long-standing organisational traditions. Though some teachers and tutors disagree with each other about the importance of anthroposophic knowledge in the BA curriculum, students are not constrained in what knowledge resources they choose. Practical orientation and diversity of resources of the BA curriculum led to close integration of students’ academic learning with their working practices. There is an indication that to some extent learning and teaching practices of the BA are affected by the organisational power within the School.

## 4.4 Further data collection and analysis

The above case study, written after the first round of data collection, gave a broad characterisation of the BA. In my opinion, which I held at that time, it went some way towards meeting the first and second objectives of the research, namely, to determine the characteristics and dynamic of learning cultures of the BA and to explore the ways in which the organisational field of the School impacts on them. However, interviews with students, conducted in the first round of the data collection, did not provide sufficient material for the investigation of dialogic speech as a mediational tool between the organisational field and individual agencies of students. It was mentioned above (p.19) that

the previous research, conducted in the School, suggested that due to the tension between the subject positions of students as workers and as learners some of the students developed critical views on organisational or learning practices. During the first round of data collection, only one interview with one participating student provided some material which substantiated this suggestion (see previous section). Other interviewed students gave positive and unproblematic accounts of their life, work and study in the School and did not express any critique or dissatisfaction with their studies. They were appreciative of their teachers and tutors.

The first round of data collection started soon after the University suspended the admission of students to the BA and appointed a panel to conduct its full review. During the review process, a number of students from each cohort were called by the panel to express their views about the programme. The panel concluded the review with a recommendation to restructure the BA into a full-time programme. This recommendation caused anxiety among the existing BA students who feared that the completion of their studies was at risk. These events may explain why the interviewed students did not express critical views about the BA and the School. A possibility that students self-censored their responses during the interviews led me to consider how to modify the data collection in order to break through the organisational discourse, articulated by students.

During the first round of data collection I obtained assignments and portfolios for the Practice module from two students of the 2008 cohort with their consent to use them in the research. The assignments and portfolios contained rich and detailed accounts of various work situations and students' reflections on them. This content allowed me during the interviews with the two students to engage them in nuanced conversations about their work and studies. I analysed their assignments and interviews by applying thematic analysis and Bourdieu's theoretical framework, outlined in section 5.1. Outcomes of the analysis are presented in section 5.2.

During the period of data collection, the BA review and re-accreditation process, conducted by the University, resulted in a decision made by the School management to break-up the partnership with the University. The events in the School, which led to this decision, provided additional data, which I also analysed within Bourdieu's theoretical framework. This analysis is presented in section 5.3.

# 5 Bourdieusian analysis of organisational fields of the School and the role of the BA in social reproduction

This chapter presents a Bourdieusian analysis of the collected empirical material. It starts with an outline of Bourdieu's theoretical tools and three-level methodology of field analysis. The analysis begins with the accounts of two students of the 2008 cohort (see Table 4.5), who occupied positions of voluntary care worker and house coordinator respectively. These accounts allow a characterisation of the social space of the School, composed of a field of house communities and a wider organisational field. The analysis of the events leading to the cessation of the BA reveals its role in the social reproduction of house communities and maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School. The events indicate the dominance of the field of house communities in the social space of the School.

The analysis proceeds to a characterisation of the positions of other participant students in the organisational fields of the School and their trajectories through these fields. It becomes evident that Bourdieusian analysis lacks theoretical concepts needed to examine the students' personal development and cannot satisfactorily explain some of their actions. These limitations suggest the need to look for another theoretical framework, which would allow an analysis of student agency and reflexivity.

## 5.1 Bourdieu's theoretical tools and methodology of field analysis

Bourdieu defined habitus, his main theoretical concept, as a system of durable (lasting over time) and transposable (to a variety of contexts) dispositions of mind and body which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices (Bourdieu 1990b, p.53). It is an individual property, which reflects the social aspects of one's life course: family upbringing, school education, class, gender, ethnicity etc. Habitus of an individual becomes homologous with a social space by the individual internalising its objective structure and socialising, through interaction with others, his/her subjective tendencies and inclinations. In spite of its match with the social space, habitus retains some degree of autonomy, being a source of individual creativity as well as of practical logic (Maton 2012). Bourdieu summed up attributes of habitus in the phrase 'structuring and structured structure'(Bourdieu 1990a, p.170): it is a structure in a sense that it is systematically ordered and patterned; it is structured by an individual's past and present circumstances; it is structuring, because it shapes an individual's present and future practices and through these practices re-orders the social space of action.

The above definitions point to Bourdieu's view of an individual action as a meeting of two evolving logics or histories: of the habitus of the individual and of the social space in which the individual acts (Bourdieu 1990b, p.52-65; Bourdieu 2000, p.150-151). For the latter Bourdieu uses the term 'field' to delimit an arena of social interaction, which has its specific rules, boundaries and internal divisions. People act, subject to their knowledge of the field in which they operate, their skills and dispositions (habitus), and according to their positions within the field, which correspond to certain combinations of economic, cultural and social capital. An assembly of existing positions constitutes structure of the field. People's strategies and actions are aimed at accumulating capital and improving their positions in the field. Driven by this interest, people struggle either for the preservation or for the transformation of the field, bringing to the competition all the relative power at their disposal (Bourdieu 1998a, p. 40-41). A social space of action is comprised of multiple fields: a field of power and specialised fields, dominant and subordinate (Thomson 2012).

According to Bourdieu, there is an 'ontological complicity' between habitus and field: field structures habitus, and habitus contributes to constituting field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and value, in which it is worth investing one's energy (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 127). The principle of 'ontological complicity' justifies making a correspondence between an autonomous field and a habitus that matches it. This defines a task of a researcher to analyse people's practices in a delineated social space with an aim to capture various types of habitus, which reflect a configuration of fields of the social space.

A habitus of a field compels individuals, who are active in the field, to internalise the field's doxa, i.e. a set of pre-reflective, taken-for-granted arbitrary assumptions, fundamental beliefs and values, which do not even need to be asserted in the form of an explicit, self-conscious dogma (Bourdieu 2000, p.16). A doxa of a field is a source of subjective misrecognition by individuals of objective conditions of the field, in which they operate (Deer 2012a). According to Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 1990b), misrecognition is necessary in order to obscure the implicit logic of practice with its struggle for maximizing capital, as its acknowledgement by individuals would threaten the very survival of a system based on the logic of practice. In Bourdieu's words, 'if the system is to work, the agents must not be entirely unaware of their exchanges ... while at the same time they must refuse to know and above all to recognise it' (Bourdieu 1977, p. 6). An implication of misrecognition for research is that reasons for actions, stated by participants, should not be taken at face value.

According to Bourdieu (1986), social practice is driven by people's interest towards maintaining and accumulating capital in its economic (monetary) form and symbolic form of social capital and cultural capital. Bourdieu distinguished three forms of cultural capital:

- embodied form, as long-lasting dispositions of mind and body (habitus);
- objectified form, as cultural goods and artefacts;
- institutionalised form, as recognised qualifications and competencies.

Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as an individual's social obligations due to membership in a social group. This type of capital requires constant labour of sociability, as it is based on mutual acquaintance and recognition between members of the group.

The above definitions point to the relational nature of social and cultural capital: they have no intrinsic value but are appraised by an individual in relations of recognition and misrecognition with other members of the group. The appraisal presupposes intervention of habitus as a socially constituted cognitive capacity (Moore 2012).

Maintenance of cultural and social capital entails reproduction of the social conditions of their accumulation. Bourdieu (1986) described a mechanism of social reproduction through the conversion of economic capital into cultural capital and inter-generational transfer of the latter by means of family upbringing and education. In this way Bourdieu used the notion of symbolic capital to explain social stratification of society and socialisation of new generations.

Symbolic capital can be also understood in terms of qualitative differences between members of a group or actors in an autonomous field (Moore 2012). In all fields, there are some individuals who develop well-formed habitus and those who do not. The difference between them is in the relative amount of cultural and social capital, which each of them possesses. An individual accrues a certain amount of social capital by becoming a member of a group, with further accumulation of social capital depending on the individual's efforts and social skills. This links social capital to embodied cultural capital, or habitus. A process of socialisation of new group members is described by Bourdieu (1986) as the accumulation of cultural capital through its transmission to them from the established members of the group and gradual development of a well-formed habitus of a dominant field of the social space, in which the group operates.

Similar to the mechanism of social reproduction in society, maintenance of capital of a group or an institution and sustaining or improving its position in an economic field can be

achieved by converting economic capital into its cultural form, for example, by investing in training and education of its members. Such institutional strategies may conceal the fact that economic capital is at the root of symbolic capital and lead to a misrecognition by the members of their economic interest (Bourdieu 1986).

Bourdieu's notion of capital can be applied to the School, as a collective agent in the economic field of institutions providing care and education. The economic capital of the School consists of the revenue it receives as fees for its pupils. Cultural capital of the School can be viewed as the combined cultural capital of its workers. The latter exists in three forms, embodied (habitus of workers), institutionalised and objectified. The embodied cultural capital of workers includes their skills and explicit and tacit understanding of the rules and norms of the organisational fields, in which they operate. Such understanding can be developed only through interaction between workers or, in Bourdieu's terms, through transmission of cultural capital from more experienced workers to less experienced workers and newcomers. For the BA students, part of their cultural capital becomes institutionalised as they progress with their studies, which culminates in a professional registration and achievement of the BA degree. The objectified form of cultural capital is cultural goods and material assets of the School. To be a part of cultural capital, these assets require the embodied cultural capital of workers. The School accrues its social capital through its membership in a network of institutions and agencies of its economic sector. Maintenance of School's economic capital depends on sustaining its position in the economic field, which is determined by School's symbolic capital. As is shown below, the BA played a vital role in maintaining School's cultural capital not only by institutionalising cultural capital of students but also due to transmission of their cultural capital to other workers in house communities.

Bourdieu presented his theory of practice as a method of social research and described concepts of habitus, field and capital as 'thinking tools', which allow a researcher to construct a research object in response to questions that concern real practices (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). The construction of a research object, according to Bourdieu, is the most difficult methodological stage to undertake, because it requires differentiating between the actual structure of the investigated social space and a space of symbolic products that arises in it (Grenfell 2012). To help researchers to break through the space of symbolic products into the structure of social positions, Bourdieu developed a three-level methodology of field analysis:

1. Look at a field in relation to other fields and to the field of power.
2. Map out the objective structure of the field by considering positions occupied by agents, expressed in terms of capital and its configurations.
3. Analyse habitus of agents, i.e. the system of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a particular type of social and economic conditions.

(Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.104-105)

In actual research, analysis tends to start at level three and then progress to levels one and two (Grenfell 2012).

The analysis of data, collected in the first round, led me to a tentative conclusion that organisational practices of the School strongly condition learning practices of students (see section 4.4). This led me to consider organisational fields of the School being an object of the research and, by applying the three-level methodology of field analysis, to formulate the following research questions:

1. What types of habitus correspond to organisational fields of the School and what are the characteristics of these fields?
2. What positions students and other BA actors occupy in the organisational fields of the School?
3. How do habitus of students and their positions in the organisational fields, expressed in terms of capital and its configurations, change in the course of their work and study?

These questions guided the analysis, presented in the rest of this chapter.

## 5.2 Two organisational fields of the School

This section addresses the first research question about organisational fields of the School and matching types of habitus. This research question corresponds to level three of the methodology of field analysis. Two students, whose interviews and assignments and portfolios for the Practice module at stage three are analysed below, occupied two different positions in their house communities: one student was a voluntary care worker and another was a house coordinator and a long-term co-worker of the School. Both students were at the end of their studies; practice assignments and portfolios were the last pieces of coursework, which they submitted before their graduation.

### *5.2.1 Care worker*

Anna was a voluntary care worker in a house community. In her assignment for the Practice module, she reflected on changes in her attitude and behaviour at work. In a section with a title 'Mastery' Anna wrote that since she joined the School five years ago she shed the habits and values, which she had been raised with in her family, centred on her own interests and needs, and acquired new habits focused on the interests and needs of pupils. She noticed that her behaviour in interaction with pupils had changed: she was delaying her responses and had more self-control. She became less prone to 'taking charge'. In an interview, Anna attributed these changes to having as a consequence of her studies more knowledge, which she could draw upon. She said that gradually she became more confident and relaxed doing her work. She said that this allowed her to pay more attention ('to listen') to the pupils and to 'better understand their needs'.

In the same section of her assignment, Anna wrote about a particular organisation of social space, the Lifespace. She made a reference for the source of this concept (Smith 2009) but characterised the Lifespace simply as 'a place where residential care workers and children share everyday living'. In the interview, Anna said:

> 'I always thought that this is something I really need to learn: to let go a bit of control and trust situation, give more space to the child and just let them react even if something doesn't go how I planned it, that it is ok.'

Referring to one of the pupils, she said: 'Lifespace is just about [working] with him.' A concise manner, in which Anna described the concept of Lifespace and the way she spoke about it in relation to her work, indicates that she used it as a metaphor for the dispositions and skills, which she wanted to develop.

Finding a metaphor that fitted her experiences and expectations, Anna began enacting the Lifespace within her house community by taking initiatives and involving her colleagues. Anna said that in her initiatives she was trusted and supported by her house coordinator. In a section of the assignment with a title 'Generosity' she wrote about one of her initiatives. Anna decided to invite her colleague, a first-year voluntary worker from her house community, to a meeting for a review of a pupil's progress. Though this co-worker was a 'key-worker' for that pupil, he had to be invited to attend the review. Anna clarified in her interview that first-year co-workers usually were not invited to the reviews, because 'experienced professionals' used theories and terminology, which first-year co-workers were not familiar with. Anna said that after the review meeting she realised how important

it was to share knowledge with her colleagues. This experience prompted her to make a presentation to co-workers in her house community on a type of therapeutic intervention, which she used in her work. Anna commented:

> 'It was good to see others getting inspired and asking questions […] This gave my work with [pupil] more value by involving others and sharing knowledge'.

In the same section of her assignment, Anna described how she was asked by the house coordinator to contribute to a written assessment of a pupil. Anna wrote:

> 'It was difficult for me at first as the previous report [made by a social worker] seemed very negative and concentrated on what A couldn't do instead of what he could. My personal involvement with A and my need to show his positive sides and protect him from the "bad old report" meant that I tried to explain his "unsocial" behaviour and went into the other extreme.'

Only after talking to the house coordinator Anna started to understand the social worker's perspective:

> 'It helped me to hear the question from [house coordinator]: "How do you think A would manage in a completely unfamiliar setting?" […] I realised that a child in a different environment (at home, shopping, respite) is someone I don't know and it is very likely that he is very different.'

In the interview, Anna said that such realisation involved overcoming her School-centred perspective. In the conclusion of her assignment, she wrote about a change in her perception:

> 'Previously, I think I liked to view situations as black and white or right and wrong, whereas now I can see that our work often includes several shades of grey.'

Anna's account is a story of social reproduction of a house community, as a social unit within the School. According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990), a social entity reproduces itself through transfer of cultural capital, i.e. knowledge, attitudes, dispositions and skills, from its established members to newcomers. The driving force for this transfer is the desire of newcomers to improve their position within a social space by accumulating capital in its three forms, economic, cultural and social. In a house community, short-term co-workers and students, being voluntary workers, were motivated by acquisition of cultural and social capital, rather than by their economic interest. It follows from Anna's

account that she was initially focused on the acquisition of cultural capital in her study and work, and only at a later stage of her studies she began engaging with her colleagues, thus, accumulating social capital.

From the moment of arriving at the School, Anna was developing a habitus of the social space which she inhabited. Bourdieu (1986) described this process as an inculcation of lasting transposable dispositions, which become embodied cultural capital. In her assignment, Anna reflected on the changes in her attitudes and behaviour in her interaction with pupils. She also became familiar with the norms and rules of her house community and developed skills of living and working in a group of co-workers. She became a competent and trusted member of her house community. All this indicates that by the end of her four years of study, Anna's habitus, corresponding to the field of her house community, became well-formed.

Anna's account indicates that towards the end of her study she started expanding her interests and activities beyond her house community. Contributing to an assessment of a pupil, she was eager to understand a perspective of a social worker outwith the School. She also became active in organisational groups outwith her house community. The latter experience brought her some disillusionment. During the interview, Anna said:

> 'What is [the School]? It gets more and more difficult the more you stay probably. There are many things I just feel I can't really identify with here [...] I think somehow within the house community and working with the children that's where I feel I belong to.'

Anna's habitus, which she developed while working and living in her house community, did not seem to match a wider organisational field of the School, corresponding to collective practices outwith the house communities. The account of the second student provides an insight into this wider organisational field and a type of habitus that matches it.

### *5.2.2 House coordinator*

Jane was a house coordinator of a house community, where she lived with her family with two young children. Her house community was started as an organisational project, when Jane was at the second stage, and she was leading this project from the start.

Jane's account was a testimony of her struggle to establish her position within the wider organisational field, represented by a circle of her colleagues, house coordinators of other communities. Incidentally, she found a metaphor for the amount of capital which she

possessed within this field – ‘cheese’. Jane picked up this metaphor from the book ‘Who moved my Cheese?’ (Johnson 1998) recommended to her by her tutor. In an assignment for the Practice module, she wrote:

> ‘In my opinion, the cheese is a metaphor for the things that give us happiness, satisfaction and meaning on material, emotional and spiritual level [...] The care for the individuals with complex needs I am responsible for in combination with communication with parents [of these individuals] I consider ‘my cheese’ and I enjoy and value this highly.’

Jane described how being confronted by a parent of a pupil, who complained about shortcomings in the care of this pupil, she felt that her ‘cheese’ was ‘moving away’ from her. At that moment, the fear of losing her ‘cheese’ made her act like ‘running through the maze’. Jane’s reaction is understandable: the alleged shortcomings put into question her competence as a house coordinator and reduced her symbolic cultural capital, thus, undermining her position in the wider organisational field.

While Jane’s assignment was mainly focused on her work practice in the house community, during the interview it transpired that in the last year of her studies her main challenges were in a group of house coordinators where she felt ‘incredible pressure’. In the assignment, she described how she was introducing new work practices in her house community and called herself a ‘facilitator of change’ in the School. In the interview, she admitted that some of her colleagues were against her innovations and explained the attitude of her colleagues by the ‘existing myths and traditions’ in the School. She said:

> ‘Not all, but these people don’t agree [with] what I am doing, that I actually maybe shouldn’t do it.’

The rejection by Jane’s colleagues of her claim of being a ‘champion of change’ undermined her progress in accumulating capital and improving her position in the wider organisational field.

It appears from Jane’s assignment that her difficulties in the house coordinators’ group coincided with transformation of her habitus. Writing about her life and work in the house community, Jane described herself as a ‘dancer on the dance floor’ with a natural disposition to be open, sympathise with others and say ‘yes’ rather than ‘no’. But throughout the assignment she repeatedly used a concept of ‘balcony view’. For example, she wrote:

> ‘Throughout my practice I was consciously and continuously creating the necessary distance and more objective “balcony view”.’

Like Anna, Jane provided a reference for the concept (Heifetz 1994) but did not elaborate it, using it as a metaphor in her reflection on various events in her house community. That is how she described one event:

> ‘I stood on the balcony and “checked” the situation on the dance floor [...] I was fully “conscious” and aware what the consequences or reactions my intervention could potentially have [...] I was able to shake [pupil]’s ground to a certain extent’.

In the interview, Jane recalled this situation somewhat differently:

> ‘And I think, ok, this all goes so fast. Intuitively I see, hey, this is an opportunity, and maybe it doesn’t even go here but it’s really like ok this is what can happen somehow.’

She added:

> ‘But, looking back at this example, when I read it, I was not fully happy with it.’

Jane seemed to feel a tension between the way she acted, being involved in a fast developing situation, and the position of a distant observer, which she attributed to herself in her writing. The comparison of the above parts of the interview and of the assignment points to a contradiction between her well-formed ‘dancer’ dispositions and the new dispositions of a ‘balcony view’ observer, which she was acquiring.

An idea that she needed to create and maintain ‘boundaries’ in her work also comes up repeatedly in Jane’s assignment, with a reference to the ‘contact boundary statement’ for a care professional in Fewster (2007). Thus, Jane wrote that development of a ‘true sense of Self with the necessary boundaries in place’ was an important part of her professional progress. She continued:

> ‘I often failed and often managed to authentically adapt, which helped developing my authentic boundaries of Self.’

Jane wrote that it was her failure to act within the ‘boundaries of Self’ that led her to ‘run through the maze’ after a complaint was made by a parent. Describing an inspection of her house community, Jane wrote:

> ‘It was my ability at that moment to “be” within my boundaries of Self that I think contributed most to a very successful inspection.’

And, it was an eventual acceptance of her as a rightful member of the house coordinators group, which made her feel that she had, at last, her ‘boundaries’ in place.

The metaphors ‘balcony view’ and ‘boundary’ were chosen by Jane from the resources available to her in her studies. As in Anna’s case, the metaphors helped her to make sense of changes in her dispositions. The transformation of Jane’s habitus took place after she became a house coordinator and started advancing her position in the wider organisational field. This indicates that the new dispositions, which she was developing, corresponded to the wider organisational field of the School and guided her selection of those metaphors that resonated with the logic of practice in this field.

### *5.2.3 Two logics of selection*

The above analysis suggests that a social space of the School was comprised of two organisational fields: the local field of house communities with one set of dispositions, which prompted Anna and Jane to use metaphors ‘dancer’ and ‘lifespace’, and the wider organisational field with another set of dispositions, which guided Jane to use metaphors ‘balcony view’ and ‘boundary’. The two sets of dispositions seemed to have operated under two different logics of selection: the dancer/lifespace set – under the logic of association; and the balcony view/boundary set – under the logic of difference (Bourdieu 1984). The logic of association guided both Anna and Jane to see a similarity between them and others, be it pupils and co-workers in their house communities or elsewhere in the School or care professionals outwith the School. The logic of difference led Jane to see a distinction between her and other house coordinators, to distance herself from the events ‘on the dance floor’ of her house community and to establish ‘authentic boundaries’ of herself.

The difference between two sets of dispositions can be described in terms of ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ social capital (Putnam 2000). Indeed, Anna invited a colleague to a review and shared her knowledge with others. She was keen to understand the perspectives of other professionals across organisational boundaries. These are features of the ‘bridging’ social capital. Jane, by assigning to herself and her house community an exclusive role within the organisation, displayed characteristics of ‘bonding’ social capital.

While ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ types of social capital are adopted in sociological research as stand-alone concepts (Field 2008), Bourdieu defines concepts ‘capital’, ‘habitus’ and ‘field’ in relation to each other and therefore they cannot be separated in analysis (Grenfell 2012). In Bourdieu’s theoretical framework, it seems more appropriate to assign ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ qualities not to capital but to habitus, shaped by field. These qualities originate in normative principles (‘rules of the game’) of a field, which generate difference, or a perception of difference, in the minds of those who operate in the field, between various positions within the field by attributing a certain value to each position. In any specific situation, these normative principles lead an actor to perceive and to act in line with either logic of association or logic of difference. Personal history of an actor impacts on his/her choice of logic of action, but, having developed a well-formed habitus of the field, an actor acquires a propensity to operate as its agent, acting predominantly in accordance with the dominant logic of the field. The two logics of selection complement each other – in any field both operate in tension. It seems appropriate to describe the ‘bridging’ habitus as the one which is dominated by the logic of association. The ‘bonding’ habitus applies the logic of association selectively, to fellow members of the actor’s group, and the logic of difference to others.

Within the house communities of both students the logic of association prevailed. Anna’s ‘lifespace’ habitus and Jane’s ‘dancer’ habitus were bonding members of their respective communities. The difference between the two students transpired when they acted outside their house communities. Anna transposed into the external field of care professionals the ‘bridging’ disposition of her ‘lifespace’ habitus. Jane, guided by the logic of difference, developed a penchant for a ‘balcony view’ and ‘authentic boundaries’ which she needed in order to operate within the house coordinators group and the wider organisational field.

Over time, Jane’s relationships with members of the house coordinators’ group were evolving. Jane wrote in her assignment that one of her colleagues offered her help to prepare a point for a meeting of the group. She wrote: ‘I felt relieved and accepted help without feeling that my ‘cheese’ being taken away.’ Jane referred to this moment as ‘the experience of a collaborative common cheese’. In the house coordinators’ group, the logic of association seemed to have prevailed over the logic of difference. It happened because members of the group were firmly grounded in the practice of their house communities, where the logic of association was dominant. Like Anna, the house coordinators transposed dispositions of the field of house communities into their group. Their disposition for associative working helped them to bridge their differences, accept Jane into their circle

and accumulate social capital, ‘collaborative common cheese’. Such dynamic within the group indicates that the field of house communities was a dominant field in the School, with norms of communal life and work being upheld across the organisation.

## 5.3 Accreditation and cessation of the BA

The events leading to the cessation of the BA programme prompted me to move to level one of the methodology of field analysis (p.64) and to address the second research question about positions of students and other BA actors in the organisational fields of the School. In the first part of this section, on the basis of interviews with three former programme directors, I consider reasons behind the establishment of the BA. In the second part, looking at the events leading to the cessation of the BA, I make a conclusion about its function in the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities and maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School, as a group agent in the field of institutional providers of care and education.

### *5.3.1 Establishment of the BA*

The Seminar, a three-year study programme for School workers, had been in existence in the School for many years prior to the Higher Education programme being developed on its basis and accredited by a College of Education. In the interviews with two former programme directors, long-term co-workers of the School, both of them said that from an internal point of view they were satisfied with the Seminar. They said that an aim of the Seminar was to provide a developmental anthroposophic course to workers of the School and similar institutions and that the Seminar was fulfilling this aim at the time when they started looking at its accreditation. That was why the Higher Education programme, subsequently developed into the BA, was closely modelled on the curriculum and structure of the Seminar. Both former programme directors recalled that they were surprised and relieved that the College did not question the content of the programme. One of them said:

> ‘The partnership [between the School and the College] was at the beginning very loose. What was clear from the beginning is that there was freedom towards the content and control about the assessment.’

Another former programme director, a member of the academic staff of the College, said that she was not entirely comfortable with the content of the programme, but from the very beginning of the partnership she promised School co-workers that she would work to protect the content of their original course. She said:

> ‘Because it was so important to them, if we were going to get anywhere, there had to be assurances that we weren’t here to say: you have to do it our way.’

Despite such assurances, some School co-workers who taught at the Seminar opposed its accreditation. The former programme director from the College recalled:

> ‘That was such a huge cultural shift, apart from anything else. And here were these outsiders coming in and observing and giving students new ideas, insisting that students read different things. And people were very afraid, to begin with, that it would weaken what the School had. And it took a long time to get through that. And there were some very difficult, very difficult encounters.’

A question arises: What motivated some of the School co-workers to persevere in their effort to accredit the Seminar?

One of the former programme directors from the School pointed out that at the time, when work on the accreditation of the Seminar started, impending changes in government policies and regulations were expected to include a statutory registration of care staff with professional bodies. This required the School to train its staff on an accredited programme, which satisfied registration criteria. The second former programme director from the School said that by the mid-1990s, in addition to changing regulations, external inspections of the School became more frequent and challenging. The former programme director from the College confirmed this. She recalled that at the time when they were working on the new programme there was anxiety in the School, ‘because all kinds of things were changing, and accountability became much-much more evident.’ She pointed out that the local government authorities questioned whether all legal requirements for children’s education were met by the School. She suggested that it was likely that such doubts were behind the falling number of School pupils during that time. The accounts of the former programme directors indicate that the accreditation of the Seminar was an attempt of School long-term co-workers to make the School more resilient in meeting external threats, which appeared due to changes in the field of institutional providers of care and education.

The accreditation of the Seminar also aimed to make the programme more attractive to School short-term co-workers. The former programme director from the School said that one of the main reasons why they started looking at an accreditation of the Seminar was that co-workers ‘wanted to go back to places’ with a formal recognition of their three-year studies. The former programme director from the College confirmed this:

> ‘The Seminar had recognition, but that was not carrying the weight that people needed [...] The young people were demanding that, if they were to put their time and effort into something, it had to have a currency that would be recognised somewhere else, even if it would be a university entrance, going back home elsewhere in Europe. And the only way to do that was to be tied in with an institution that could offer that.’

Thus, School long-term co-workers pursued the accreditation of the Seminar to transform cultural capital of students into an institutionalised form and, through that, to make the programme more attractive to short-term co-workers of the School.

School long-term co-workers had another motive to pursue an academic validation of the Seminar: they shared a belief in its mission to spread in the world the anthroposophical approach to care and education of children with special needs, curative education. The former programme director from the School said that an aim of the Seminar was ‘seeding out’, which meant that the graduates ‘take into the world what they have learnt’. She said that by adapting the Seminar curriculum to academic requirements they hoped that the students of the programme would become able ‘to express the contribution of curative education to the world without relying on the founding authorities’. By ‘founding authorities’ she meant Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy, and Karl Koenig, the founder of the School, whose writings were studied at the Seminar. Thus, long-term co-workers of the School anticipated that the accreditation of the Seminar would lead to wider recognition and dissemination of curative education, and that this would increase the value of their symbolic cultural capital.

The accounts of the former programme directors lead to the conclusion that the accreditation of the Seminar was aimed at transforming cultural capital of students, teachers and tutors of the programme into an institutionalised form, and at maintaining and improving the position of the School in the field of institutional providers of care and education. This indicates that in the accreditation of the Seminar an interest of students, teachers and tutors to increase the value of their symbolic cultural capital was aligned with their economic interest as School workers.

### *5.3.2 End of partnership*

In August 2011, the Home Office issued a warning to the University that the hours of campus-based teaching at the BA were below what was required for the overseas students with a study permit. At that time, a third of BA students were in that category. The

University suspended the admission of new students to the BA and appointed a panel to review the programme. In January 2012, the panel issued wide-ranging recommendations, which included a transformation of the BA into a full-time programme, a reduction of work practice and an increase in hours of teaching sessions and group tutorials. The University left the admission of new students suspended until implementation of recommendations of the panel and re-accreditation of the BA as a full-time programme.

In the School, house coordinators were informed that the students of a full-time programme would attend the University up to five days a week with accumulative study time of 35 to 40 hours per week. Their work practice would be reduced and take place both in the School and in other institutions. House coordinators expressed their concern that the full-time students would not be integrated in the life and work of their communities in the same way as the current BA students. Despite this concern, a working group of BA teachers and tutors started developing a full-time programme. House coordinators continued expressing their reservations, while also cooperating with the group on finding ways to include future full-time students into house communities. After a year of work on a full-time programme, when it was close to completion, one of the house coordinators, on behalf of all members of the house coordinators group, wrote a letter to the programme directors. The letter said:

> 'We were aware that many prospective students had already shared that they were not interested in a full time course at all, but wanted to study part time and participate fully in the life sharing and work aspects of the community [...] For all of us it begged the question: So why are we doing this if it is not what the students want and not what we want? I recognise that a lot of time and effort has been put into finding a way with the university, but perhaps our efforts would be better received elsewhere?'

This event was pivotal. Within two months after this letter was written the work on the full-time programme was abandoned and the University and the School reached an agreement that the BA was to be closed in a year's time, after the graduation of the last cohort of students. During that time, the School entered into a negotiation with another university to establish a BA programme with a distant learning mode of study.

### *5.3.3 The BA and social reproduction of house communities*

Two questions arise: Why did house coordinators openly state their opposition to the full-time programme; and why did their protest have such an effect on the development of the

programme which was almost complete? To answer these questions, the role of students in social reproduction of house communities needs to be considered.

In house communities, the daily work of providing care and support to pupils rested on short-term workers and students, all of whom worked on a voluntary basis. The low cost of their labour allowed the School to employ a relatively high number of short-term workers (see Table 4.2, p.36) to maintain a sufficient number of care staff in each house community. However, the majority of short-term workers stayed in the School only for one year. The annual turn-over of care staff in house communities was reaching 80%, with new short-term co-workers arriving throughout a school year. They were inducted and socialised into communal life and work by house coordinators and students, who normally stayed in the same house community for a few years. In routines of daily life and work, they passed on to short-term workers their attitudes, dispositions and skills and, in this way, maintained what they called 'continuity' of the communal work and life.

As the figures in Table 4.2 show, by the beginning of 2013, a year and a half after the admission to the BA was suspended and just before the second last cohort of the BA students was about to graduate, the house coordinators had a crisis in their house communities, as they were left with very few or no students at all. The number of short-term workers went up to compensate for the decrease in the number of students. This made the task of inducting and socialising newcomers into members of house communities even more difficult.

Around that time, a student from the 2009 cohort described in his assignment a critical situation, which arose in his house community:

> 'Change occurred after the course of studies was closed [for admission]. Most students have left and only few experienced co-workers remain. We face a great turnover in workforce every year while extending our services. I have tried to go on as I did in the previous years on my own. However I am meeting greater resistance amongst the new co-workers to follow the principles and the vision of our organisation. I feel that I need to manage them by exercising my authority as otherwise the work will not get done. I try to uphold the ethos of the organisation but the new co-workers do not give into the community spirit and do not respond to many of my requests in the long term.'

From the very beginning of the re-accreditation process house coordinators expressed their opposition to the full-time programme, because they anticipated that the full-time students would not be able to exercise the role of the current students in providing 'continuity' to their house communities. Their letter to the programme director was triggered by the withdrawal of applications to the University by prospective BA students, short-term workers from their communities. But, the reason for their rebellion was likely to be the crisis which they faced in their house communities. At that time, the School opened a negotiation with another university about establishing a distant learning BA programme. House coordinators hoped that such a programme would increase the number of students in the School and, in that way, restore the status quo in their house communities. A combination of three developments, the intensifying crisis in house communities, the rejection of the full-time programme by short-term co-workers and the start of a negotiation with another university, led to a fast unravelling of the process of re-accreditation of the BA and to its subsequent cessation.

The events leading to the cessation of the BA indicate that the BA was providing the School with a mechanism of social reproduction of house communities. The transfer by students of their cultural capital to newcomers allowed the School to maintain its cultural and economic capital and its position in the field of institutional providers of care and education. School workers realised how important the students were to the house communities only after the University suspended the admission of new students to the BA and the number of students in the School had fallen. In normal circumstances, the function of the BA in the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities remained unrecognised by School workers. In Bourdieu's words, 'if the system is to work, the agents must not be entirely unaware of their exchanges [...] while at the same time they must refuse to know and above all to recognise it' (Bourdieu 1977, p. 6). The function of the BA was obscured by the belief of School workers in the mission of the BA to disseminate the anthroposophic approach to special education. 'Making a virtue out of necessity' (Bourdieu 1977, p.10), this belief served as an impetus to School workers to institute an educational programme, first, the Seminar and, later, the BA, which provided a mechanism of social reproduction and a means to maintain cultural and economic capital of the School.

### *5.3.4 Organisational fields of the School*

The full-time programme, which BA teachers and tutors were developing, could still satisfy all the aims which, according to the former programme directors, were pursued by

the accreditation of the Seminar. It would still provide School workers with a vocational programme, allowing them to achieve a professional registration and a recognised Higher Education degree. The curriculum of the full-time programme would become broader, while retaining most of the anthroposophy-based courses of the BA. Teachers and tutors would continue to deliver the anthroposophic approach to special education, and this would satisfy those long-term co-workers who believed that a mission of the BA was to disseminate this approach.

Despite all of this, the intervention of house coordinators effectively brought to an end the work on re-accreditation of the BA. This fact supports the conclusion, made above (p.72), that the field of house communities was a dominant organisational field in the social space of the School. While the interests of teachers, tutors and a programme director, and some other groups of School workers, who were involved in the delivery of or contributed to the BA curriculum, were served by the full-time programme, they choose not to counteract the intervention of the house coordinators. This indicates that house coordinators occupied a more prominent position in the wider organisational field of the School, than the group of BA actors and other groups of School workers.

Bourdieu (1986) pointed out that economic capital is at the root of all other types of capital. School revenue was comprised of fees that the School was receiving for the provision of care and education to its pupils. Each School pupil was assigned to a house community, where a house coordinator exercised full operational control over provision of care to the pupil and was accountable directly to a local government authority for that. No decision, affecting house communities, could be made in the School without their consent. That is why house coordinators possessed relatively high symbolic capital in the wider organisational field of the School.

There was one feature of the field of house communities, which was highlighted by the break-up of the partnership between the School and the University: that was stability of the field, which house coordinators called ‘continuity’. They considered the ‘continuity’ of the communal life and work to be a key condition for providing care and meeting the needs of pupils. Resistance to change was also a feature of the wider organisational field, as Jane’s story indicates: Jane’s claim to be a ‘facilitator of change’ had a hostile reception in the house coordinators’ group. The stability of the organisational fields of the School was a consequence of its structure: a third of workers were long-term co-workers (see Table 4.2, p.36), who occupied most of the managerial positions in the School. For them, the School

was not only a place of work but also a home for their families. Therefore, they had an interest in maintaining the status quo within the house communities and in the organisation, as a whole.

Thus, the events leading to the break-up of partnership between the School and the University revealed the role of students in transfer of cultural capital within house communities and the function of the BA in the mechanism of their social reproduction, indicated positions of BA tutors and teachers in the wider organisational field of the School and highlighted stability of these fields.

## 5.4 Conceptual limitations of Bourdieusian analysis

To address the third research question about changes in positions and dispositions of students (p.64), I turned to the assignments and interviews of four students of the 2009 cohort: John, Peter, Lisa and Beth, and of two students of the 2010 cohort: Max and Ruth (see Table 4.5).

In the 'Outline of a theory of practice' Bourdieu (1977) writes that analysis of practices requires from a researcher to make an epistemological break with 'objectivist' knowledge, or with presuppositions which are inherent in the position of an outside observer. To do that, the researcher must incorporate time in the analysis and substitute strategy for the rule. Bourdieu claims that in social practices actors do not follow rules but intuitively devise and deploy strategies, which are less rigid than rules, although within the logic of practice of the fields in which they operate. Subconsciously devising a strategy and then following and constantly reviewing and modifying it in practice, actors have some room for flexibility and creativity due to relative autonomy of social fields and a range of positions and stances available to them in each field (Mahar, Harker, and Wilkes 1990).

Analysing the accounts of the six students, I realised that in the course of their work and study they employed a variety of strategies and that in the course of their work and study in the School they consciously modified them, which had an impact on students' positions in the organisational fields. Looking at the circumstances and implications of such turning points in students' trajectories in the School, I felt that there was some superficiality in my analysis and a lack of understanding of numerous details of their accounts. Below, to discern the nature of problems which I encountered in developing my analysis, I bring, as an example, a piece of my writing about two students, Peter and Max, and then draw on some of the points raised by Sayer (2005) in his critique of the concept of habitus.

### *5.4.1 Peter's and Max's accounts*

Peter's account is a story about a process of change in a large house community, which was undergoing transfer of power. A team of young long-term co-workers, including Peter, were moving into positions of authority, gradually taking over managerial responsibilities from the outgoing team of long-term co-workers. Peter's goals were to become an appointed manager of his house community and to enact a wide range of changes.

Peter grew up in a house community of the School, in the midst of communal life and work. After finishing secondary school, he went overseas and for a few years worked as a volunteer with disadvantaged families and vulnerable young people. In an interview Peter said that the experience of working in another country changed him and that after returning to the School he wanted to bring his new identity into the community which he joined together with his partner. He soon realised that this could not happen overnight and modified his strategy, substituting, as he put it, evolution for revolution. Facing a quiet resistance of the outgoing team, Peter moderated his ambitions, while keeping alive his original goal of transforming the house community. By the end of his studies Peter succeeded in making some small steps towards his original goal and was appointed as a manager of the house community, thus realising his personal goal. Peter's trajectory in the School could be described as gradual accumulation of cultural and social capital both in his house community and in the wider organisation and advancement his position in the organisational fields of the School.

The story of Max differs drastically from Peter's one. Originally from Bulgaria, Max applied to do voluntary work in the School after dropping out of a university where he studied physics. He spoke good English, but there was an air of misapprehension between him and members of his community and his study group. Max was a voluntary worker in the same house community as Peter. Just as Peter, he lived there with his family with two young children; his wife was a member of the new management team. After spending three years in the School he decided to embark on the BA study. In the first year of his studies Max provided a channel of communication between his practice tutor, the outgoing house coordinator, and the new team members. Such a role boosted his self-esteem and gave him a standing within the community. However, this role dissipated in the second year of his studies and Max started voicing protest against what he perceived as discriminatory practices within his student group and the house community. Conflicts with the students of his cohort and then with his practice tutor and house coordinator followed. These conflicts had a negative impact on his work and studies. In the last year of his studies, he reduced

his engagement with the community and devoted most of his time to his children. His role in the community became peripheral. He graduated the BA with a low mark for work practice. In the last interview he said that he felt disillusioned about communal life and considered leaving the School after the graduation. Thus, Max's trajectory in the School was the one of gradual loss of symbolic capital and weakening of his position in the organisational field.

From the Bourdieusian perspective, it can be suggested that the difference in trajectories of Peter and Max in the School stems from the differences in their primary habitus, prior life experiences and starting amounts of cultural and social capital which they possessed when they came to the School. Peter's primary habitus was formed in a house community of the School, which indicates that he possessed embodied cultural capital relevant to his position. The experience of working overseas as a volunteer also contributed to his cultural capital. He was well known to many long-term co-workers, which gave him a starting social capital in the School.

Compared to Peter, Max came to the School from very different cultural and social environment. Some of his habits and dispositions were at odds with the norms and practices of communal life and work. Though most of the BA students enrolled to the programme after one year in the School, it took Max three years to become sponsored for the course. This indicates that when he arrived to the School Max had no starting cultural and social capital and that his primary habitus held him back in accumulating symbolic capital.

### *5.4.2 Resistance to socialisation*

Peter and Max were both driven by the desire to transform practices of their house community. A question is why their strategies in pursuit of this goal differed so radically. An answer to this question lies in their different susceptibility to social influences (Sayer 2005).

The differences between Max and Peter in their prior dispositions and starting cultural and social capital cannot fully explain why Max's habitus did not adapt to the conditions of the field of the house community, in the way Peter's habitus did. The relative durability of dispositions, acquired by Max in his childhood and youth (primary habitus), might have explained some delay in the adjustment of his habitus after moving to a new field (Hardy 2012). But, Max's primary dispositions cannot explain why he had such a strong aversion to socialisation and resistance to social influence.

Sayer (2005) points out that Bourdieu's default assumption of ontological complicity and compliance between habitus and field makes it hard to understand how anyone could react against and resist the social conditions of their habitat. Sayer identifies the core of the problem in explaining resistance to socialisation from the Bourdieusian standpoint in too close fit between habitus and field, which Bourdieu's principle of ontological complicity assumes. Sayer states that unless we recognise the difference between habitus and field, we would not be able to analyse their interplay and changes in habitus (or lack of them). He suggests that a question about the relationship and dynamics between habitus and social field in particular cases should be an empirical one, and that the investigation of such dynamics requires elaborating the concept of habitus to take into account the specificity of a particular mix of causal powers and susceptibilities for each individual which makes the causal efficacy of social influences selective.

### *5.4.3 Reflexive practice*

Sayer (2005; 2009) argues that the concept of habitus needs to be elaborated in order to incorporate reflexivity into the genesis of disposition and action. Sayer (2005, p.27) points out that in most of Bourdieu's accounts of the habitus, structured dispositions seem to arise through a process of osmosis and shaping, through accommodation to material circumstances and social relations. Accordingly, his model of personal development is one of subconscious bodily learning through repetition and practice. For Bourdieu, reflexivity has no role in such process. Though Bourdieu recognised that reflexive choices can be made by practitioners at times when conditions of the field change, he theorised reflexivity not as a property of individual actors but as collective practice of an academic community (Bourdieu 1988; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Sayer argues that by assigning reflexive practice only to the intellectual field Bourdieu marginalises the life of mind of lay subjects and ignores a mundane but crucial aspect of everyone's life: internal conversation. Sayer asserts that a reflexive internal deliberation is a much more common activity than Bourdieu assumes. He refers to Margaret Archer's research (Archer 2003) which shows that reflexivity, exercised in internal conversations, is not the preserve of academics but is common to people regardless of their social position or occupation.

Students' assignments contain numerous accounts of their reflection and reflexivity in the course of their practice. Below, I bring just a few examples of their reflexive practice.

Analysing Anna's and Jane's interviews and assignments in sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, I came to a conclusion that from the study materials they selected those concepts and

theories which resonated with their experiences and dispositions, acquired in the organisational fields of the School, and then used these concepts and theories as metaphors in their reflection on work practice and interaction with their colleagues. Both Anna and Jane referred to the selected metaphors without 'unpacking' the underlying theories. Sayer (2005, p.27) pointed to such phenomena:

> 'Ways of thinking can become habitual: once learned they change from something we struggle to grasp to something we can think with without thinking about them'.

Anna's and Jane's accounts also contain episodes in which their actions were preceded by reflexive deliberations. For example, in an interview Anna said that in a challenging situation with a pupil

> 'you can still observe and then you step back, before you react, you think: Ok, where is it coming from? Why is the child doing that? If I respond like this, what do I think will happen? If I respond in another way, will it may be better?'

Jane described a similar situation that occurred in her practice:

> 'I stood on the balcony and "checked" the situation on the dance floor [...] I was fully "conscious" and aware what the consequences or reactions my intervention could potentially have.'

Beth in her assignment described a day trip by her house community, which she meticulously planned to allow a wheelchair-bound pupil to join in. To her dismay on the day of the outing a driver refused to let the pupil on the bus. After this event Beth wrote an extensive piece in her learning journal and then in the assignment for the Practice module, in which she deliberated about her relationships with vulnerable individuals:

> 'I have come to the conclusion, through experience, that the practise of social pedagogy is inherently encompassed by the concept of relationship. ... I believe, in all my practise areas that sustaining and developing a relationship with the individuals I support is a vital, constructive, mutual process which is essential to achieving positive outcomes. [...] A relationship [with the pupil] requires personal commitment and professional consciousness. I invest personally in the relationships I establish with the pupils, informed by my values and attitudes which, I believe, is essential in order to facilitate a genuine exchange and interaction.'

The above piece is an exemplar of reflexive writing, in which Beth contemplates about the nature of her personal commitment to vulnerable individuals. It indicates that reflexivity played a prominent role in Beth's practice.

### *5.4.4 Commitments*

As the above quotation from Beth's assignment and her account in section 7.3.2 indicate, she had a deeply felt commitment to vulnerable individuals, which she acquired earlier in her life and reflexively deliberated about in the aftermath of the incident during the outing. Students' assignments and interviews testify that in the course of their life and work in the School they acquired commitments to the professional and communal norms and values, to the fellow members of their house communities and to vulnerable individuals in their care. Peter's and Max's commitments to the cause of transforming practices in their house community are mentioned above.

Sayer (2005, p.39) asserts that the causes, practices and other people that matter to actors and to which they are committed are the things in terms of which their identities are formed: without commitments people are likely to feel rootless and lost. He argues that the ability to develop commitments is central to people's well-being and that commitments figure prominently in the struggles of everyday life.

Sayer (ibid.) notes that Bourdieu (e.g. 1998b) often uses a metaphor of investment which implies that actors, seeking to maintain or improve their positions in the fields, invest their labour, time and money in particular practices and games of these fields. Bourdieu (1986) also employs a metaphor of conversion of economic capital into cultural and social capital, which actors employ in order to accrue profit in non-material forms of capital and then to convert it back into monetary form. He formulates a 'law of conservation of social energy', which states that profits in one area are necessary paid by the costs in another with the universal equivalent in labour-time.

Personal interest (illusio) is also defined by Bourdieu in terms of basic investment in meanings which makes social life meaningful, such that 'everything that takes place in [the field] seems *sensible*: full of sense and objectively directed in a judicious direction.' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.66, italics in original). Bourdieu emphasizes that illusio is a form of misrecognition by actors of their economic interest and objective conditions of the field:

> ‘Taking part in illusio ... means taking seriously (sometimes to the point of making them questions of life and death) stakes which, arising from the logic of the game itself, establish its seriousness.’ (Bourdieu 2000, p.11)

Sayer (ibid.) argues that the ‘economic’ metaphors of investment, stakes, capital and profit are inadequate for understanding the nature and strength of attachments involved in people’s commitments, for they can be in their self-interest but also can be based on altruism and be related to causes such as social justice. Thus, Max’s and Peter’s commitment to transforming practices in their house community indicates that their ‘relationship to the world is not simply one of accommodation or becoming skilled in its games, but, at least in some ways, one of wanting to be different and its games to be different’ (Sayer 2005, p.35). Sayer concludes that the concept of commitment is superior to that of investment in games and that the concept of habitus should be elaborated to reflect the diversity and non-economic roots of people’s commitments.

### *5.4.5 Macro and micro levels of analysis*

The framework of Bourdieusian analysis allowed me to characterise the organisational fields of the School and the function of the BA in the reproduction of house communities and maintenance of the economic capital of the School. When the analysis moved to the individual students, the limitations of Bourdieu’s conceptual apparatus became evident, as described above, in understanding the origin of Max’s resistance to socialisation and in analysing the effects of students’ reflexivity and commitments on changes in their positions and dispositions.

The nature of the difficulties which I encountered can be attributed to the limited explanatory power of Bourdieu’s theory on the micro-level of individual action. This point was made by Hodkinson (in Grenfell & James 1998, p.145) who stressed that Bourdieu’s analytical tools are designed for explaining patterns in actions of members of social groups but not for interpreting an individual action. Reay et al. (2011, p.26) also pointed out that Bourdieu’s theoretical tools facilitate units of analysis other than individual and therefore are suitable to investigations of social classes, groups and families, but not to studies that give ‘primacy to the individual, conceived as fundamentally a free agent in any explanation of social phenomena’.

The objectives of this research (pp.19-20) required finding a suitable theoretical framework which would allow investigating learning cultures of the BA both on the macro-level of organisational processes of the School and on the micro-level of work and learning

practices of individual students. As Biesta (2011, p.203) put it, studying learning cultures requires to ‘zoom in’ and ‘zoom out’ on learning practices at different scales and to investigate both proximal and distant factors: the factors that are at play at the concrete level of practice and the factors that shape learning at a distance, from institutional to national and international levels. James (2014, p.321) also emphasised the necessity in studying a learning culture to oscillate back and forth between system-level features and the most ‘micro’ of everyday social processes.

The outlined above difficulties with applying Bourdieusian analysis to the accounts of the six students prompted me to look for another theoretical framework which would be applicable to analysis both on the level of organisational processes in the School and on the level of individual actors. Such a framework of the Morphogenetic Approach of Margaret Archer is outlined in the next chapter.

# 6 Archer's theoretical framework

In the previous chapter, my dissatisfaction with the developed analysis stemmed from the conceptual limitations of Bourdieu's theory on the level of individual actors. Sawyer (2002) pointed to the difficulties in studying properties, actions and practices of individuals for those theories which are based on a claim that the individual and the collective levels of analysis cannot be ontologically and methodologically distinguished, known as the principle of inseparability of structure and agency. Bourdieu's theory of practice is regarded as one of such theories, due to its claim of transcendence of the dichotomies of structure and agency, of the social and the individual and of the objective and the subjective, e.g. in the way it theorised the concepts of habitus and field (Maton 2012). Archer (1995) points out that with such transcendence, which she regards as elision of structure and agency, what is lost are 'any autonomous features which could pertain to either structure or agency [which] otherwise could be investigated separately' (ibid, p.97). Archer (ibid, pp. 87-89) asserts that the inseparability claim also precludes, in principle, explaining structuring of social and individual properties over time, which is a particularly vexing problem for theorising and studying developmental processes, social or personal. In order to resolve theoretical and methodological difficulties posed by the principle of inseparability, Sawyer (2002) advocated adopting a methodology of analytical dualism of structure and agency, which was applied by Archer (1995; 1996; 2000) in her theorising of social and personal development.

Accepting Sawyer's argumentation, I turned to one of Archer's more recent writings about a study of a cohort of undergraduate students of Warwick University (Archer 2012). Reading Archer's analysis of accounts of participants of her study, I realised that her approach holds some explanatory power in regard to the motives and actions of participants of this research. Archer's analytic approach and theoretical concepts and categories, which she developed in her theoretical trilogy (Archer 1995; 1996; 2000) and applied in three empirical studies (Archer 2003; 2007; 2012) allowed me to re-interpret and re-analyse the accounts of BA students and to draw conclusions about how the process of their personal development was enabled by the context and practices of their work and study. This analysis is presented in chapter 7. Archer's explanation of how structure and culture condition social interaction prompted me to have a fresh look at the students' accounts of their work and learning practices. A re-examination of collected data resulted

in an analytic account about these practices and conclusions about the BA, presented in chapter 8.

In this chapter, I provide an outline of the ontology and analytical methodology, on which Archer rests her theorising, and of her theories of reflexivity and personal development. I apply Archer's Morphogenetic Approach to macro-level analysis of cultural and structural development of the School that happened since the accreditation of the BA. It results in an analytical description which differs substantively from the one produced by applying Bourdieu's theory.

## 6.1 Ontology of social realism and methodology of analytical dualism

In the first monograph of her trilogy, Archer (1995, p.3) writes that any practical social theory in sociology is built on certain ontological assumptions about social reality with a certain approach to its explanation, or explanatory methodology. Thus, in the 19$^{th}$ century social theories were advanced and delineated by the debate between individualism and collectivism (holism) (Archer 1995; Dyke 2015), which proceeded on two levels: an ontological level and a methodological level. On the one hand, social theorising was done either on the assumption that the only real entities are individuals (ontological individualism) or on the assumption that the social entities in the range from families to nations are real and possess actual properties, just like individuals (ontological collectivism). On the other hand, methodological individualists claimed that an explanation of social phenomena can be reduced to an explanation in terms of properties of individuals, while methodological collectivists insisted on irreducibility of properties of collectivities to properties of their individual members.

Archer (1995) characterises theories of social science, which are rooted in the ontology and methodology of collectivism as theories of 'downward conflation', because causal power in these theories, attributed to holistic properties of social entities, operates in a downward manner. In the opposite category of theories of 'upward conflation' Archer allocates those theories, which rest on the ontology and methodology of individualism. These theories view individuals as the only bearers of causal power, which operates in an upward direction.

Archer (1995, p.60) notes that in the 1970s and early 1980s the terms of the debate between individualism and collectivism changed to 'agency' and 'structure', and the debate itself was re-cast as a choice between two competing platforms, of elisionism and of emergentism. Elisionism claims transcendence of the dualism between the individual and

the collective, or agency and structure, by insisting on and theorising their mutual constitution. Methodologically, elisionist theories follow the principle of inseparability of agency and structure, or, more precisely, of the individual and the collective levels of analysis. Some theorists also assume the ontological inseparability of the individual and collective entities. Thus, Giddens who developed the theory of structuration (Giddens 1979), argues that only processes are real, while entities are ephemeral. Such an ontological standpoint became known as process ontology. There is a wide spectrum of ontological and methodological positions among the sociocultural theorists, who could be assigned to the elisionist camp (Sawyer 2002). Archer (1995; 2007) characterises elisionist theorising as 'central conflation' of structure and agency and sharply criticises two theories of central conflation, the theory of structuration of Giddens (1979) and the theory of practice of Bourdieu (1977;1990b).

The second of the two platforms that replaced two sides of the classic debate, according to Archer (1995, p.61), is emergentism. From emergentist standpoint structure and agency are both viewed as emergent properties of stratified social reality. Archer assigns herself and Bhaskar (1979;1989) to this platform. Archer asserts that emergentism substitutes three forms of conflationary theorising with the methodology of analytical dualism of structure and agency. According to Archer (1996), analytic dualism is not the same as ontological dualism as there is no suggestion that structure and agency are separate properties of entities, only analytically separable ones, which it is theoretically useful to treat separately. A foundation of emergentism and analytical dualism allows Archer to conceptualise structural, cultural and agential emergent properties of social entities and personal emergent properties of individuals and to examine their emergence and stasis or change in time.

The notion of emergence (Sawyer 2001) was initially used in the materialist ontology in the beginning of 20$^{th}$ century, by postulating that higher-level properties are grounded in and determined by but cannot be reduced to the lower-level properties of physical matter. Applying this notion to social reality, emergentists equate emergence of collective phenomena with their irreducibility to aggregated individual phenomena. Archer (1995, p.61) aligns with Bhaskar (1979;1989) in stating that emergence is a foundational assumption of social realism which views social reality as ontologically stratified. Entities of each stratum possess relational emergent properties which are separable from and irreducible to the properties of entities of lower strata. Archer (1995, p.14) conceptualises emergent properties as emerging in the process and outcome of social interaction. Once

properties have emerged, they obtain relative stability and autonomy from one another; and it is their autonomy that allows them to exert independent causal influence in their own right. Thus, Archer's ontological position combines upward causation of the process of emergence and downward causation of conditioning of social interaction by the existing emergent properties, with conditioning, interaction and emergence being separated in time. Such a view of emergence allowed Archer to develop the Morphogenetic Approach, described in the following section.

Fig. 6.1 presents Archer's view of the stratified social world (Archer 1995, p.190), where strata correspond to various types of social entities: collectivities, or primary agents, defined as segments of population, comprised of people with equal positions in a society's distribution of material and cultural resources; individual actors in various social roles; organised groups, or corporate agents, e.g. organisations, institutions, political parties and movements; and populations. This stratification can be applied to society, as a whole, and to its parts, if a population in question can be analytically detached from the rest of the society (e.g. members of an organisation or of a local community). It should be mentioned that Archer applies the term 'agency' and 'agent' both to individuals and to social entities. Thus, an institution is a corporate agent; its members collectively exercise their corporate agency.

| **System Integration** | | **Social Integration** |
|---|---|---|
| Systemic | ←Interplay→ | Populations |
| Institutional | ←Interplay→ | Organised groups (corporate agency) |
| Roles | ←Interplay→ | Individual actors |
| Positions | ←Interplay→ | Collectivities (primary agency) |

Figure 6.1 Stratified social reality (Archer 1995, p.190)

The split of Fig. 6.1 into two halves under the umbrella terms 'system integration' and 'social integration' reflects analytical separation between structure and agency at each stratum. Archer uses the terms of systemic integration and social integration after Lockwood (1964), who sought to rectify a deficit of Conflict theory in explaining why some social conflicts resulted in systemic change while others did not. Conflict theory focused its analysis on actions of groups. Lockwood suggested in addition to the need to examine to what extent the relations between groups of actors were in a state of order or conflict (i.e. the extent of social integration), there was also a need to investigate to what degree the 'parts' of the structural system were in orderly or contradictory relations (i.e. the

degree of system integration). Archer stresses that a purpose of separating the systemic 'parts' from the 'people' for Lockwood was to theorise about the interplay between them, because neither the system dysfunction nor the social antagonism alone provided a condition sufficient for structural change. Hence, the two sides of each stratum on the Fig. 6.1, structure and agency, are linked by 'interplay'.

Archer operationalises Lockwood's distinction between the systemic 'parts' and the 'people' by developing a concept of an emergent property and applying it to the material domain – structural emergent property (Archer 1995), to the ideational domain – cultural emergent property (Archer 1996), and to the agential domain – personal/people's emergent property (Archer 2000).

The emergent properties of a social entity are real in a sense that they possess potential causal powers, i.e. a capacity to modify the powers of the constituents of their stratum in fundamental ways, as well as to exert causal influences on other emergent properties by affecting the constituents of their strata. Archer (1995, p.14) stipulates that it is the identification of the causal powers of the emergent properties at work which validates their existence, because they may be unobservable. For example, reflexivity (internal conversation), an unobservable personal emergent property of an individual (section 6.4), influences his/her intentional actions or interaction with others and potentially can cause a structural and cultural change on a collective level and physical and mental transformation of the individual and others, including the reflexivity itself. Thus, an emergent property is relatively enduring but can be transformed in the result of interaction.

Archer (1995, pp.173-184) defines a structural emergent property (SEP) of a social entity as follows:

- first-order SEP – a distribution of resources, material;
- second-order SEP – a configuration of the structural system, emerging from its first-order emergent properties;
- third-order SEP – an elaboration of the structural system, emerging from its second-order emergent properties, mediated by personal/people's emergent properties in the course of social interaction.

Archer (1995) theorised four types of second-order SEPs. They are outlined below (pp.95-96). The three-order classification of emergent properties is connected to three phases of a morphogenetic cycle (pp.94-95).

Archer (1995, p.173) posits that structural emergent property of an entity is homogeneous, which means that relations between components of the entity are internal and necessary ones. This distinguishes SEPs from heterogeneous taxonomic or aggregative properties of collective entities. Archer (1995, p.175) writes that whether or not a structural property is emergent can be established only empirically, by examining the effects of the property on actions of people and agents.

Following realist ontology, Archer (1995; 1996) approaches culture as an element of social reality. She defines a cultural system as a sub-set of culture as a whole, consisting of items to which a law of contradiction can be applied (Archer 1996, p.xviii). These are propositions, and the cultural system of society, according to Archer, is a 'propositional register of society in any given time' (ibid).

Archer distinguishes between autonomous and durable components of the cultural system and ideational resources used by people and agents in socio-cultural interaction. Archer defines a first-order cultural emergent property (CEP) as a distribution of ideational resources which are available to people. She specifies that the constituent parts of the cultural system are in logical relations to one another, whereas CEPs possess causal powers, because socio-cultural interaction entails ideational influence of individuals and agents on each other which produces causal effects (Archer 1995, p.179). CEPs are influenced by SEPs and personal/people's emergent properties, e.g. a distribution of material resources in society affects people's access to ideational resources; reflexivity of individuals influences the extent to which they actualise available ideational resources in the course of socio-cultural interaction.

As with SEPs, discernment of those relations between the ideational resources which are emergent and possess causal powers is a matter of empirical examination of cultural conditioning of socio-cultural interaction and of interaction and its outcomes. Archer (1995, p.183) points out that this involves gaining by a researcher an understanding of what the propositional knowledge used by participants means to them and how they live with logical inconsistencies and contradictions in their ideational resources. By analysing the use of ideational resources, the researcher establishes a type of their emergent configuration. Archer theorised four types of such configurations (second-order CEPs). They are outlined below (p.97). A third-order CEP emerges as an elaboration of the cultural system.

To operationalise causal forces of social integration (the right side of Fig. 6.1), Archer assigns personal emergent properties (PEPs) to individuals: self-consciousness, reflexivity, personal identity and social identity (Archer 2000) (section 6.4), and people's emergent properties (also, PEPs) to corporate agents: bargaining power and negotiating strength (Archer 1995). According to Archer, primary agents (segments of population sharing similar life chances) have no intrinsic emergent properties, as they lack both collective articulation of their vested interests, rooted in unequal distributions of resources in society, and coordination of their actions.

Archer's model of social reality (Fig. 6.1) includes a stratum of individual actors and their roles, placed between primary and corporate agents. Archer (1995, p.276) defines a social actor both as a role incumbent and as a role itself and assigns to it properties which cannot be reduced to characteristics of the individual who occupies the role but are nevertheless anchored in them. The inclusion of a stratum of individual actors into the model of social reality reflects Archer's view of personal development as a progression from Self to Agent to Actor to Person (p.104).

Donati and Archer (2015) re-conceptualised PEPs of corporate agents in terms of relations between its members and relationality (relations between relations). The authors theorised a third ontological order of reality, an order of social relations, in addition to the material (structural) order and the ideational (cultural) order. By ontologising agential emergent properties, Donati and Archer made a step from analytical to ontological separation of structure, culture and agency.

## 6.2 The Morphogenetic Approach

The Morphogenetic Approach (Archer 1995) links the emergentist ontology, outlined above, and Archer's social theories by providing a methodology for investigating generic processes of social transformation and reproduction. By developing the Morphogenetic Approach, Archer turned analytical dualism of structure and agency into a method for examination of their interplay in time and advanced an explanation why in some cases social transformation occurs, while in other cases social reproduction persists.

To underscore the aim to investigate transformation and reproduction of social formations, Archer uses the terms morphogenesis and morphostasis, which were originally introduced by Buckley (1967). In Buckley's definition, morphogenesis refers to the processes which tend to elaborate and change a system's given form, state or structure, while morphostasis refers to the processes which tend to preserve and maintain a system's given form,

organisation or state (ibid, p.68). Archer also applies the term morphogenesis to the emergence and transformation of agency.

The Morphogenetic Approach is based on two propositions (Archer 1995, p.15):

i) Structure necessarily pre-dates the actions leading to its reproduction or transformation;
ii) Structure elaboration necessarily post-dates the action sequence which gave rise to it.

These propositions break analysis of the flow of social structuration into three-phase cycles: structural conditioning – social interaction – structural elaboration/reproduction, and open to examination the middle phase of social interaction, in which the interplay between structure, culture and agency takes place. Archer asserts that this becomes possible because 'the actual time-span which any morphogenetic explanation addresses is in fact *longer* than in every version of conflationary theory' (Archer 1995, p.92). Thus, theories of downward conflation restrict their examination to the effects of structural conditioning of people's actions; theories of upward conflation focus on structural elaboration caused by people's actions; and theories of central conflation are entrapped in social interaction. Archer points out that it is only the Morphogenetic Approach which accords time a central place in social theory by incorporating it as sequential phases and successive cycles rather than simply as a medium in which events take place.

Archer (1995, p.90-91) describes three analytical phases of a structural morphogenetic/morphostatic cycle as follows:

a) Structural conditioning is a phase when the social distribution of material resources (first-order SEPs) and relations between agents (second order SEPs) shape the situations in which the current generation of agents finds themselves and endow them with vested interests; these structural conditions are intended and unintended consequences of actions of agents during previous cycles;
b) Social interaction involves actions of current agents, constrained and enabled by the SEPs and mediated by PEPs; people always have a choice of actions ranging from defence of their vested interests to sacrifice of them, which they make by applying their reflexivity; corporate agents engage in transactions between each other endowed by relative bargaining power and negotiating strength; re-grouping of

corporate agents and modification of sets of social roles takes place in the course of social interaction;

c) Structural elaboration involves structural morphogenesis – transformation of previous structural properties and the emergence of new ones as the intended and unintended outcomes of people's actions in the process of social interaction; alternatively, the combined outcome of actions may result in reproduction (morphostasis) of the structural properties; the new (or reproduced) structural configuration is the start of another cycle.

Archer presents a structural morphogenetic cycle in a graphic form:

$T^1$ Structural conditioning

$T^2$ Social interaction $T^3$

Structural elaboration $T^4$

Figure 6.2 The morphogenesis of structure (Archer 1995, p.193)

Here, $T^1$ through to $T^4$ are the times at the start or at the end of the analytical phases. Each cycle is preceded and followed by other cycles.

At the start of each cycle, agents are conditioned by a certain distribution of wealth in society (first-order SEP) and a particular structural configuration, which arises from this distribution (second-order SEP). Archer classifies structural configurations by relations of dependency (necessity) or independency (contingency) between agents and complementarity or incompatibility of their vested interests. Archer (1995, pp.218-229) describes four types of structural configurations and corresponding patterns of social interaction, as follows:

1. Necessary complementarities. With a highly concentrated wealth, corporate agents are dependent on one another and have compatible vested interests. Primary agents are not mobilised and their self-organisation is constrained by a lack of resources and political sanctions. Social interaction on all levels is characterised by solidarity. All agents benefit from maintaining the status quo in society. The situational logic of protection operates on all levels of society, reinforcing traditionalism. Structural innovation and diversification are suppressed. This structural configuration of high integration of the structural system leads to stable societal or institutional structural morphostasis, if not disrupted by external contingencies.

2. Necessary incompatibilities. Two or more corporate agents or alliances are internally related to each other but with contradictory vested interests. Corporate agents pursue their interests but try to avoid a confrontation with each other, as it may cause a major structural disruption. The situational logic of compromise and containment prompts agents to exercise a cautious balanced strategy of promotion of their interests, weighing gains against losses. Mobilisation of primary agents is low. This is unstable morphostatic structural configuration, easily disrupted and turned into morphogenetic structural configuration by external contingencies.
3. Contingent incompatibilities. External contingencies, leading to a scarcity of resources, cause a latent conflict of corporate agents with divergent vested interests to intensify, with protective or containing strategies being replaced by strategic mobilisation of primary agents. The situational logic of elimination drives intense competitive interaction characterised by progressive polarisation of conflicting sides and their supporters. Social cleavages open up across a society or an institution, which result in its deep structural morphogenesis.
4. Contingent compatibilities. External contingencies (e.g. influx of resources or advances in technology) lower the threshold for new corporate agents to form from primary agents and to gain means for realisation of their interests. The situational logic of opportunity energises old and new corporate agents and blunts the conflict of vested interests. Abundance of opportunities leads to diversification of agents and to ongoing structural morphogenesis, sustained by the external factors which triggered it.

Archer points out that the above structural configurations and patterns of social interaction may co-exist in society as corporate agents can be involved in different types of relations with various other agents. All structural configurations provide only a situational guidance for agents in social interaction, which is mediated by their PEPs and liable to the incursion of external contingencies. Thus, it is not possible to make a definite projection from the structural configuration at $T^1$ towards its elaboration at $T^4$.

A morphogenetic/morphostatic cycle of a cultural system is similar to the one for a structural system, described above. The independence of the cultural system, constituted by logical relations between its elements, entails a relative autonomy of its cycle, which, due to production of new knowledge, results in cultural elaboration more often than structural morphogenesis takes place. At the start of each morphogenetic cycle, a certain distribution of cultural resources and a particular cultural configuration condition socio-cultural

interaction. Cultural configurations are classified by Archer by relations of logical contradiction or complimentarity between ideational resources and mutual dependence (necessity) of different sets of ideas or their independence (contingency) of each other. Similar to structural conditioning, Archer (1995, pp.229-245) describes four types of cultural configurations and corresponding patterns of socio-cultural interaction, as follows:

- Concomitant (necessary) complementarities. All ideational resources are mutually dependent and complement each other. Such relations facilitate systematisation, canonisation and deep study of the cultural conspectus. It becomes intellectually rich and dense, with subtle distinctions in meanings and a well-developed vocabulary. The situational logic of protection prompts agents to create a cultural boundary and to form an integrated socio-cultural community, which cannot assimilate new ideas without major disruption. This, in the absence of external contingencies, leads to the closure and morphostasis of the cultural system.
- Constraining (necessary) contradictions. Two or more ideational resources (doctrines), available to agents, are in logical contradiction with each other but cannot be separated due to mutual evocation. Protagonists of both doctrines can neither embrace the opposite standpoint nor disregard it. Agents have a choice between abandoning their doctrine and attempting to unify the two doctrines through syncretic re-definition of contradictory elements. The situational logic of correction leads in time to ideational unification and cultural morphostasis, if socio-cultural interaction is not affected by a persistent antagonism between agents and an irreconcilable conflict of their vested interests.
- Competitive (contingent) contradictions. Contradictions between the old cultural conspectus and a new set of ideas are activated by the protagonists of the latter. By accentuating differences and overstating their salience, they draw in primary agents into a fray and coerce people to take their side. Material interests, not allegiance to ideology, prompt corporate agents, espousing the contradictory doctrines, to act towards elimination of the opposite side. The ideas always survive, even if their protagonists do not. Exposure of broad sections of populations to competing ideas and ideologies leads to their proliferation, elaboration and differentiation, i.e. to cultural morphogenesis. In the fullness of time, cultural contest may result in ideational diversity and pluralism.
- Contingent complementarities. In this configuration, ideational resources, circulating in society, are unconstrained by logical contradiction or by mutual

dependence. Their activation depends on the initiative of individuals and agents, prompted by the situational logic of opportunity. Adoption of new ideas can be constrained by established routines and habitual interaction and by structural divisions in an institution or a society. In an unconstrained structural environment (abundance of material resources), socio-cultural interaction involves cultural specialisation of individuals and agents and their constant re-grouping as new opportunities arise. This cultural configuration may lead to sustained cultural morphogenesis.

Archer asserts that it is people who make and re-make culture, with their emerging properties (PEPs) affecting and being affected by their on-going interaction. Therefore, similar to the structural morphogenetic cycle, the initial cultural configuration at $T^1$ conditions but does not determine the outcome of socio-cultural interaction and cultural elaboration at $T^4$.

Archer stipulates that outcomes of social and socio-cultural interaction are affected by changes in the properties of primary and corporate agents in the course of it. Such changes are aggregate for primary agents and emergent for corporate agents. They constitute morphogenesis of group agency, described by Archer (1995, pp.261-265), as follows:

- Structural and cultural conditioning of groups. The initial distributions of material and ideational resources and structural and cultural configurations define societal positions of primary agents and bargaining powers of corporate agents. This constitutes configuration of agents at $T^1$, or their pre-grouping.
- Group interaction. Interaction of corporate agents affects their bargaining power and negotiating strength and may cause mobilisation of primary agents. The latter acts as environmental pressure on interaction of corporate agents, enabling or constraining them.
- Group elaboration. Social and socio-cultural interaction results either in maintaining pre-grouping of agents (morphostasis of agency) or their re-grouping (morphogenesis of agency). The latter consists of shrinkage of primary agents and expansion and change of corporate agents, along with re-distribution of resources and emergence of new structural and cultural configurations.

Archer calls a process, by which agency elaborates structure and culture and, in the course of it, is elaborated itself, ‘double morphogenesis’ (Archer 1995, p.247). By definition,

structural and cultural morphogenesis always involves re-grouping of agents through changes in their bargaining power.

Archer (1995, p.255) uses the term 'triple morphogenesis' to describe the emergence and modification of arrays of social roles in the result of interaction and re-grouping of agents. In pursuit of their vested interests, corporate agents mobilise primary agents and their own members. If the societal or institutional cultural configuration provides a scope for creativity (morphogenetic scenario), their activities can be innovative and game-changing and lead to elaboration of existing arrays of social roles and rules and emergence of new ones. Modified and new arrays of roles widen opportunities for individual actors to choose and to personify those roles, which they find congruent to their personal identities, and to establish their social identities (see section 6.4). Archer asserts that it is by applying their reflexivity individuals transform chosen roles and, in the process of it, develop and modify the reflexivity itself. Thus, in Archer's theorising, the concepts of group agency (primary and corporate) and social actor and the process of triple morphogenesis provide a link between societal morphogenesis and personal development and between macro and micro levels of analysis.

Modelling of morphogenesis of structure, culture and agency as three autonomous, yet interrelated cycles with the same three-phase sequence of conditioning, interaction and elaboration allows Archer to theorise how the interplay between structure, culture and agency takes place. The three cycles intersect in the middle phase of social and socio-cultural interaction. It is interaction of agents that actualises their material and human resources, turns ideas into ideational resources and knowledge into a source of their expertise, reveals their bargaining power and negotiating strength, and mobilises reflexivity and creativity of their members. Thus, in Archer's model of societal and institutional morphogenesis a pivotal role belongs to the stage of social and socio-cultural interaction. Such theorising of interplay of structure, culture and agency allows Archer to make a purchase on Lockwood's (1964) original answer to the question of why some social events result in a systemic change while others do not.

Archer (1995) maintains that because of the complex dynamics of inter-relations between three sets of emergent properties and the fact that any society or institution is an open system, there cannot be a formula 'if – then' that predicts an outcome of structural and cultural development. Nevertheless, Archer (1995, pp.308-322) offers four scenarios of systemic development, what she calls 'analytical histories of emergence' (Archer 1995,

p.294), based on conjunction or disjunction of structural and cultural morphogenesis and morphostasis, which can be used by researchers as explanatory methodology in analysis of societal and institutional transformations. In section 6.5, I apply two of these scenarios in macro-analysis of cultural and structural changes in the School that took place after the accreditation of the BA.

## 6.3 Archer's theory of reflexivity

In the third monograph of the trilogy, devoted to a theory of personal development, Archer (2000) introduced reflexivity as a personal emergent property of the stratum of individual actors. In her following research, Archer (2003; 2007; 2012) developed a concept of personal reflexivity, which she allocated a central position within social theory (Archer 2007, p.5) and in the social realist account of how 'the causal power of social forms is mediated through agency' (Bhaskar 1979, p.26). Archer stipulates that this concept specifies what emergent properties and powers on the individual level are involved in activation of structural and cultural conditioning and in steering social and socio-cultural interaction towards social reproduction or social change. In the course of interaction, personal reflexivity forges and modifies the personal and social identity of an individual, while itself being modified and diversified. This, according to Archer, constitutes a process of maturation and life-long personal development in a contemporary society of Late Modernity (Archer 2012). Thus, the notion and theory of reflexivity provide a link between Archer's theorising of societal or institutional morphogenesis and her theory of personal development, outlined in the next section.

Archer defines reflexivity as 'a regular exercise of mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa' (Archer 2007, p.4). Such ability is exercised by people in their internal conversations. In this definition, Archer follows in the steps of American pragmatists who distinguished between a routine human action and a conscious response. Thus, according to Dewey (1930), in unfamiliar circumstances human mind blocks habitual action and engages in a deliberation, which is 'a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action' (ibid, p.95). Such an internal deliberation proceeds in a format of questions and answers, albeit with truncated words and incomplete sentences, which led numerous social scientists to refer to it as internal conversation or internal dialogue (e.g. Voloshinov 1973; Vygotsky 1986; Arendt 1978). Archer (2003; 2007) discusses in detail features of internal conversation and argues that reflexivity is synonymous with it.

Archer advances a proposition that reflexivity is not a homogeneous phenomenon but is exercised through distinctive modes and that at any given time for almost every person one of such modes is dominant. In an exploratory study, using qualitative interviewing, Archer (2003) produced rich descriptions of research participants, which coalesced into four modes of reflexivity. Following her second research project with a larger number of participants, Archer produced the following descriptions of four types of individuals which correspond to four dominant modes of reflexivity (Archer 2007, p.93):

- Communicative reflexives are those whose internal conversation requires completion and confirmation by others before resulting in a course of actions.
- Autonomous reflexives are those who sustain self-contained internal conversation leading directly to action.
- Meta-reflexives are those who are critically reflexive about their own internal conversation and critical about effective action in society.
- Fractured reflexives are those whose internal conversation intensify their distress and disorientation rather than leading to purposeful courses of action.

To identify among the participants of her research those individuals, who consistently practiced one of the reflexivity modes as a dominant one, Archer (2007) devised from the array of instruments in social psychology a questionnaire the Internal Conversation Indicator (ICONI). Archer emphasised that the ICONI instrument was not intended to stand alone in the research but only as a tool for sampling subjects for qualitative interviewing.

Archer (2003; 2007; 2012) found in her empirical research that familial relations affected development of young people's reflexivity. Close and harmonious families, producing an abundance of 'relational goods', such as love, reliance, caring and trust, were conducive to developing by young people the communicative mode of reflexivity, exercised through 'thought and talk' with members of their families. Dysfunctional families, which inflicted 'relational harm' on young people through relationships of domination, coercion, antagonism and exploitation, undermined their ability to reflexive deliberation. These young people scored with ICONI as fractured reflexives. Families with much less severe 'relational harm' but with few, if any, 'relational goods' induced in young people early independence and desire to make their own choices in their lives. These young people, experiencing contextual discontinuity in their families, were likely to develop the autonomous mode of reflexivity. The last group of young people, who grew up in families

with parental tensions, compensated by family stability, developed critical detachment from their parents and dissociation from *modus vivendi* in which they were brought up. These young people, confronting contextual incongruity in their families, were found to be susceptible to developing the meta-mode of reflexivity. Thus, Archer found that natal context was bringing a particular pre-disposition to the mode of reflexive deliberations of young people, though only in the case of communicative reflexivity there was homology between reflexivity mode and natal context.

A question arises, and was put by Archer herself (Archer 2012), whether a mode of reflexivity could be termed as a set of dispositions. Archer noted that the modes are orientations towards the social order: communicative reflexivity – towards protection and prolongation of contextual continuity; autonomous reflexivity and meta-reflexivity – towards acceptance of contextual discontinuity and incongruity and pursuit of opportunities, opened by these societal conditions. The modes of internal deliberation pre-dispose individuals to make choices and to act in accordance with these orientations, which, in the long run, affect their lives. Thus, in her second study (Archer 2007), Archer found an association of communicative reflexives with social immobility, autonomous reflexives – with upwards social mobility, and meta-reflexives – with lateral social mobility. This may justify characterising the modes of reflexivity as sets of individual dispositions.

However, Archer (2010) strongly objected to attempts to combine her concept of reflexivity with Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Sweetman 2003; Sayer 2005; Adams 2006; Elder-Vaas 2007; Fleetwood 2008; Sayer 2009). Archer stressed that habitus refers to a disposition to act pre-reflexively or semi-reflexively, out of the logic of practice, which orientates an individual to prolonging appropriateness of his/her dispositions, i.e., in Archer's terms, to sustaining contextual continuity. In this sense, habitus can be associated with the communicative mode of reflexivity. Archer (2012) suggested that, because this mode entails external conversations, reflexive thought can be lost in talk, and reflexivity can be overlooked or neglected by a researcher. Archer asserts that despite such association between habitus and communicative reflexivity, these concepts are incompatible because of Bourdieu's foundational principle of ontological complicity between habitus and field. In Bourdieu's theory, any change of a habitus originates in changes of or exposure to a field, or, in Archer's terms, is an outcome of structural and cultural conditioning. In Archer's theory, mobilisation and diversification of reflexivity is an outcome of social interaction.

Bourdieu introduced reflexivity as a methodological concept and applied it to practices of sociological inquiry and of critical discourse in philosophy (Wacquant 1989; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). His rejection of reflexive practice outside an academic community (Bourdieu 1988) was based on his assumption of an opposition between scientific knowledge and the logic of practice. Archer (2007) criticised Bourdieu for creating such an 'epistemological barrier'. In her view, all knowledge is equally accessible to all people and there is no justification for singling out one particular group. Archer asserted that there is no empirical ground to hold the logic of practice so pervasive in its grip on individual action, as Bourdieu's theorising does. It is indeed not exceptional for individuals to act against their vested interests and pursue concerns, which are not congruent with the conditions of the field in which they operate. According to Archer's (2003; 2007; 2012) empirical research, this is typical for meta-reflexives. In his late writings, Bourdieu (2000; 2001; 2004) attempted to theorise reflexivity as a universal mode of understanding and a source of informed action which can break with a doxa of the field. However, for Bourdieu, the concept of reflexivity remained based on phenomenological understanding of practice and action (Deer 2012b), which is something Archer (2012) strongly opposed to. Thus, Archer's concept of reflexivity, rooted in realist ontology and analytical dualism, cannot be combined with the concept of habitus, if consistency between ontology, explanatory methodology and practical social theory is to be maintained.

While Archer's concept of reflexivity as an agential emergent property is ontologically grounded, the heterogeneity of human reflexivity remains a hypothesis. The four modes of reflexivity are defined by Archer heuristically. Their theoretical validity is based on her empirical studies and could be either confirmed or contested by further empirical research. A study of Dyke et al (2012), using social network analysis, found that modes of reflexivity, practiced by participants of their research, depended on context of social interaction. The authors argue that the modes of reflexivity should be seen as approaches, rather than types, because individuals in their study were displaying characteristics of different modes, depending on the network in which they were operating. The authors concluded that the modes of reflexivity are not fixed but emerge, adapt and change over the life-course of an individual.

## 6.4 Archer's theory of personal development

In the final monograph of the trilogy, Archer (2000) theorised maturation and life-long personal development as a process of emergence and elaboration of personal emergent

properties, in accordance with her stratified model of the subject (Fig. 6.3): self-consciousness (a sense of self), reflexivity, personal identity and social identity.

| Self | Sense of self |
|---|---|
| Agent | Reflexivity |
| Actor | Social identity |
| Person | Personal identity |

Figure 6.3 A stratified model of the subject (Archer 2000, p. 254)

Archer (2000) described the process of maturation of 'us', human beings, in three orders of reality, natural, practical and social, as progression through four stages:

1. A stage of differentiation. Our sense of self emerges through embodied practice in the natural world and differentiates us from other objects and subjects. It gives us the first ineluctable concern about our physical well-being. By manipulating material objects we acquire embodied practical knowledge and the second ineluctable concern of striving for performative competence. In social practices, we develop our internal conversation, or reflexivity, and acquire a notion of self-worth as the third ineluctable concern. The three concerns constitute our nascent personal identities. From birth, we involuntarily occupy positions on society's distribution of material and ideational resources and share life chances with some members of society. This defines our primary agency.
2. A stage of socialisation. To sustain or to improve our societal positions, we voluntarily become members of corporate agents. Our primary agency conditions but does not determine our choice, with our nascent personal concerns and reflexivity playing a part in it. In interaction with other members, we develop dispositions, beliefs and values, characteristic of members of a chosen corporate agent, and articulate and pursue that agent's interests. Societal and institutional morphogenesis mobilises our reflexivity and prompts us to seek a match between our personal concerns, our corporate agency and social roles, which we occupy.
3. A stage of individuation. In our internal conversation, we reflect on the array of corporate roles available for realisation of our nascent personal concerns. This reflexive process results in a choice of roles, in which we willingly invest ourselves. We strike a balance between our different roles, in accordance with our own definition of self-worth. We determine how much energy, time and

commitment we put into each of our roles in pursuit of our ultimate concerns. This defines us as unique persons, with our personified social roles (our social identity) becoming a subset of our personal identity.

4. A stage of commitment. In a genuine act of solidarity, we make a commitment to our social roles. We prioritise our ultimate concerns, thus, obtaining a strict personal identity. This brings a developmental process of maturation to completion.

Archer posits that the process of our personal development does not stop with us achieving a personal maturity, as our position in society and our corporate roles change due to societal and institutional morphogenesis. This compels us throughout the life-course to re-prioritise our concerns and acquire new ones, to re-evaluate our membership of corporate agents, to personify our modified and new roles and to re-commit ourselves to them, thus re-establishing our personal and social identity. Archer presents a continuous process of personal development in the format of morphogenetic cycle (Fig. 6.4).

$T^1$ the conditioned 'Me' – Primary Agent $T^2$

the interactive 'We' – Corporate Agent $T^3$

the elaborated 'You' – Personal Identity and Social Identity $T^4$

Figure 6.4 The emergence of personal and social identity (Archer 2000, p.296)

During her study of the undergraduate students of Warwick University, Archer (2012) elaborated her theory of maturation of young people under societal conditions of structural and cultural morphogenesis. According to Archer, under such conditions the socialisation of young people into the primary agency of collectivities, in which they are born and bred, progressively fails: cultural and structural diversity on all levels of social stratification diminishes what is regarded as 'normal' and normatively binding and this makes societal institutions of primary socialisation (family, local community, school) less and less effective, as they become sources of inconsistent messages. Archer also argued that, in the period of nascent morphogenesis in society, the mechanism of social reproduction through intergenerational transfer of cultural capital in families and in educational system (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990) becomes ineffective. This happens because the homology between socialised dispositions of young people and positions in society, which are available for them to occupy, is coming to an end. Parents from all walks of life become less and less capable of preparing their children for the contextual incongruity of the world outside their familial environment as the cultural capital, transmitted in families and schools, devalues. Leaving school, young people encounter opportunities, unknown to the

generation of their parents. Archer maintained that young people face the necessity of selecting their personal concerns which have a real and enduring importance to them and, therefore, can provide a direction in their lives. For Archer, concern is an abiding interest in life, for example, an aspiration, a career goal or a relationship with another person. Archer wrote that 'concerns are commitments that are ends in themselves and constitute who we are, for whose sake we will be altruistic, self-sacrificing and sometimes ready to die, and always, at least, be trying to live' (Archer 2012, p. 15).

Archer (2012) described development of personal identities of young people in a contemporary morphogenetic society as a three-phase process of selection, prioritising and dovetailing of their personal concerns. It starts in adolescence with the discernment of what does and does not matter to a young person. The emerging reflexivity mediates this process, strongly conditioned by the relations within the young person's domestic environment. The young person registers concerns without discriminating between them and by the time of leaving school has a provisional list of concerns, which help him/her to determine the next step in life. This list undergoes revision, addition and deletion during the next phase of deliberation about what he/she cares about most. The young adult accommodates and prioritises various concerns in such a way that they dovetail each other. This often entails projection of scenarios, imagining particular ways of life. This phase includes choosing a career and, for some but not for all, a partner. Dedication to a particular set of concerns is the last phase in the emergence of a personal identity. During this phase, the individual has to decide whether a particular way of life is worth striving for and whether it is sustainable in the long run.

In her study of the undergraduate students of Warwick University, Archer (2012) found that by the time of graduation the dedication phase remained unfinished for most of the interviewed students, with the majority of them being still preoccupied with discerning their concerns and deliberating about them. Students, identified by Archer as autonomous reflexives, made the best progress in defining and dovetailing their life and work choices, while communicative and fractured reflexives remained until the end of their studies largely undecided about their future careers and directions in life. Those students, who did complete the dedication phase, were planning concrete practical steps after their graduation, in order to achieve satisfying and sustainable practices of work and life (*modus vivendi*) (Fig. 6.5).

Archer (2012) theorised emergence of relational reflexivity in the process of development of personal identity under morphogenetic societal conditions. Interviewing participants of her research, Archer (2012) found that the task of prioritising concerns was an extremely difficult one for them, because it involved balancing and accommodating relationships within their diverse social networks, which included their families, friends and partners. Archer noted that to have a concern entails a relationship and to have multiple concerns involves plural relationships, which may and may not be mutually compatible. Archer also found that some young people, while deciding on their career and a partner for life, faced a problem of 'two final ends'. Archer suggested relational reflexivity assisted young people in solving such problems, as well as in prioritising and dovetailing their concerns and achieving a sense of unity in their lives.

Archer (2012) endorsed Donati's (2011, p. xvi) definition of relational reflexivity as such reflexivity which orientates individuals to the reality emerging from their interactions by taking into consideration how this reality is able (by virtue of its own powers) to feed back onto the individuals, since it exceeds their individual as well as their aggregate contribution to it by virtue of their personal powers. This is theorising of reflexivity as a human ability to reflect upon and take into account the emergent properties of the 'relational order' of reality (Donati and Archer 2015).

As Archer's research (2012) did not follow the participants after their graduation, she could not investigate how the process of their maturation proceeded further, beyond the stage of development of personal identity. Nevertheless, with a contribution from her previous two studies, Archer (2003; 2007) presented an outline of the stage of emergence of social identity under conditions of societal morphogenesis (Fig. 6.5).


Figure 6.5 The emergence of personal and social identity in a morphogenetic society (Archer 2012, p.108)

Archer specified that the social identity emerges through practical realisation of concrete projects, developed by an individual pursing his/her personal concerns. Archer defines a project as a specific agential enterprise, individual or collective, which involves 'an end that is desired, however tentatively or nebulously, and also some notion, however

imprecise, of the course of action through which to accomplish it' (Archer 2003, p.6). Realisation of a project activates systemic and people's emerging properties of social context, within which it takes place. Reflexively responding to these two sets of powers, an individual personifies selected social roles in a manner expressive of his/her personal identity and achieves a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. This, according to Archer, concludes the process of maturation in a contemporary morphogenetic society.

## 6.5 Application of the Morphogenetic Approach for macro-analysis of the School and the BA

In this section I apply the Morphogenetic Approach to the analysis of structural and cultural changes in the School that took place after the accreditation of the BA. My aim is to test the validity of the conclusion made above, by applying Bourdieusian analysis, in relation to the role of the BA in social reproduction of house communities and maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School (see section 5.3.3).

The conclusion reached in section 5.3.3 can be re-formulated in terms of the Morphogenetic Approach, as follows: the BA served to maintain contextual continuity in the house communities and thus contributed to reproduction of the structural configuration of the School or, in other words, to morphostasis of its structural system. The account about the end of the partnership (section 5.3.2) indicates that a request put by the University to turn the BA into a full-time programme caused a conflict between two group agents. The group of BA teachers and tutors, whose vested interests were served by continuing a partnership with the University, had insufficient bargaining power to enact a re-distribution of material and human resources in the School, which was necessary in order to re-accredit the BA as a full-time course. The group of house coordinators, whose vested interests were served by maintaining contextual continuity in their house communities, effectively instigated a break-up of the partnership with the University. This resulted in a cycle of reproduction of the structural configuration of the School, albeit with a growing structural disruption due to the reduction in the number of students.

The details of the accounts in section 5.3.2 indicate that at the time of the cessation of the BA the structural configuration of the School was one of the necessary incompatibilities (p.95), in which two or more corporate agents or intra-corporate groups compete with each other for limited resources but are internally related to each other. Avoiding an open conflict, which may cause a major structural disruption, groups cautiously exercise strategies of promotion of their interests. Social interaction is conditioned by the situational

logic of compromise and containment, with concessions being made by all sides of the internal conflict for the sake of maintaining the status quo. It is an unstable morphostatic configuration, which is easily disrupted and turned into a morphogenetic one by external contingencies. The intervention by the University, which caused a rapid reduction in the number of BA students, was such an external contingency. Three years after the University intervention, the BA was closed and, one year after that, a structural reform was implemented in the School.

The above analytical account, made by applying the terms of the Morphogenetic Approach, does not differ substantively from the one, made within the Bourdieusian theoretical framework. This is because it considers only the structure of the School and does not take into account cultural changes that have occurred in the organisation since the accreditation of the BA. The cultural morphogenesis in the School becomes apparent, if the cultural configuration of the School is considered separately from its structural configuration.

The interviews with the former programme directors (section 5.3.1) indicate that prior to the initial accreditation of the BA the School's cultural system had a configuration of concomitant complementarities (p.97). The School was an institution with an isolated and protected cultural system, which was based on the doctrine of anthroposophy and ideas, derived from it. Over decades of cultural hegemony, these ideational resources were systematised and canonised by successive generations of long-term co-workers. Many of them were engaged in a continuous study of the doctrine and its applications to their work and communal life. The Seminar served as a means of cultural initiation and vocational induction of new members. The situational logic of protection led to formation of a cultural boundary, which was preventing assimilation of new ideas. Nevertheless, external contingencies and a threat of a major disruption forced the School to enter into a partnership with a Higher Education institution with an aim to accredit the Seminar as a BA programme. School long-term co-workers were given an assurance by their external partners that the Seminar curriculum would be retained and protected. This enhanced the negotiating power of those co-workers who worked towards an accreditation of the Seminar. Thus, a structural disruption, followed by a split between organisational actors, led to the initial accreditation of the BA, which was a step in the opening of the cultural system of the School and a first sign of its cultural morphogenesis.

The cultural influence of the University led to the gradual expansion of the BA curriculum by including non-anthroposophic knowledge. An exposure of students to 'mainstream' approaches facilitated their dissemination across the School. At the time of the research, the ideational diversity in the BA and the School was evident (see section 4.4). Though many School long-term co-workers still identified themselves as followers of anthroposophy, the latter lost its cultural hegemony in the School and its role of legitimising ideology for organisational and communal practices in the School. Traditions and rituals were losing their former significance and cultural symbolism and were no longer a source of social unity in the School. Yet, even with the diminishing role of shared meanings the norms of communal life and work, grounded in daily practices, endured.

Collected data indicates that ideational differentiation in the School unleashed a competition within the group of BA teachers and tutors, between those who taught anthroposophy and those who taught non-anthroposophic courses (see section 4.4), though there was no open conflict between protagonists of competing ideas. Cultural influences of the University had a moderating effect on the socio-cultural interaction within the group of BA teachers and tutors, resulting in diversity and pluralism of ideas within the BA curriculum. There was no conflict between adherents of anthroposophy and sponsors of 'mainstream' approaches in the wider organisation either. However, as it is evidenced by Jane's account (section 5.2.2), some students faced constraints in implementation of their practice-based projects. New ideas, promoted by students, clashed with cultural traditionalism in the School. This indicates that the cultural configuration of the School at the time of the research was the one of competitive (contingent) contradictions (p.97). It was a morphogenetic cultural configuration which was conducive to the spreading of ideational diversity and pluralism from the BA into the organisation. Thus, it can be concluded that the accreditation of the BA brought about cultural changes in the School, triggering and then facilitating its cultural morphogenesis.

A question arises as to whether cultural morphogenesis caused structural changes in the School. Analytical application of Archer's scenarios of systemic development provides some indications on that matter. The scenario of a conjunction of structural morphostasis and cultural morphostasis (Archer 1995, pp.309-312) applies to the School until the time of the initial accreditation of the BA. Structural morphostasis in the School was sustained by the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities. Socialisation of newcomers (short-term co-workers) into group agency of their house communities proceeded through interaction with students and long-term co-workers. Such ongoing socialisation was critical

for structural reproduction of the School. Cultural homogeneity and cultural reproduction of the School was a result of activities of long-term co-workers. They maintained cultural traditions and rituals and taught Seminar students organisational and anthroposophy-based knowledge. The specific structure of the School and availability of resources made it possible for the long-term members to engage in cultural practices, which, in their turn, sustained structural reproduction of the School. The structure and culture of the School were reinforcing each other. This resulted in a period of systemic morphostasis in the School which lasted for many years.

The second scenario of a disjunction between cultural morphogenesis and structural morphostasis (Archer 1995, pp.315-318) is applicable to the School from the time of the initial accreditation of the BA. The period of stability was brought to an end by a structural disruption in the School: a reduction in the number of pupils reduced the School's income and threatened its economic viability. As it transpires from the interviews with the former programme directors (section 5.3.1), the cause of this disruption was external: regulatory changes in the sector of institutional providers of care and education. In addition, a drop in the number of Seminar students also undermined the structural stability of the School. This drop was caused by societal changes in some European countries, which reduced the attractiveness of the Seminar study to young people from these countries. The result of such double disruption in the School was a split of long-term co-workers between traditionalists and progressivists. In ensued interaction, the latter had an upper hand. They succeeded in accrediting the Seminar as a Higher Education programme and, thus, opened the School to external cultural influences that further undermined cultural traditionalism within the organisation. The split among long-term co-workers was the first sign of cultural morphogenesis in the School. The replacement of the Seminar by the BA preserved and even strengthened the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities, because the number of students went up. The School earned a high reputation for the quality of its care and education. Its income increased. This alleviated pressure on the structural system of the School and its structural morphostasis persisted.

Although the structural configuration of the School remained morphostatic, there was a qualitative change in social interaction of groups and individual members. If before the accreditation of the BA it was guided by the situational logic of solidarity and protection, at the time of the research, interaction of the group of house coordinators with the group of BA teachers and tutors followed the situational logic of containment and compromise. This indicates that some structural changes did occur in the School in the years after the

accreditation of the BA. In terms of Archer's categorisation of second-order SEPs (pp.94-95), it was a change from the structural configuration of necessary complementarities to the one of necessary incompatibilities.

This change happened due to the ideational differentiation among long-term co-workers of the School. The differentiation started with a split between traditionalists and progressivists in regard to the accreditation of the Seminar and accelerated with dissemination of new ideas from the BA curriculum across the organisation. Some of the ideas found sponsors among long-term co-workers, occupying various positions in the School's organisational hierarchy, and were put into practice by students. Jane's story (section 5.3.2) tells about one such case. Lisa and Beth were involved in another transformational project, which was initiated and implemented by a group of long-term co-workers and students. This demonstrates that the pool of new ideas presented competitive advantages and opportunities to groups and individual co-workers of the School. They adopted these ideas, pursuing their ideational and material interests in competition with other groups and co-workers. The intensified competition within the organisation undermined solidarity and trust between its members and led to the change of the structural configuration of School. The new configuration was less rigid and less stable than the old one. The loosening of the School's structure allowed a number of younger long-term co-workers, BA graduates, to join a power play in the School and to become promoted to prominent positions within the organisational hierarchy. Within a year of the cessation of the BA, the School entered a period of structural transformation. A new chapter of a conjunction between cultural morphogenesis and structural morphogenesis was opened in the 'history of emergence' in the School.

The above analysis presents the School at the time of the research as an institution in the throes of cultural change and on the brink of structural transformation. This analytical account differs substantively from the one based on Bourdieusian analysis. The latter accentuated the function of the BA in the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities and overlooked the impact of the BA on the School's culture and structure. Thus, for the macro-level analysis of the School's structure and culture, application of the Morphogenetic Approach offers more potent analytical tools than Bourdieu's theoretical framework. A suggestion can be made that Archer's theories and concepts are also better suited than Bourdieu's ones for micro-level analysis of the personal development of individual students. This suggestion is tested in the following chapter.

# 7 Archerian analysis of reflexivity and personal development of students

This chapter presents substantive analysis of assignments and interviews of six students. Applying Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development, an aim here was to produce an analytical account, which 'conceptualises the experiential, namely that which is accessible to actors at any given time in its incompleteness and distortion and replete with its blind spots of ignorance' (Archer 1995, p.150). This chapter can be viewed as a second part of a two-part analytical account of the School and the BA, with what is written in the previous chapter about the structural and cultural configurations of the School and the role of the BA in its cultural and structural morphogenesis being its first part. The two-part analysis stems from the principle of analytical dualism of structure and agency, for it compels 'to distinguish sharply, then between the genesis of human action, lying in the reasons and plans of human beings, on the one hand; and the structures governing the reproduction and transformation of social activities, on the other' (Bhaskar 1989, p.79-80).

Another aim in writing this chapter was to develop an interpretive and analytic account from a standpoint, which is close to the perspectives of the students. This is a methodological consequence of Archer's theorising reflexivity as an internal conversation (Archer 2003; 2007). Archer points out that the internal conversation is a first-person phenomenon, which is private, personal and unique. The reflexive internal conversation is not accessible to a researcher, but, its extension and outcomes in written accounts and interviews are. Analysing them entails a risk of committing a fallacy by substituting a third-person interpretation for a first-person meaning. Archer notes that it is possible to transform a first-person meaning into a third-person one, but 'the subject alone can do this' (Archer 2007, p.81). This puts an onus on the researcher to examine people's reasons for actions as they are subjectively defined by people themselves.

More specifically, the analysis in this chapter is guided by research questions about reflexivity of students and the process of their maturation:

1. How do the work in the School and the study of the BA influence the development of students' reflexivity, in regard to its modes and a relational aspect?
2. How do the work and the study affect the process of maturation of students?

I address the two questions by producing interpretive and explanatory accounts of life, work and study of six students on the basis of their assignments and interviews (see Table 4.5, pp. 41-43). Applying Archer's descriptors of the reflexivity modes (see p.101), I conclude that among the six participants there were two students, whose reflexivity was dominated by the meta-mode, two students, whose reflexivity was dominated by the autonomous mode, and two students, who practiced the communicative mode of reflexivity. Accordingly, I divide accounts about these individuals into three sections. In the last section of this chapter, I draw a conclusion about a role of the BA in the process of maturation of students.

## 7.1 Meta-reflexives

In Archer's definition (Archer 2007; 2012), meta-reflexives are those individuals who are critically reflexive about their own internal conversations and critical about effective action in society. Archer notes that the practitioners of meta-reflexivity, far from internalising or normalising the social order, unapologetically problematise it. In their rich and expansive internal and external deliberations, meta-reflexives could be sharply critical and subversive to the established norms and practices. Their critique of the 'system' on all its levels and quest for its change makes meta-reflexives receptive to the situational logic of opportunity of a morphogenetic society. Meta-reflexives are particularly prone to social volatility in their lives and careers because of their difficulty in locating suitable contexts for realising their concerns.

In the study of Warwick University undergraduates, Archer (2012) found that meta-reflexives, entering university, declared themselves to be immune to group pressures and indifferent to group expectations. They were 'loners' rather than 'individualists', often shunned or misunderstood by others, because of their lack of social skills. Each of them was in search of a 'cause', through the service of which they strived to make a difference in the lives of others. It was typical for meta-reflexive students to be value-oriented in their career choice and to plan for a vocation in the social sphere, which would be deeply relational in its practice. Archer found that the 'third' sector (charities), in particular, attracted meta-reflexive university graduates, because it provided them with an array of roles that could be personified according to their commitment to values.

It is by their choice and not by chance that two BA students, Max and John, whose accounts suggest that meta-reflexivity was their dominant mode, first, came to the School for a year to work as volunteers and, then, stayed on and enrolled on the BA. Life and

work in a community and care for its vulnerable members resonated with their nascent values and concerns. Their emerging personal identities had some similarity in this respect. Yet, the stories of Max and John differ in regard to what they had achieved by the time of their graduation, in terms of realisation of practical work and study projects and positions which they attained in their house communities, and in terms of their progress in the maturation process. Their accounts, analysed below, indicate that their achievements (and failures) and their maturational progress are linked to the extent they managed to mobilise their relational reflexivity.

### *7.1.1 Max*

After finishing school, Max went to a university to study physics but dropped out after three years. Max said that he lost motivation for academic study and wanted to work in social services. Feeling 'adventurous', he and his girlfriend decided to move to another country. They applied to the School, being attracted by an opportunity to live and work in a community and to work with vulnerable people.

They joined one of the School's house communities and, after working and living there for two years, got married. In the following year Max enrolled on the BA. In an interview, Max said that after being in the School for three years 'some things started to look like they always were like this'. He began reading books on anthroposophy and then decided to do the BA study 'to find more meaning in work'. In his first interview, Max said that he had not yet decided about his future career but he thought that it would have something to do with vulnerable people. It seemed that Max had made two inner commitments, to his family and to his work with vulnerable people, and was in the process of dovetailing these two concerns and deciding how to pursue them through practices of communal life and work. Archer (2012) maintains that dealing with such dilemma of two final ends involves relational reflexivity.

In the same year, when Max started the BA, a team of young co-workers, Max's wife being one of them, took over the management of the house community from a group of long-term co-workers, who had been running it for twenty years. During a period of transition of power, Max acted as a link between the new management team and the former house coordinator, who was his practice tutor. This gave Max an important role in the house community and boosted his self-esteem.

At the seminar sessions of his student group, Max appeared to be acting opportunistically and subversively: he asked provocative questions, often critiqued reading materials and,

sometimes, sharply disagreed with a teacher. In an interview, Max defiantly explained his behaviour by ‘a lack of confidence in the person who is teaching’. He described the seminars as ‘sometimes a monologue and at some other times they are a very conservative dialogue’. Max said that his remarks at the seminars were often attempts to ‘check how it is from the other side’ and ‘to balance out things’. Max gave one other reason for his behaviour: he wanted to change the ‘dynamic of the group’, when some students ‘did not give a chance to anybody else to answer and some other students didn’t take a chance and usually never speak’. Archer (2012) found that such motives for a social intervention were typical for meta-reflexives, for whom a group debate was a common search for truths that underpin their values and concerns. Archer noted the seriousness with which the meta-reflexive undergraduates approached their studies, for they supplied them with the ideational resources for clarifying and articulating their concerns. Max displayed a similar attitude towards his studies. In an interview, he said that he wanted ‘to explore deep questions’ at the seminars.

At the end of the first stage, Max put a fair amount of time and effort into an assignment, based on an observation of a vulnerable individual he supported in his house community. In the interview, Max said that he developed an understanding of the individual in terms of the anthroposophic theory of twelve human senses. He added: ‘It’s much easier to believe that it’s true, than to be disappointed that it’s not true’. Max acknowledged that he felt a pressure to acquiesce to anthroposophic knowledge and to conform to the rules and routines of his house community. Still, he stated that he was determined ‘to do things differently’. A search for ‘difference’ characterised the entire period of his studies.

In the first two years of his studies, Max’s two children were born. This must have intensified Max’s internal deliberations, for during the second stage of the BA he made an important step for a meta-reflexive: he found a cause. In his house community and in his student group, Max became a champion of non-discriminatory practices, which he learned about in one of the BA courses. His dedication to this concern transpires in his account about two projects, which he undertook during that period.

The first project was a short play performance, which Max volunteered to produce for a celebration Christmas in his house community. The performance traditionally included vulnerable individuals. Max wrote in a self-assessment report for the Practice module that he decided not to invite any co-workers to participate in the performance:

> ‘I was very glad I was given the chance to take them all on my own, because this created a very empowering atmosphere. I intended to create space in which the participating [vulnerable individuals] could feel equal and critically important. This was then going to help them take good and intentional charge of themselves.’

He noted ‘smoothness’ in their rehearsals, explaining this by the absence of other co-workers. He wrote in the report that he felt he was being challenged only when senior co-workers came to the rehearsals and suggested he makes some changes. Max’s project was successful, though just before the performance he did ask his colleagues for help.

In the report, Max reflected on his experiences during the rehearsals of the play:

> ‘I noticed how quietly discrimination occurs and I managed to prevent it, upholding the dignity of each individual in the group and allowing them to feel equal in our project. This is when I made sure that not only the more able ones light the important candles, but all of them (some with support) [...] From the experience I gained most of all trust in the potential of these individuals, as they surprised me with their initiative and focus on many occasions.’

In the interview, Max mentioned that senior co-workers of the house community had some reservations about his decision to produce the celebration without involving other co-workers. One of the senior co-workers attempted to intervene at the rehearsals, but Max insisted on maintaining a sole charge of the process. Archer (2007) found that meta-reflexive participants of her research were often reluctant to compromise in a situation, in which power was at play.

Max’s determined pursuit of equitable practices brought him into a conflict with the students of his cohort during realisation of a group project for the course Creative Action. The six-month long project included staging a play and performing it for an audience of School pupils and co-workers. Students of Max’s cohort were expected to work collaboratively throughout all stages of the project: choosing a play, adapting a script, making costumes and decorations, rehearsing and, then, organising several performances. In a post-project assignment, Max wrote that before the start of the project he felt apprehensive due to his previous experiences at the seminars of the group, when a few individuals were leading in any discussion and not allowing anyone else in the group to express their opinions. To Max’s surprise, the first project meeting of the student group turned out to be very different. At this meeting, the group established ‘moral guidelines’

and equality as a ‘ground principle’ of their work on the project. Max wrote that he was encouraged by such beginning:

> ‘Knowing each other for a while, everyone knew there is an imbalance of power and in result of this meeting the power became shared. I became very enthusiastic about the empowerment I could strongly feel among people who could never before express their views freely.’

In the interview, Max said that he made a resolution to ‘hold back’ at the group meetings:

> ‘This was difficult, because naturally I wanted to contribute, but I knew that if I do it out of my initiative, the ones who usually wait at the background will have no reason to step forward. And I remember they asked for support with this.’

For some time, the group was making good progress with the realisation of the project, albeit with constant ‘tripping over details’, which was disappointing to Max. Max soon came to view their process of decision making as ineffective. He wrote in his learning journal that because much work was done in small groups,

> ‘transparency and communication became ever more difficult to maintain. Power shifted in the whole cohort and only people with strong communication and involvement could keep it.’

Though Max was one of those, who was able to influence the proceedings, he could not accept that the group returned to ‘old habits’. In his learning journal, after one of the group meetings, he wrote:

> ‘I apparently assumed my values to be the group’s values, because I thought we are betraying ourselves with just going for one option and ignoring the other. It was probably closer to reality that the group was betraying my principles of fairness and sticking for resolutions.’

Max resolved to take a stand. He wrote in the learning journal:

> ‘I find myself strong enough to hold minority view, in contrast to many people in the group who avoid speaking up. If there is a lead, most people seem to want to follow it rather than presenting a valuable argument [...] I feel it makes our practice very unconscious and we do not know what we want to present, why, and would

there have been a better way. I think it is my task in the group to at least ask these questions.'

As a consequence of Max's uncompromising stand, two 'heated exchanges' took place at group meetings. Max was genuinely surprised by the strength of the emotions, expressed by others. He wrote in his learning journal:

> 'In following the goals I try to be objective and fair, so if a minority view has not been given proper hearing I may argue for this view in order to test its ground against the view of the majority. In doing so I may not personally hold such an opinion, but I feel it to be my duty to give it a chance. Despite that, people often become personally involved in a conflict with me. I have seen some passions in this. I am usually surprised by this because I see it by then as an objective discussion where one side is under-represented and I feel responsible for it. Doing so has often brought me the status of a scapegoat.'

In the post-project assignment Max wrote:

> 'I was defending the principles of our group from the assaults of the group [...] But me leading the group out of harmony and into conflicts in the name of 'principles' might have been a high price to pay.'

Reflecting on the conflict within his student group, Max provides a justification of his actions, which is grounded on value-rationality. As a meta-reflexive, he doubts the effectiveness of his actions but not the values he holds. This indicates not only the strength of Max's conviction but, also, his readiness to bear the consequences of defending his principles and pursuing his concerns. As Archer (2007) noted, meta-reflexives are prepared to pay a price for subverting social constraints in an attempt to live out their ideal.

What lesson did Max learn after the turbulent six month of work on the student group project? In the assignment, he reflected on his experiences:

> 'I also see the contradiction I enter into, when I insist that people respect the needs of the group, not considering that the individuals might have different needs than the group's and to meet these, a certain level of flexibility is required. Therefore I see that losing my ability to empathise with the group made it difficult to transform the two conflicts we had into not so conflicting conversations.'

In this piece of meta-reflexive writing, Max is critical about both his internal conversation and his social actions. He acknowledges his failure to consider the needs of members of the group and to deal with arising social tensions. He attributes the cause of his failure to a lack of empathetic understanding of others, or, in Archer's terms, to a deficit of relational reflexivity about social contexts of his actions.

Writing about a main lesson, which he had learned, Max referred to a notion of non-discriminatory practice:

> 'Now I know that this term does not only mean we all deserve the same rights, attention and respect, it also means that we are able to surprise and be different for once and a team should not shelter assumptions about people. Assumptions can oppress and prevent an individual to express their full potential. I think now I will have a different view over the teamwork in my community.'

In this piece, Max writes about cultural assumptions that condition social interaction and can prevent individuals from realising their full potential and, also, about ability of people, working together, to overcome such cultural constraints. In Archer's terms, this is a remarkable realisation by Max of the power of people's emergent properties to shape personal and social identities of members of the group.

Max did learn some lessons the hard way, through experiencing a failure of his interventions in the student group. Now, he intended to apply in his house community what he had learned. There, he faced difficulties, similar to the ones he had in his student group. Max's practice supervisor, who observed him at work and spoke to his colleagues, said in an interview:

> 'I was a bit puzzled, because in describing [Max]'s practice there was from the beginning a certain air of puzzlement. Everyone was puzzled by him [...] Everyone referred to him as spending a lot of time thinking, and they were a bit puzzled how to help [Max], because they felt that things weren't quite being done as they ought to be.'

The practice supervisor said that he gradually understood what was special about Max:

> 'This aspect of him actually is that he does not really like structure [...] And if something is very structured, he will come along and he will be thinking: What about everyone's rights?'

This characterisation of Max shows the extent of misunderstanding which was building up between Max and other members of his house community. The situation in the house community was similar to the one in Max's student group. What made it even more complicated for Max was that his work practice was assessed by both his practice supervisor and his practice tutor/house coordinator. In the interview, Max reflected on how this affected his internal deliberations:

> 'I might have got a bit confused standpoint in some situations, because, if I think differently from my practice supervisor or my practice tutor, then, most likely I won't get a good mark. Or, I won't get a good pass. Even, though, I might see the situation from the different point of view, not being able to express it gives them a wrong impression. [...] If there is something that I don't doubt, when I struggle to find the right approach and ask for help, I more listen to it and appreciate it, and I would still choose whether to take this advice or not. In practice, I feel I have to take it.'

Max was aware about the pressure on him to conform but nevertheless was trying to advance some projects in pursuit of his cause. He organised a study with the members of his community about one of the vulnerable individuals but did it in a different way, compared to other such meetings. Instead of focusing on problems and difficulties in supporting this individual, he asked his colleagues to share what they could discern as a contribution of this individual to their communal life. In his learning journal, Max reflected on this event:

> 'Very significant moment for me was when so many positive observations came from some of the co-workers. Some of them might have felt the way I felt when I asked myself this question the first time [...] It was a dialogue between him and the community. I came with this piece of paper and shared how he feels about the community, about living here, what he likes and doesn't like and so on [...] I tried to bring his voice, as far as it was possible. So, there was a dialogue.'

The success with this project boosted Max's self-esteem, while prompting him to re-affirm his commitment to the concern that mattered to him:

> 'I think the way I handled the meeting and its preparation reflects strongly where I stand in my attitudes and values in this work. I hope this time I have given them the right vehicle for materialisation.'

In a report for the Practice module at the second stage, Max commented about two other events, when he attempted to challenge the established practices in his house community but was not successful:

> 'I am good at challenging others. Sometimes the challenge I bring does not necessarily lead to positive outcomes, but it nevertheless raises mine and my opponent's awareness on the issue.'

In the interview, Max said, referring to these two situations:

> 'For me, authority is when it has a direction, trying to achieve something, when it has some bigger meaning. Let's not do it just the same. We are free to do it differently.'

Archer (2012) notes that exercising power of authority is not a natural behaviour for a meta-reflexive. There must be a higher purpose for that. For Max, such purpose was enacting social change. His last two sentences could be taken for a motto of meta-reflexives, who are motivated by the logic of opportunity that guides social interaction in a morphogenetic society. 'Change' is a word that holds for them a promise of a different life, for they never cease trying to create new openings in their lives and the lives of others. With these words Max re-affirmed that bringing about change was a concern that still mattered to him.

The above indicates that in regard to the process of maturation (Fig.6.5, p.107) during the second stage of the BA Max attained a personal identity by virtue of his commitments and entered a stage of developing a social identity through engaging in and undertaking various projects. This stage involved personification of his roles in the house community and in the student group and required from him reflexive adjustment and accommodation between his personal concerns and social contexts of his life, work and study. To be successful in realisation of the projects and to make progress towards establishing a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*, Max had to take into account the micro-politics of the house community and the student group. It is on this stage, he encountered challenges, which he characterised as 'relational'. In the post-project assignment for the course on Creative Action Max wrote about his relations with others in the student group:

> 'I personally could not have judged when the others were actually not experiencing any personal challenges, because most of them, most of the time, looked tired, sleepy, ill, not motivated, not willing to listen. I simply accepted these impressions

> as a fact which I cannot influence. This bothered me and demonstrated that I cannot show empathy towards them and that I have become estranged to the group. This imminently led me to personal challenges on relational level, but accepting that we are incompatible I did not need to speak about that. There was a strong lack of communication. Even though I am confident in expressing my views, I felt often that I am being heard but not listened to.'

In this writing, Max critically reflects on his internal conversation and on the effectiveness of his social actions, thus, displaying hallmarks of a meta-reflexive. He makes an honest assessment of his social isolation in the group and owned the responsibility for the lack of communication with other members. He attributes the cause of his predicament to his own failure to achieve empathetic understanding of others. Essentially, Max identifies the relational nature of the challenges, which he encountered during realisation of the group project, and recognises that in order to overcome these challenges he has to raise his relational awareness. But, facing mounting challenges in his work practice, Max was also bound to ask himself a question about whether he had to accept the status quo in his community and abandon his cause. Putting such questions in his internal conversation, Max returned to deliberating about his personal concerns.

Max's interview, taken in his last year of the BA, indicates that the outcome of his internal deliberation was the re-prioritising of his personal concerns which put his family needs in front of his work and study. Max said that in the house community he strictly followed his work schedule in order to separate family life from work:

> 'I had just as many roles [as during stage two], but it was easier for me to keep a separation, so I could with a light heart say: 'I am not going there, I am not doing that', because I managed to get more clarity in the beginning of practice, what my responsibility is and what is not, and what time I should be in the community and what time I should be with my family. I have been keeping it more strictly. And it was good. I usually liked to help out, when I was able to. But now, I am not able to. I would rather spend some time in the family, because that's my timetable.'

With the change in Max's priorities, his tasks and status in the house community were also shifting. His role of a messenger between the former house coordinator and the new managers came to an end. As a third stage student, he was tasked to oversee work of several short-term co-workers in a small household of vulnerable individuals, which was a

part of their house community. Though, Max seemed to be uneasy with the role of a leader. In the interview, he said:

> 'I noticed sometimes that they are responding to me in a way, as if I am an authoritative figure. Then I feel a bit strange, because I am not sure whether they make a choice or they do in that way, because I said so. I am sensitive to such moments. I try to kind of navigate.'

Max seemed to have lost his determination to change the established routines of communal life and work, and this loss of direction undermined his sense of self-worth. The managers noticed his hesitance and indecision and one of them was assigned to provide support to Max in his task of a supervisor. Max's position in the community became even more ambiguous, than it was during the second stage. This hindered Max's progress in personifying his roles and developing a social identity.

Max made some effort to resolve a misunderstanding which arose between him and members of his house community. He said that he stopped speaking to his colleagues with humour and irony:

> 'I think last year I would still see it as a challenge that I put to people. I say this in a humorous way. But to get it, I ask you to think a bit, to connect to my way of thinking. But, now I see it, at least, my tutors helped me to see it, as an obstacle. I don't need to present any challenge in communication to other people.'

These words are testimony to the pressure on Max to conform to the established practices, roles and rules of the house community. This pressure was exerted by the structural, cultural and agential (relational) emergent properties of the School and its groups. To withstand the conditioning by the systemic powers and to interact with the relational ones, applying his reflexivity and creativity, Max needed, first of all, to re-commit himself to his ultimate concerns and to re-define his personal identity. For the time being, the process of personifying Max's social role was suspended. It was Max's personal identity that was again in question. In this situation, by 'correcting' his personal way of talking to his colleagues Max ran a risk of losing his personal identity.

Despite Max's efforts to resolve relational problems with his colleagues, his relationship with his practice tutor (and house coordinator) had deteriorated. During his last interview, Max appeared to be strongly affected by comments made by his former and current practice tutors at a final assessment meeting of his work practice. In Max's view, these

comments were the reason why he got a low mark for the Practice module. He admitted that there was consensus among his two tutors and practice supervisor that he had not 'taken things further' since a pre-practice meeting, when some specific targets were set up for him for the practice period. Max did not agree with the assessment done by his tutors and practice supervisor, because it differed substantively from his self-assessment, which was his daily business as a meta-reflexive. In the assignment for the Practice module, Max argued that his tutors were biased in their perception of him. He wrote:

> 'What it also demonstrates is that one issue imprinted before the eyes of [practice] tutors can therefore be noticed everywhere and suspected even where it might not be. So, with the emphasis of certain issues in observation, the inability to notice change becomes a very human thing.'

In the interview, he stuck to the same explanation of tutors' assessment of his practice:

> 'They both were of the same opinion about my work. But, my feeling was that one person was bringing to the other a similar observation, which wasn't necessarily from this practice period, from somewhere else, something, which hasn't happened during this practice, but some time ago.'

Max admitted that since the final assessment meeting he had been engaged in intensive self-examination:

> 'I have been wondering, for instance, whether it is true or not, whether my observations of my development are more accurate, than of other people. And the feedback on the assignment [from an external assessor] that I received just last week also said that I am a bit defensive, and, instead of looking at how I have developed and taking things further or asking questions, why am I rather concerned with other questions? And that is because it was on my mind quite a lot, trying to figure out what it is actually happening, and why.'

Max was in crisis. He abandoned his elected concern of bringing about change and suffered a blow in relation to two ineluctable ones, of achieving performative proficiency and a sense of self-worth. He doubted effectiveness of his monitoring, examination and assessment of self, which were the bread-and-butter of his meta-reflexivity. With his personal identity in a flux, some intensive reflexive work was in store for Max in order to progress in the process of maturation. By retreating into the circle of his family, he curtailed his progress in personifying his role in the community and developing a social

identity. As a result of this, he had not succeeded in developing life and work practices that were satisfying to him and sustainable in the long run.

Max's internal deliberations brought him to a conclusion that the community could not provide a suitable context for his ideals. In the final interview, taken just before his graduation, he said:

> 'Helping people is an ideal, and when you do it practically, then, you might be just more down to the reality. So, you might be not so idealistic in your outlook towards the world. You might be just thinking what is good for this person. You are more down to earth, let's say. I also think that sometimes idealists are quite a hindrance to the community.'

These words were a sign of Max's disillusionment in the communal life and work, but they were also an outcome of his emerging relational reflexivity. It allowed him to perform a reality check in regard to his current situation. It became clear to Max what his tutors tried to impress on him: during the last stage of his studies he was compartmentalising his life and work and temporising his involvement in the community.

Did such clear-eyed assessment mean the end of Max's time in the School? With the approaching end of his studies, Max faced a dilemma whether he and his family would stay in the School or return to his native country. In the interview, Max said that he and his wife were considering to start a community for vulnerable people there. Thus, Max had to choose between remaining with his family in the School, while moderating his idealism and restraining his search for 'difference', and leaving the community and pursuing his ideals elsewhere, looking for new opportunities but also facing an uncertain future. That was the main question on his mind during his last interview.

Archer (2007) stipulates that meta-reflexives are a well-spring of society's self-criticism and transformative ideas; they are called by the logic of opportunity of morphogenetic society to bring about change in their lives and the lives of others. Max sensed this call and followed it throughout the years of his study of the BA. Now, he had to decide whether to continue his quest or to abandon it. In Archer's (2012) words, Max confronted the reflexive imperative of Late Modernity.

### *7.1.2 John*

The collected data (two assignments and an interview) present a picture of the last year of John's studies at the BA programme. At the start of the school year he moved to another

house community in order to provide support to its house coordinator in supervising short-term co-workers from the new intake. In the interview, John said that the first few weeks in his new house community were very tough, as apart from the house coordinator he was the only experienced member. But, he recalled a positive team spirit and new co-workers' enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. From the start, John saw his role in guiding and supporting co-workers, rather than controlling and micro-managing them. He strived to find a balance between being directly involved in work routines and holding back and allowing co-workers themselves to find the way to handle their tasks and arising problems. He admitted that holding back was not easy for him, because he felt responsible for everything that was happening in the house community. In the interview, John reflected on the dilemma he faced:

> 'I talked a lot with my tutor about it, about this letting go of a situation or controlling a situation, and if you are afraid of something happening, then you are still controlling the situation [...] And, if you start dominating people, even unconsciously, like you just feel there is something which wasn't done right, you actually in this moment lose the point. What you think is right, it is your subjective personal opinion [...] How things are right comes in between people, it comes between like in a discussion, in an action, and then you feel what is right for this particular house community [...] And I think a lot of things that went wrong in that time were due to like this choice between doing things right and doing the right thing.'

Here, John reveals his insight into how exercising power undermines trust in a community. Like Max, he was reluctant to impose the authority, assigned to his position, and intended to give everyone in the community a say in deciding a course of action. Similar to Max, John was determined to live out his ideal of developing equitable relations between group members. And just like Max, John encountered problems in communicating with his colleagues. In the interview, he recalled that around the middle of the school year he realised that his project of establishing a community of shared purpose was not developing according to his intent:

> 'I had the feeling that there was the perception of me trying to dominate the actions of others and not taking into account what they felt or thought. I also felt that there was miscommunication and non-communication, as well as communication not

> including me, which created the feeling of two parties, whereas my value is to work as one into one direction.'

John's meta-reflexivity allowed him to detect the growing cleavage and mistrust between him and co-workers and to figure out a reason for that. In the assignment, John wrote that he felt strong pressure to succeed in his task of supervisor in the eyes of others and that this caused his anxiety and fear of failure and reduced his ability to communicate with co-workers:

> 'I wanted to do things right and therefore did not really listen to the people I was working with while additionally not being open about my thoughts with them. The situation and the expectations had gained power over me and took away my ability to respond.'

John articulated his ultimate concern at that time. It was a task of meeting the needs of vulnerable members of his house community. He looked at the problems arising between him and co-workers as unnecessary distraction in pursuing this concern. He wrote:

> 'For me, the meaning and purpose of daily life and work in the community was putting the needs of the [vulnerable individuals] in the centre. Instead, it was the problems between the co-workers which were in the centre. I wanted to resolve this misconception.'

Thus, John found himself in a situation which was very similar to the one, which Max encountered in his student group. But, facing escalating social conflict, John decided not to persevere with his agenda, as Max did, but to re-consider it. For that purpose, he used an assignment for the course 'Organisational Development – Understanding and Responding', which he studied at that time. He wrote the assignment in a format of a conversation between two long-term co-workers of the School and a BA student. It starts with the first co-worker, a house coordinator, describing how the situation in her house community recently changed:

> In the beginning I was supported by individuals who came in order to seek out an alternative way of living. They were therefore willing to do whatever was needed and felt that through this they were developing as human beings.
>
> Afterwards we established and maintained a culture of learning through offering a University course [...]This ensured that the organisational aims were sustained by a

> strong base of studying co-workers who at the same time [were] committed to our community for the duration of the training thus contributing to a relative stability in structure. Change occurred after the course of studies was closed. Most students have left and only few experienced co-workers remain. We face a great turnover in workforce every year while extending our services.
>
> I have tried to go on as I did in the previous years on my own. However I am meeting greater resistance amongst the new co-workers to follow the principles and the vision of our organisation. I feel that I need to manage them by exercising my authority as otherwise the work will not get done. I try to uphold the ethos of the organisation but the new co-workers do not give into the community spirit and do not respond to many of my requests in the long term. At the same time the need for new co-workers to take on extended responsibility is greater than before as we lack experienced co-workers. I feel that at this rate the organisation will lose integrity, the vision will be neglected and the [vulnerable individuals] will be supported in a less meaningful way.

In reply, the second co-worker, a senior manager of the School, states that 'the most important aspect of work in a community is valuing the individual'. The first co-worker replies that he fears that with a focus on an individual the fabric of communal life would disintegrate, and 'work for the sake of work' and for one common goal would lose its appeal to co-workers. Bringing arguments from theories of organisational development, the second co-worker succeeds in convincing the first one to engage co-workers in his house community in 'a reciprocal process of learning based on equal relationship'. At this point, a BA student joins the conversation. The student calls the latter suggestion 'manipulation' and explains why he uses this word: 'The expectations of co-workers fulfilling their organisational roles were hidden behind an adjusted support system which suggests that you are not concerned about the co-workers'. The student asserts that 'in order to enable an individual to access their full potential while maintaining their integrity as a human being' and to 'prevent them from becoming means to an end', the house coordinator needs to 'listen' to the co-workers in order to become aware and to accommodate what they want to achieve for themselves and for others by working together.

In the assignment, John developed a remarkable insight into structural and cultural changes in the School, which he was a witness to, and by applying knowledge from his studies came up with ideas how to alleviate the current organisational crisis. As a 'house

coordinator', he emphasises a role of students in contributing to 'stability of structure' of the School and describes gradual disintegration of communal life and work after the 'closure' of the BA. As a 'senior manager', John suggests a new organisational doctrine, based on theories he studied on the BA module. As a 'student', John critiques such ideological 'manipulation' of co-workers and proposes to remedy the breakdown of trust in the community by attending to co-workers' ultimate concerns. He suggests that in this way they would be able to find a common purpose and to re-build a community.

John's assignment is more than just an analysis of the systemic changes in the School and a proposal of how to respond to them. In the light of Archer's theory of maturation, the assignment can also be viewed as a milestone in the process of John's personal development. At the beginning of the school year John embarked on realising a major work project in pursuit of his ultimate concern to build a community with the common purpose of serving the needs of vulnerable individuals. He began personifying his role in the house community and developing his social identity. This corresponds to the stage of individuation of the maturational process (pp.104-105). However, facing a prospect of failing in his role in the house community, John returned to deliberating about his ultimate concern and the social context of its realisation. John used the process of writing the assignment to explicate and expand his internal conversation. He mobilised his meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity and elaborated his ultimate concern. In the outcome of his deliberations, he effectively re-defined his personal identity.

After completing the assignment, John returned to the realisation of his project. As his writing indicates, he resolved to listen to the personal concerns of the co-workers of his house community and to try to accommodate their concerns. To follow through with this commitment, John needed to resume communicating with his colleagues and to restore their perception of him as a trusted interlocutor. Soon after submitting his assignment, John 'stepped out and went to talk to people'. In his learning journal, he documented one of his conversations with a colleague:

> 'I came to her and started the conversation as I had realized that it is difficult for some co-workers to voice their concerns or their worries openly especially to a senior co-worker. I think I started out by making clear my failure to communicate and my inability to reengage due to my doubts and the tensions around the situation. I drew open and true image of myself and then made clear how I hoped to go forward. I responded to my own perception of me which suggests that I am often

> not communicating or showing my appreciation for others. I therefore made this point very clear in the conversation.'

At the conclusion of this entry, John wrote:

> 'I learned that by making the first step and going into an area, which I perceive as painful and emotionally charged, in an open and truthful way I can be genuine in myself and bring about positive change.'

In a reflective assignment for the Practice module, which was the last assignment of his studies, John described his conversations with the colleagues at that time as 'risking the heart', when 'something very intimate is shared which leaves each of us vulnerable to the judgement of the other'. In the interview, he explained why he used the metaphor 'risking the heart':

> 'I had the prejudice that with the co-workers there are hard feelings and people get stuck how they feel about somebody else and you can't repair that anymore. This year for me was very much really trying to work that through and really sometimes when a relationship seemed bad, seemed like there was nothing anymore to be done somehow, to step in that space and say, I still want to continue here, do you still want to continue? Here I am; that's who I am; that's what I feel; I am really vulnerable here right now, but I still feel that we are two human beings and we can make this work together. And that's what I meant with risking the heart.'

The way, in which John describes his conversations, is evocative of a particular kind of inter-personal communication, called by Bakhtin (1984;1981) an internally persuasive discourse. In Bakhtin's words (Bakhtin 1984, p. 293), the internally persuasive discourse is enacted, if 'a person enters into a dialogue as an integral voice' and 'participates in it not only with his thoughts, but with his fate and with his entire individuality'. From the perspective of Archer's theory of reflexivity, an external speech is internally persuasive both for the speaker and for the listeners, if it is authentic, i.e. when it matches the speaker's internal conversation. John's account indicates that, by disclosing his inner thoughts and feelings, he was engaging his interlocutors in such internally persuasive discourse. If this was the case, in the conversations with his colleagues by mobilising his emergent meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity John was personalising his role in the house community and developing his social identity in a manner expressive of his personal identity.

John's conversations with his colleagues had a positive effect on the relations within the house community. John managed to break through his estrangement and to restore what he called a 'basis of trust in working and talking with each other'. John wrote in the assignment that by the end of the period of assessed practice, there was a marked change in the attitudes of the co-workers:

> 'In the end I was able to find my inner security and maybe even the capacity to be vulnerable to others and started listening and responding to them. This then brought about a change in their attitudes as a real dialogue is now the dominant aspect [...] I experienced myself that co-workers were willing to give up some of their own free time in order to make it possible for another person to have rest when they perceived a need.'

In the interview, John said that he felt that 'the pressure vanished' and he was able to trust co-workers in their daily work with vulnerable individuals. He said that, now, when a challenging situation happened, he tried 'to project a spirit of it's just another day, it's just going to move on, and we are just going to go on'. Though, he admitted that 'that is a very-very difficult thing to achieve or to be at all the time'. These last words point to the intensity of John's internal conversation during the last year of his studies.

Where does it all place John on the maturational progression (Fig.6.5, p.107)? By the end of his study, John achieved a distinct personal identity through selecting, deliberating about and committing himself to a concern that mattered most to him. Already by the time when he moved into his last house community and took on a senior position in it, John was clear about his concern to serve the needs of vulnerable individuals. During the last year of his studies, John expanded this concern to all members of his community, making it universally inclusive. The following words of John provide an evidence for that:

> 'Everyone actually comes here with a bag of things, which they want to sort out in their lives, or, they are carrying around with them. And I really felt that an important part for me in this life was not to only see the potential of the [vulnerable individuals] and to try to really help them to reach that, but to also see the potential of each individual co-worker, to work together with them that they can also reach it, come closer to that, in a way.'

John restored trustful and supportive relationships in his house community and thus succeeded in realising his main project of the last year of his studies. He established his

social identity by personalising his role and making it congruent to his ultimate concern. In the interview, John defined his role in the house community with the following words:

> 'I am responsible for, in a way, for life spirit in the house, how people live in the house with each other and with the [vulnerable individuals].'

It seems that John, by the end of his studies, established sustainable and satisfying practices of life and work.

In the interview, just before his graduation, John said that he decided to leave the School. He explained why:

> 'I think there is a limit who you can become while you are here in [the School]. Or better to say, to who I can become while I am here in [the School] [...] In [the School] I became part of life and partly I found parts of myself already, but I think for the rest I need to go out, just do some other things, which may also not be connected with caring for other people. And I know you can do these things in [the School], but I also feel there is something which drives me out into the world, because I want to do something there. I am not very clear about what it is and how I am going to do that, but that is just who I am right now. And I don't want to be clear about it. I just want to go out.'

John was eager to find something new in life that would matter to him, a new concern that would become his cause. It was a step dictated not by instrumental rationality, as he was forfeiting the benefits of his current position and possibly even abandoning the vocation, in which he acquired performative mastery. As a meta-reflexive, John was answering a call of wide opportunities of a morphogenetic society.

### *7.1.3 Meta-reflexives and relational reflexivity*

According to Archer (2007; 2012), meta-reflexivity predisposes individuals, who practice this mode of reflexivity as dominant, to take advantage of the logic of opportunity of contemporary morphogenetic society. Leaving their natal contexts, meta-reflexives thrive in social environments, characterised by discontinuity of practices and incongruity with their previous (natal) experiences. What happens with meta-reflexives when they find themselves in a 'pocket' of morphostasis, in a situation of maintained contextual continuity, such as a School house community? The stories of Max and John give seemingly different answers to this question.

Max, throughout the period of his studies, pursued a cause to subvert normative conventionality and often acted to disrupt routinised and habitual behaviour, rooted in the organisational structure and culture of the School. His quest for 'difference' brought him into conflict with his house coordinator and practice tutor, who strived to maintain continuity of life and work in the house community. In his student group, Max, concerned about 'discrimination' of some of its members, acted to change the mode of interaction, to which his fellow students became accustomed to. The result of his actions was an open conflict between him and the rest of the group. Max's difficulties in the relationships with work colleagues and fellow students hindered realisation of his work and study projects. This prevented Max by the time of his graduation to establish a sustainable and satisfying *modus vivendi*.

John, in the last year of his studies, also faced an incongruity between his ultimate concern and the social context of his work. Contrary to Max, John considered that the continuity of work routines was an enabling factor for pursuing his concern and realising his work project. When John's relationships with co-workers of his house community broke down, his response to this crisis was different to Max's. He assessed the changing organisational context, modified his ultimate concern, and acted to repair the relationships with his colleagues. This allowed John to succeed in realising the work project and in completing his studies. Having established a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*, John accomplished the process of maturation (Fig.6.5, p.107).

Why were the outcomes of Max's and John's work and study in the School so different? It is plausible to suggest that the structure of the School conditioned the interaction of Max and John with their colleagues. In the last year of their studies, their positions in the organisation pre-disposed them to view differently the established organisational practices. Max, in a position of subordination, viewed the existing routines as a constraining factor in the realisation of his projects. John, in a position of authority and responsibility for his community, considered the continuity of work practices as an enablement in the realisation of his main project. But, the structural conditioning did not determine the outcomes of their deliberations and their actions. As Max's and John's accounts testify, in their daily interaction with their colleagues and fellow students, they were motivated primarily not by their vested interests, but by their ultimate concerns, which they reflexively selected, prioritised and, in the case of John, re-evaluated. It is through pursuing their concerns and applying their reflexivity that they endorsed or rejected the existing organisational practices and acted accordingly.

There is ample evidence in the learning journals and assignments of Max and John that they used ideational resources available to them through their studies in order to clarify and rationalise their concerns and courses of actions. Their assignments show that they selected those theories and concepts that resonated with their concerns. John used the process of writing an assignment to modify his main concern. He acted decisively straight after he had finished and submitted the assignment. Max in his assignments also attempted to make sense of the situations in his community and in his student group and to justify his motives and actions. Thus, the BA studies provided resources and opportunities to both students to mobilise their reflexivity in order to deal with the problems which they encountered while pursuing their concerns and realising their projects.

It follows that the impact of structural and cultural properties of the contexts, in which Max and John lived, worked and studied, on the process of their maturation was mediated by Max's and John's reflexivity, and the difference between what Max and John achieved in this process was due to their reflexivity. It was the task of establishing complementarity between his concerns and contexts that proved too difficult for Max to accomplish by the end of his studies. The negative relations, developed within his community and student group, undermined his confidence in his performance and his sense of self-worth. Max was not able to overcome the effect of negative relations in his social networks. This may have been a reason why Max and his wife were considering leaving the School. Archer (2012) noted that relations generate emergent properties whose effects exceed terms like 'reinforcement' and 'deterrent', - they can make life in a particular social context possible or impossible.

Relational reflexivity was no less important to John, who experienced a setback in the realisation of his project. Archer (2012) pointed out that relations may prompt modification of concerns. This was the case with John: facing growing relational problems in the house community, he modified his main concern and expanded it to his relations with all members. Then, he applied his relational reflexivity in the interaction with the community members. The power of John's relational reflexivity caused a transformation in the relational properties of the house community. The change of the group agency allowed John to accomplish his project and to arrive by the end of his studies to a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*.

Thus, both for Max and for John, relational reflexivity played a key role in the process of their maturation. The relations within their social networks generated emergent properties,

which they had to take into account in order to achieve complementarity between their personal concerns and social contexts and then to pursue these concerns and realise work and study projects. Max failed to achieve such complementarity and resolve the relational problems, while John elaborated his personal concerns and turned negative relations into positive. This allows us to conclude that it was the difference in Max's and John's ability to mobilise their relational reflexivity that explains their different progress in the process of maturation.

## 7.2 Autonomous reflexives

Archer (2003; 2007; 2012) characterises autonomous reflexives as those individuals who sustain self-contained internal conversations, leading directly to action. They are disciplined, rational and strategic thinkers, relying on their own mental resources. When they lack knowledge, they seek independent information, rather than involve others in decision making. Their decisions might be sub-optimal, but deliberations can be concluded within the necessary time frame and according to a procedure they deem appropriate. By not sharing outcomes of their lone deliberations with others, these individuals unintentionally protect themselves against conventionality. Courses of action, which they take, are often strategic, innovative and self-advantageous. As the decisions are strictly their own, they take full responsibility for them.

Autonomous reflexives are oriented to task. To 'light up' at work is the most important thing for them. They attach a life-long importance to the practical order, aiming not only, as everyone else, at performative competence but at excellence in their area of work. Through their enduring practical concerns, they achieve mastery of practical skills and derive enjoyment from them. When practical challenge is gone and boredom sets in, they can leave an established position and look for a new context to pursue their practical concern. They actively endorse contextual discontinuity. Being highly self-motivated, autonomous reflexives are not constrained by their social relations. By adopting strategic stance to constraints and enablements, they aim to improve upon their social position. In a study of a sample of Coventry residents, Archer (2007) found that the autonomous reflexivity was associated with an upward social mobility.

In a study of the undergraduates of Warwick University, Archer (2012) found that autonomous reflexives had one feature in common: they appeared to be considerably more mature than other students. During the first year of study they were already deliberating about their future occupation and even deciding in which institutions to pursue their

careers. Archer attributed the origin of the autonomous reflexivity of these students to their upbringing. In their natal environments, these individuals experienced contextual incongruity (mixed messages from parents) and a lack of 'relational goods'. Therefore, independence and necessity of selection were thrust upon them early in life. For the same reason, they attributed a relatively low value to social networks. In the university, they established relationships, driven by their pragmatic interests, and carefully monitored them, lest they become constraining to their studies and careers.

Archer (2012) asserts that the conditions of contextual continuity are inimical to autonomous reflexivity, because instrumental rationality cannot flourish in a morphostatic environment. In the School, the continuity of communal life and work was institutionalised: it was deemed essential for the provision of care to vulnerable individuals and actively maintained. A question arises: What could motivate an autonomous reflexive to remain in a School house community for the duration of the BA study? The accounts of two BA students, Ruth and Peter, suggest the same answer: an opportunity to attain performative mastery and a vocational degree to launch their careers. For both of them, this was a reason that brought them to the School and kept them persevering with their work and studies, despite their personal difficulties. Such a practical ultimate concern of Ruth and Peter indicates that autonomous reflexivity was a dominant mode of their internal conversation.

### *7.2.1 Ruth*

Ruth was physically fragile but strong-willed. She applied to do voluntary work in the School, because she was eager to leave her family home. She did not elaborate why, though she mentioned in her first interview that she had a domineering mother, from whom she inherited a habit of being direct in her talk. After she started the BA, this habit, coupled with her being a 'perfectionist' in all her tasks, caused difficulties in her relations with other members of the house community. In a report about her work practice at stage two, she wrote:

> 'It has been mentioned to me a few times before, and again from the same person in the written feedback, that I expect the same standards (as my own) from less experienced co-workers, and sometimes struggle to give them the space to make mistakes and learn'.

Such a feedback from her practice tutor prompted Ruth to reflect on the way she interacted with her colleagues. In the interview at the end of stage two, she said that her study and a

new task of supervising short-term co-workers helped her to gradually change her behaviour:

> ‘I think I’ve become more aware of this over the past year, as I’ve begun to guide co-workers in their practice more, since doing the course on team work, collaborative practice and conflict resolution [...] and well before that since a colleague sometimes comments on how I say things a bit too directly or bossily.’

It was common for Ruth to reflect in her learning journal and assignments about situations at work and about her relationships with colleagues and with vulnerable individuals. In her first interview, she said that reflecting was ‘easy’ for her, and that she was doing it ‘all the time’.

An episode from the second stage demonstrates how Ruth used knowledge from her studies and a practice of making notes in her learning journal for reflecting on events at work. In the learning journal, she described a conversation with a parent of a vulnerable individual from her house community and her reaction following this conversation:

> ‘After the conversation I felt a bit shaken up. I think partly because I had to remain so calm, professional and strong throughout the conversation, and then the more I thought about it, the more I realised how worried this parent was, and how seriously she was taking the situation.’

Here, Ruth’s reflection moves from her own reaction and emotions during and after the conversation to the point of view of the parent. Reflexively, she realises the importance of factoring into her actions the context of the conversation and the perspective of her interlocutor.

Shortly after this event, Ruth studied a topic of conflict resolution, as a part of a BA course. In the learning journal, she wrote that in the conversation with the parent she followed, albeit unknowingly, a method of dealing with a conflict which she recently studied:

> ‘It was to be: 1.Calm and detached; 2.Loving and compassionate; 3.Courage. I think during the conversation, I actually managed to do these things, (although not entirely consciously). I think it was easier for me to be ‘detached’ though, because I’m not personally involved with the [pupil], and therefore could look at the situation from a more objective view, although I still understood [pupil’s] basic

> needs, and situation. I was 'loving and compassionate' in the way that I genuinely tried to understand her point of view and why she felt that way, to a large extent, although obviously not fully because I have never been a parent, or in her situation. I was 'courageous' by listening to her worries, and giving her honest explanations from the knowledge I had of the situation.'

This entry shows Ruth's tendency for analysing and rationalising her actions by using ideational resources available to her, which is a core feature of an autonomous reflexive. She applied knowledge from a BA course to attain an 'objective view' of the event and to evaluate how she handled the conversation with a parent. She strived 'to remain calm, professional and strong' in a challenging situation, which also points to dominance of autonomous reflexivity in her internal conversation.

Ruth's mother worked in an institution, which, like the School, practiced anthroposophy-based approach to care. In her first interview, Ruth said that she was open to anthroposophical knowledge but wanted to make up her own mind about it. Demonstrating independence in her thinking, she said: 'I am not just going to hear and agree with it'. Ruth tested practical usefulness of knowledge in her work. In the assignment for the Practice module at stage two, she referred to some anthroposophical theories and approaches she applied in her work. In the interview, I put to her that she was using the anthroposophical terms in her writing, because they were commonly used in the School. Ruth protested:

> 'No, because I use them to assess certain things. And, then, it made a lot of sense for that individual, for that situation [...] and then, practically applying my understanding, I could see positive results. I guess I do find them helpful as a tool in this kind of work.'

Ruth's progress in applying knowledge from the BA curriculum was acknowledged by her practice supervisor, who wrote in the final assessment of her practice during the second stage:

> 'She is beginning to develop detailed analysis of <u>why</u> specific theories were relevant to her work with individuals and groups and <u>how</u> she used them [...] It is perhaps most striking that Ruth is learning to draw together knowledge from a variety of different sources (own observations, that of colleagues and parents, reading and research).'

The above indicates Ruth's instrumental and rational approach to work and study and suggests that autonomous reflexivity was the dominant mode of her internal conversation.

Despite her rational thinking, Ruth was not a cold, calculating person. Her practice supervisor commented in the written assessment of her practice at stage two:

> 'I noticed her patience and willingness for the most part to enter into the pupil's world empathically. She communicates a warm engagement with whoever she is with, a sense of presence and attentive listening which is very striking.'

In the same period, Ruth wrote in her assignment that her approach to her work with vulnerable individuals included 'empathising and being conscious of and implementing an inner attitude.' This attitude was 'accepting [vulnerable individual] for what he was doing and who he was.' In the interview, Ruth said that her empathy is based on her knowledge and understanding of vulnerable individuals, that it is more rational than intuitive:

> 'Knowledge helps me to be more empathetic, because when I have more insights into whatever is autism or these different conditions and how these frameworks work, this helps my understanding. Intuition comes into it, still, but, yeah, I am very consciously using empathy to understand the situation and to help develop responses, but also to give this individual feeling of acceptance, in a way.'

During the second stage, Ruth developed a genuine concern for the vulnerable individuals in her house community and, as the result of it, faced a task of reconciling this concern with the one of achieving performative excellence. Ruth's entry to the learning journal from that period reveals her intensive reflexivity:

> 'In my practice I have more and more consciously made use of and adapted my inner attitudes to support varying situations. For example when working with [vulnerable individual] I often empathise with him in order to understand his needs better, but I very consciously ensure that I do not sympathise with him. This is because he is so sensitive to others' emotions and if for example I felt sad about him getting hurt, it would only amplify the emotion and overwhelm him, making the situation worse. With different [vulnerable individuals], my inward presence is different according to my understanding of their needs in that moment.'

This entry tells about Ruth's reflection on the impact of her emotional state on the interaction with vulnerable individuals in her care. Through on-going reflection, she

learned how to modify her emotional responses in order to fulfil her tasks and to meet the needs of the individuals in her care. This indicates that she routinely applied, in addition to autonomous reflexivity, meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity. Diversifying her reflexivity, she dovetailed her two concerns and established her personal identity. She began to personify her role in the house community and develop her social identity.

During the second stage, Ruth started supporting short-term co-workers in her house community. She did out of her own will, as the supervision of co-workers was not a requirement of work practice at stage two. She wrote in the learning journal:

> 'I do believe I have started this process already, as there are a number of times I have sat down with individual co-workers and listened to their worries both in relation to their work and more personal issues, and offered support in various ways. Sometimes that involved giving guidance in how to deal with a particular pupil in a certain situation, or what could be helpful in working with another co-worker they are in conflict with.'

Ruth was providing a 'listening ear' to her colleagues, thus, developing positive relations with them. As an autonomous reflexive, she was aware of her limits and readily accepted that:

> 'On another occasion I offered to a co-worker to speak to someone more senior, and ask them if they would be able to help the co-worker with the situation she was struggling with – when this was far out of my depth, and I didn't know for myself what guidance to give.'

Ruth's competence and skills were recognised by her colleagues. She became a focal member of her house community. Her practice supervisor wrote in the assessment of her work practice at the second stage:

> 'Ruth has been learning to share the overview of the [house community] needs over the past months and has had a lot of experience of the complexity of community life [...] It has been noted that she is very aware of how situations interlink and of the need for good communication [...] Ruth is a well-liked and trusted member of the house community [...] In the final meeting it was stated that co-workers and pupils rely on her experience and appear to respect her.'

The above indicates that at the end of the second stage, by expanding and personifying her role in the house community Ruth was in the process of developing her social identity. But to arrive at satisfying and sustainable practices of life, work and study, Ruth had to find a way how to accommodate her poor health. She feared that deterioration in her health due to the increasing demands of her study and work could prevent her finishing the BA.

Ruth suffered from ill health from childhood. In the interview she said that during winter she usually was not well for weeks. She was acutely aware how she was affected by her poor health. In her learning journal she wrote:

> 'I have noticed that when I have gone through difficult times in my life, unfortunately I become very self absorbed and not very perceiving of others' feelings, and this has resulted in big misunderstandings between myself and others, largely due to my own fault, where at times I have unintentionally hurt or induced stress on others.'

Mobilising her meta-reflexivity, Ruth managed to mitigate to some extent the detrimental effect of her illness:

> 'Recently when I was struggling with my health, I managed to become aware that my emotions were overwhelming me and affecting my ability to make rational judgements and decisions. Therefore, I ensured that when needing to make decisions I sought out the opinions of others more frequently than I might usually need to.'

Ruth was determined to follow the established routine of life and work in School house communities. But, as she progressed with her studies, she found it progressively difficult to cope with long working hours and insufficient time to recuperate. In the learning journal she wrote:

> 'I think partly I didn't want to accept that I couldn't manage and partly I did feel pressure from senior co-workers to do this amount of work. And I could have asked for more free time, but I think I should have really pushed for that. But that's just my character. I felt guilty, in a way, for doing less work. Unfortunately for me, I really want to manage and want to be able to do as much as everyone else [...] Sometimes, I put my work before my own needs. For example, if we're short of co-workers, I will (especially until more recently) willingly work through the day without thinking to take a break and rest.'

This entry indicates that Ruth's concerns about performative competence and self-worth took precedence over her other concern about physical wellbeing. But, this made her *modus vivendi* unsustainable, no matter how satisfying it was to Ruth to feel that she was managing to do as much as everyone else in her community. Some reflexive work was in store for her in order to prioritise her concerns and to accommodate them with the context of her communal work and life. Gradually, Ruth came to realisation that in order to be able to complete the BA, she needed to reduce her involvement in the house community. In the self-assessment report for the Practice module at stage two Ruth wrote:

> 'Through the practice 2 experience I have begun to realise how easily I get affected by what is happening around me, and am beginning to find ways of creating boundaries for myself between work, study and personal time, to ensure that I have some space and time to recuperate from stressful situations.'

At the start of the third stage, Ruth took steps towards reducing her working hours in the house community. She asked the BA administration to appoint for her a second practice tutor, outwith her house community. This person joined her other two tutors and practice supervisor in planning a period of assessed work practice. At the pre-practice meeting, this group recommended to restrict her working time to the number of hours, required for the Practice module. Together with her two practice tutors, Ruth devised her new timetable. In an interview, Ruth said:

> 'We [Ruth and her practice tutors] made it clear in my house community that I shouldn't be asked to work more, unless there is a real emergency, and then it was fine. I had to learn to be very strict with myself to just stick with these hours, so that I can consistently manage that with my health.'

Ruth said that her colleagues supported her. She included a comment from one of them in the portfolio for the Practice module:

> 'Sometimes I noticed that you don't know exactly what is going on in the team, but that is because you are now only working in the weekend, what, of course, has a good reason. And everybody understands that.'

The changes at work had a positive effect on Ruth's health. She persevered with her studies and graduated with the BA with a high mark for the assessed practice. In the written assessment of her work practice, the practice supervisor noted that Ruth developed into a skilful and knowledgeable practitioner. She became a focal point of her house

community. The comments of her colleagues, which Ruth included in the portfolio for the Practice module, provide evidence of that.

One of her colleagues commented:

> 'It is good to see that you really want [vulnerable children] to learn new things, so that they can develop. You are good in observing children, you are thinking much about how to do things better with them. You know when to be strict or playful. You have patience. And the most important thing is that one can see that you really care for them.'

Another colleague appreciated Ruth's advice:

> 'In one of our very first house community meetings I have attended, we were talking about a pupil, who sometimes runs away, and Ruth said about her work that she always imagined an elastic band around her and her pupil. Whilst running he can expand it, but she is always with him in her awareness and mind, so he can never get out of that band and really run off. I transferred this picture to my work and use it ever since, and it is one of the most helpful things someone has ever said to me about my work.'

Yet, another colleague recollected:

> 'Ruth mainly works with three out of our seven kids, and they all know her so well and react to her in a very respectful way, but they also really seem to enjoy her company. Once during this year, Ruth has been ill for a longer time. The day she came back to work she spend the day with one of our more difficult pupils. He was laughing the whole day and he behaved himself incredibly well. It was really nice to see the joy and happiness he felt by being reunited with his friend.'

These comments indicate that by the end of her studies Ruth developed performative mastery in her work. She personified her role in the house community and established her unique social identity. In the last year of her studies, she achieved a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*, thus accomplishing the process of maturation.

After graduating with the BA, Ruth did not intend to stay in the School. In her last interview, she said that she would like to pursue a career in the profession of child care. She stressed that she needs more freedom, than the communal life and work in the School could offer her. Looking back at her years in the School and at the BA, she said:

> ‘I think the work is very rewarding and it’s nice to be able to do something for other people, children. And, I think, because it is for a limited time. Yes, five years is a while, but in a meantime I could study and was able to learn and get something back from it.’

In a succinct way Ruth summarised the transformation of her personal identity over the last five years. She acknowledged that throughout this time she pursued her ultimate concern with which she came to School: to achieve performative mastery. In the course of her life, work and study in a house community, she developed a deep regard for vulnerable children and for fellow members. She called her work ‘very rewarding’ because of this second concern. She mobilised her meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity to reconcile and dovetail her two concerns and to pursue them in her work and study. Thus, by diversifying her reflexivity, she became oriented both to her task and to the relational properties of her social environment. In the words of Archer (2012), Ruth became a socially-oriented autonomous reflexive.

### *7.2.2 Peter*

Peter grew up in one of the house communities of the School, where his parents were house coordinators. After finishing secondary school he spent a couple of years in the School, working as a volunteer, and then left with a partner, after she graduated with the BA. They went overseas to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged children. After a few years, they returned to the School in the status of long-term co-workers. Peter was admitted to the second stage of the BA. The following year, Peter and his partner joined a house community, where they gradually took over managerial responsibilities from a team of senior co-workers, who had been running the community for over twenty years. The account below is based on two assignments from Peter’s last year of studies and an interview, conducted a month before his graduation.

By the time Peter returned to the School, he made his choice about a vocation and a partner for life. This fits Archer’s (2012) characterisation of young adults, who practice autonomous reflexivity: they select and prioritise their concerns and establish their personal identities earlier in life than others. Seeking independence, they leave their natal environments and build their lives, making their own choices. If that was Peter’s intent, why did he come back to the place where he grew up? Archer suggests that, unlike meta-reflexives, who disengage from their familial *modus vivendi*, autonomous reflexives evaluate their natal backgrounds and select those elements, which they find useful. They

combine them with the opportunities which become available to them. For Peter, the School provided an opportunity to start both a professional career and a family and thus to make progress in pursuit of his two ultimate concerns.

The School to which Peter returned differed from the one he left. With the growing number of the BA graduates among the long-term co-workers, the non-anthroposophic knowledge from the BA curriculum spread wider in the organisation and increased its ideational diversity. The ideological liberation had loosened the organisational structure of the School, providing an incentive and an opportunity for a younger generation of co-workers to advance to managerial positions. An agenda of organisational change seemed to have inspired Peter and his partner to move to a large house community, which was located separately from the rest of the School and had a higher degree of autonomy than other house communities. Peter's intention was to transform the house community, in order to make it fit better to what he perceived as changing societal expectations of how vulnerable young people should be supported in their transition to adult life. This goal resonated with Peter's concern of an autonomous reflexive to acquire performative excellence and fitted his maturational stage of personifying social roles and establishing a social identity.

The first year of Peter and his wife in their new house community was devoted to gradual handover of day-to-day management tasks from the stepping down house coordinator. They were settling into the community life and work routine which differed from the other house communities. In the middle of that year, when Peter started the third stage, their daughter was born. These circumstances postponed the realisation of Peter's plans.

The following year, which was the last year of Peter's studies, Peter and his wife, together with a long-term co-worker, who recently graduated with the BA, fully took over management of the house community. Now they were planning to make some changes to the life and work practices in the community. In an assignment, Peter deliberated on this matter:

> 'How do I as a new leader support change that is necessary and keep what is still relevant? In this process I need to take into account the needs and expectations of many people within the community and the interests of society and those outside the community. In taking over a management role I feel there are some changes that can take place with everyone on board [...] and some changes that from my perspective have to happen, but may not be welcomed by some of the senior co-workers moving or changing their roles.'

Peter argued that the new ways of living and working in the house community were required because the standards and practises in the care profession had changed. But, he anticipated that some of the innovations would not be acceptable to the former house coordinator and senior co-workers, who were still actively involved in the house community. He admitted:

> 'It is a challenge for me to know what to do about this, as I know that the community benefits massively from their contribution, but at the same time I feel that I have a need for some autonomy.'

Despite expecting an opposition to his transformative agenda, Peter was determined to press on with implementing changes but, following the logic of compromise and containment (p.96), wanted to avoid a conflict within the community. The challenging situation prompted Peter to turn to his studies in order to clarify his role and to rationalise his actions. In the assignment for the BA course on organisational development, which he studied in the first half of the year, he wrote:

> 'I have been fortunate to work with people with additional supports needs since a young age. Over the last ten years I have worked in many different practice settings and in doing so I have had the opportunity to gain experience and knowledge. Throughout this process I believe I have also been on a road towards leadership.'

Referring to the reading, recommended for the course, he drew a distinction between roles of a manager and a leader in an organisation:

> 'In my understating of a manager, they are followed because of their rank in an organisation. A leader is followed because their colleagues believe in them. A manager 'manages' what is in their remit to do and are more mechanical in their approach. A leader has social empathy, in order to be aware of how others feel and is more organic in their approach.'

Defining his role as 'organic' rather than 'mechanic', Peter expressed his intention to take into account the concerns of all members of his house community. He noted in the assignment that the majority of the issues that he had to deal with since taking up a managerial position 'almost exclusively involved people in some way'. He admitted that dealing with 'people's issues' did not come naturally to him. According to Archer (2007), this is a common problem for autonomous reflexives: deeply investing themselves in the practical order, they attach a relatively low value to the relational aspect of their practice.

Over the years of working with vulnerable children and young adults, Peter acquired understanding of their needs and skills of interacting with them. Now, he needed to apply his knowledge and skills in the interaction with his colleagues. In the assignment he wrote:

> 'Just as I 'listen' to the needs of the [vulnerable] young people, to be a good leader I need to hear how the group I work with thinks otherwise I will be out of tune with the group [...] When meeting with senior co-workers and planning the cultural year, I need to show the qualities of leadership and be empathic towards my colleagues and show that I have the capacity to listen otherwise they will not want to be led by me. In the position that I hold I believe that a balance of these two attributes would serve me well in taking my role in the community and facilitating the changes that are taking place.'

As an autonomous reflexive, Peter stated that in pursuing his goals he was relying on his knowledge and expertise:

> 'My expertise power is limited as I am new to the position of management, but [...] I believe that knowledge is the most important personal power. The more knowledge I gain I believe will be an asset to my abilities as a leader. If my colleagues would see that I know what I am doing and quick to react, I trust that I would be taken more seriously and thus have my colleagues on my side.'

Here, Peter seems to be engaging in self-assessment not only of his knowledge and skills but also of his 'abilities as a leader'. The following passage in his assignment reveals his worry about how others perceive him:

> 'Much of the worry and frustration that I have comes from being insecure about how people think about me. This I feel leads to my tendency to want to rush change through as I often feel that I want to be seen as doing something. Without trust in ourselves, we do not feel trustworthy and thus not expect people to believe in us. As a leader, I need to trust myself before others can trust me.'

Such deliberations are not characteristic for autonomous reflexives and likely to be an outcome of Peter's meta-reflexivity. To such conclusion points also a comment in his learning journal, which Peter recorded after a meeting with colleagues:

> 'After all was said and done I felt like I could [have] done better in relaying what I wanted to do. Why is it that I always do this?'

This comment is characteristic of meta-reflexives, who, according to Archer's definition (p.101), are critical about their internal conversation and about effectiveness of their social action. The distress, which Peter experienced, was caused by the clash between his intent to perform competently and act decisively, and his self-examination and self-doubt, i.e. between the autonomous mode and the meta-mode of his internal conversation. This indicates that during the realisation of his plans Peter faced a double challenge: to reconcile the two modes of his reflexivity and to find a practical compromise with the senior co-workers of his community. Both challenges required Peter to mobilise his relational reflexivity.

Peter's account about a project, which he undertook in the middle of the last year of study, shows that he was applying both his meta-reflexivity and his relational reflexivity. Before Christmas, Peter volunteered to organise a traditional celebration of Advent with participation of all members of his house community. In the beginning, he intended to make drastic changes to the way the celebration was conducted in the past. But, anticipating that the senior co-workers would object to the changes, he tempered his ambition. The celebration was discussed in advance at a joint meeting of managers and senior co-workers of the house community. Peter needed to get an approval for his plan of the celebration, but he was hesitating to put forward his proposal. In his learning journal, Peter recorded his thoughts during the meeting:

> 'As I sat there in the meeting while a discussion was going on about the Advent celebration, in my head whirling around was the thought 'come on, you can do this!''

In the assignment, Peter deliberated why it was so stressful for him to bring his proposal to the meeting:

> 'Initially I was not sure how they would react, as the group have never experienced a large event led solely by me before. Additionally I have never been confident in sharing my ideas for anything in a group setting as I always worry about how I might be perceived by others. Underlying this is my tendency towards impatience and wanting things to happen straight away. Some of this I feel has to do with coming into a community that already has a strong identity and my wanting to bring my own identity into it [...] In taking on the responsibility of producing the celebration I have had to balance my will to assert my identity with the identity that exists in the community and the views of others in the community.'

This is a remarkable piece of Peter's reflexive writing. He acknowledges his tendency for 'impatience and wanting things to happen straight away', which is a trait of an autonomous reflexive. He realises that this tendency was amplified by the social constraints ('a strong identity' of the community), which he encountered while pursuing his concerns. He concludes that in order to personify his role and develop his social identity ('to bring my identity into it'), he had to overcome this tendency. The way for Peter to keep in check this trait related to autonomous reflexivity was by applying relational reflexivity, which was exactly what he did in this piece. Peter also states that in order to succeed with his practical project, he had to balance his personal concerns ('my will to assert my identity') with the relational properties of the community and concerns of other members ('the identity that exists in the community and the views of others in the community'). This was a task for Peter's relational reflexivity.

In the assignment, Peter wrote that he succeeded in having a 'really open discussion' at the meeting. He managed to convince his colleagues that some changes to the celebration were necessary:

> 'In the management group, we felt that it was difficult for the [vulnerable individuals], because their whole routine was thrown out of the window and they had very little involvement in the festivals. We changed that around, and it was very difficult for some [senior co-workers]. But, through conversation they could agree that it did benefit the [vulnerable individuals].'

The celebration was considered to be a success by the community members. Peter wrote in the learning journal:

> 'I knew myself that I had managed to create something good and also learn great deal about producing festivals.'

The realisation of this project boosted Peter's confidence and motivated him to proceed with some practical innovations of daily work routines in the community. By the time of graduation, he had a well-established role in the house community and had completed a training that qualified him to become a registered manager of the house community. This was progress in his professional career. In the interview, Peter said that he was content with living and working in the house community:

> 'I think we have quite a healthy balance at the moment. And it is very useful that the house where my family lives is very close to the main house, because we can go

in and out without it being such a separation. But, we have our own space, own flat, and I think that's important.'

Peter seemed to have succeeded in dovetailing his two ultimate concerns and in establishing a sustainable *modus vivendi*. But, was it satisfying for him? In the interview, he made an assessment of what the new managers had achieved:

> 'Now, we have been here already for two years [...] we made some changes, which I think have reshaped the identity of the community a little. But, it still is a slow process. Every year we made a couple of more changes. Maybe, in two or three years the identity of the community will change, because the old group are still part of the senior co-workers meeting, where we turn to festivals and cultural things.'

Peter accepted the slow pace of changes in his house community. His experience brought him to the realisation that they cannot be rushed, if social cohesion is to be maintained. He adjusted his projects and moderated his plans but was still resolved to realise them. In the interview, Peter said:

> 'For me, it is exciting but challenging to be in [the School] at the moment, because there is a lot of change happening, and these old systems I hope will get thrown out, so that we can look at it anew. I know that for many people of my generation it is important to determine by themselves how to go about this system.'

Peter pursued changes in his house community but his ambition was on a larger scale. He pursued a broad transformational agenda of the younger generation of long-term co-workers, enabled by cultural and structural morphogenesis in the School (see section 6.5). One year later, when the process of structural change in the School accelerated, Peter and a number of BA graduates were promoted to the new array of managerial posts at the top of the organisational hierarchy. Peter was now in a position to transform the whole School.

Peter's rapid career was an outcome of his maturational process. His account indicates that by the time he returned to the School he had already achieved complementarity between his ultimate concerns, and developed a personal identity of a socially-oriented autonomous reflexive. In the course of his work and study, by applying his meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity, he overcame a discord in his internal conversation and adjusted his plans and actions to the social context of his house community. He personalised his role in the community and by virtue of his commitment to his ultimate concerns developed a unique social identity.

### *7.2.3 Autonomous reflexives and relational reflexivity*

What was the role of relational reflexivity in Ruth's and Peter's process of maturation? Their accounts above indicate that for both of them it was vital for developing personal and social identities and achieving satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*.

Ruth, in her last interview, being asked why she did come to the School and stayed there for five years, replied that it was 'for a reason'. Her reason was a desire to leave her family home and to work and study for a vocation she had chosen. Peter returned to the School to pursue a career in his chosen profession and to start a family. For both Ruth and Peter, as autonomous reflexives, the School offered a predictable social environment to develop and implement their strategies, based on calculability of pay-offs and knowledge of likely outcomes of their actions.

In pursuit of their goals, each of them had to deal with personal problems: Ruth – with her ailing health and Peter – with his lack of confidence. Their actions and projects activated structural and cultural constraints in their social environments. The norms of communal work and life compelled Ruth to disregard her physical frailty, which threatened the completion of her studies. The realisation of Peter's plan of changes in his community was hampered by the traditional views, espoused by his colleagues.

It is by applying their relational reflexivity that Ruth and Peter managed to overcome both their personal problems and structural and cultural constraints. They established positive relations with vulnerable individuals and co-workers and positive relationality in their house communities. While Peter had developed a socially-oriented personal identity before he returned to the School, he moderated his ambitions and adjusted his projects to the social context of their implementation. During the period of her work and study in the School, Ruth transcended her personal goal of achieving performative mastery and adopted a socially-oriented concern. For both of them, relational reflexivity was vital in the process of maturation: it helped them to reconcile their concerns and then to pursue these concerns by planning and realising practical projects. In the course of their work and study, Ruth and Peter were involved in the process of double morphogenesis (p.98): through engagement in social interaction, which led to structural, cultural or social transformation of their communities, their individual agency (reflexivity, personal and social identities) was also transformed.

## 7.3 Communicative reflexivity

Archer (2003; 2007; 2012) characterised communicative reflexives as those individuals whose internal conversations require completion and confirmation by others before resulting in a course of actions. To exercise their 'thought and talk' reflexivity, they are in need of face-to-face contact with someone, whom they can trust. In their natal environment, this role is performed by their parent or relative. Leaving the parental home, they become highly dependent on their interlocutors. As Archer stressed, communicative reflexivity is relationally formed and needs to be relationally maintained.

In the study of undergraduates of Warwick University, Archer (2012) found that those students, who practiced communicative reflexivity as a dominant mode, identified themselves with their natal contexts. During their childhood and adolescence, they were recipients of 'relational goods', such as love, reliance, trust and mutual concern, which they wished to replicate in their own lives. In university, these individuals established close friendships with selected trusted interlocutors. If negative relationality developed between their families and the university friends, they struggled to choose between them. Those communicative reflexive, who were unable to make such a choice, fell into passivity. Their reflexivity became impeded to such an extent that they began displaying characteristics of fractured reflexives. Though Archer did not follow the further development of these individuals, she speculated that they could resume the process of maturation, only if they would diversify their reflexivity by practicing autonomous or meta-reflexivity as a subordinate mode. By the time of graduation, no communicative reflexive amongst the subjects of Archer's research had progressed in the process of maturation beyond the stage of defining and dovetailing their personal concerns (Fig.6.5, p.107).

The accounts of two BA students, Lisa and Beth, reveal that both of them in their reflexive deliberations were dependent on conversations with trusted interlocutors. The accounts indicate that they practiced also autonomous reflexivity and meta-reflexivity. In the course of their work and study, they developed relational reflexivity, which was vital for them in selecting and reconciling their ultimate concerns and progressing in the process of maturation. The analysis below is based on data collected during the last year of Lisa and Beth's studies.

### *7.3.1 Lisa*

Lisa grew up in a big family with four siblings and 'always many friends in the house'. Coming to the School, she quickly settled in a house community and immersed herself in

communal life and work. The house community was headed by an experienced house coordinator who maintained supportive and trusting relationships among the community members. Lisa developed positive relationships with members of the community, one of whom became her close friend and a trusted interlocutor. Together, they decided to enrol to the BA. In an interview, she acknowledged her affinity and commitment to communal work:

> 'So, for me who I am [...] I love it to be in a team. And because I just can't let go [...] I live here and work here. So, I feel very committed to whatever I am doing.'

Thus, the house community provided Lisa with a social environment which was congruent to the one of her familial home. As a communicative reflexive, she thrived in the condition of contextual continuity of communal life and work. But soon after she started the BA, her work in the community was interrupted.

In the first year of Lisa's study, she and her close friend accidentally made an error in administering a medicine to a pupil. After an internal inquiry, the School administration asked Lisa's friend to leave due to a breach of trust, while she was allowed to stay. This event deeply affected Lisa. In an interview, conducted two years after the accident, she was still troubled by what happened to her:

> 'For me, the decision that he has to go, I don't agree with it, to be honest. I have heard so many opinions, so many people talking about it, bringing their ideas, but also from what they have heard. It's a mess in my head. I am not talking to these people to find out what the truth is. And maybe even people who are talking about that don't even know what the truth is. For me, I thought, he should have stayed, and that did not happen. On the other hand, I was in the accident as well, and I felt supported by people. That's why I can't say bad about [the School] or about this or that person.'

This is a speech of a communicative reflexive who is receiving incongruent messages from her interlocutors. Lisa admitted that that she could not agree on that matter even with her partner, who was her primary interlocutor at the time of the interview. It is likely that after the accident Lisa was at risk of suspending her reflexive deliberations and becoming passive. But, this did not happen to her. On the advice of her tutors, she took on a task outwith her house community. She became a teacher of a small class of vulnerable children. It was not unusual for a student to specialise in teaching a class of School pupils,

but this usually happened when students reached the third stage of the BA. The fact that Lisa began teaching during her second stage indicates that her tutors considered that she was capable of working independently and carry responsibility, assigned to a teacher position in the School.

After she became a teacher, Lisa didn't abandon her house community and continued to be involved in its daily routine. This is how she described a start of her working day:

> 'I sit there at half past six every morning for the morning meeting [of co-workers]. I am preparing breakfast. I am cleaning the toilets every morning Monday to Friday. I see what the needs are, like when somebody is ill or this kind of things.'

But, most of her time now was occupied by teachers' tasks. In the interview, she admitted:

> 'Being a teacher, it feels for me a little bit like a separation [from the house community]. I am not there for meal times that much anymore. I am not there for suppers, unless they really need help. I am never there for breakfast. For me, it means that I lose the touch [...] On Friday I was free [from teaching]. And I felt so happy, to be with the others and clean the house.'

Lisa's withdrawal from the house community was a painful experience for her, for it deprived her of the familiar social environment and hindered her communicative reflexivity. But, the work of a teacher mobilised her autonomous reflexivity. In the interview, Lisa said that teaching helped her to realise 'many things' about herself:

> 'I think I became more conscious in what I am doing and how I am doing things. And it is really funny, because all my life I hear from my dad that I should be conscious in what I am doing. Do it consciously! [...] All these things that happen to me, I think it's because sometimes I think already about another thing. Not much in the present, you know.'

Lisa also gave a credit to her studies for gaining self-knowledge:

> 'I am realising more and more about myself. And this BA was very consistent, like I got impulses [...] from different situations, but also from different assignments, because we had different types of assignments. And you can always relate it to yourself. [...] Then, many times you can observe something in a child. And that you see: aha, that's what I do as well. Or just realising while watching somebody else: this is what I am doing as well actually.'

The above indicates that both the work of a teacher and her study at the BA facilitated development of Lisa's autonomous mode of reflexivity.

During the period of assessed work practice at stage three, Lisa was expected to make progress in the areas, which were established at a pre-practice meeting with her tutors and practice supervisor. Such a requirement prompted her to reflect on her practice and to modify it, making her own decisions and relying on her knowledge and experience. In an assignment for the Practice module Lisa wrote:

> 'I have grown stronger in bringing activities such as school morning consciously till the end and concluded them in a clear way, for example: we took the time to tidy up after each craft lesson and only then moved on to the next activity. I have realised that to take time and slow down in everyday life helps me to focus and to do my task with more understanding and devotion.'

Here, Lisa writes about reflecting on her performance and deciding how it can be improved. This indicates that she was practicing the autonomous mode of reflexivity.

Lisa's assignments and interview point to her nascent relational reflexivity. Thus, in her assignment she reflected on the occasions, when she and the assistants in her class misunderstood each other. She noted that she learned 'how understanding of the same aim differs from person to person'. Lisa wrote that this made her aware of her need to develop understanding of perspectives of her colleagues. She wrote:

> 'I know that in order to understand them better I have to allow them to speak and I have to listen.'

In the interview, Lisa said:

> 'I always thought that I am a person who can get on with anybody. And only just working and trying to find the way and living with so many different people, I realised that I have so much to learn about living with people and accepting other people, understanding them. Not having these ideas: oh, this one is like this and that, because of what they do, but actually maybe seeing: oh, they do this but maybe there are different reasons why they do that [...] Listen to them is also to respond to that, and to take what their intentions are, to listen to their intentions, in a way.'

Here, Lisa tells how she gradually became aware of her social environment and of her assumptions about people's intentions. She started reflecting on her colleagues' perspectives and concerns, which led her to changing her behaviour in relation to her colleagues: to listen rather than to respond. These words are an indication of her developing relational reflexivity. They also indicate that Lisa became able to conduct and complete her internal conversation and to take an action on her own, without relying on interlocutors. Thus, the above allows concluding that the educational practices of the BA in combination with her work practices facilitated development of Lisa's autonomous and relational reflexivity.

In the middle of the second stage, Lisa joined a group of long-term co-workers and students for a year-long project. The group was formed to introduce a new regime of work, which would have allowed vulnerable children to remain in the School during school breaks. At that time, the School experienced financial difficulties due to the reduction in the number of pupils, while there was a demand to provide the 'fifty-two-week' placements. For a year, the group piloted the new regime of work in several house communities to pave the way for its adoption in the following year by the whole School. In an assignment, written after the completion of the pilot stage, Lisa expressed her surprise that after what she considered to be a successful outcome of that stage only half of the School house communities decided to adopt the new regime of work. She wrote:

> 'However after the year's trial I was surprised to hear that the other part of our organisation was not willing to continue the provisional model and were going back to working with the former term and holiday times. I was surprised because I was not even aware that a meeting had taken place reviewing the pilot scheme.'

In the assignment, Lisa developed arguments for the adoption of the new regime of work:

> 'One of the most obvious reasons for change was also that my organisation realised that in the current political and financial climate we would need to provide 52 week provision in order to survive. The local authorities who place pupils with us made this clear to us. That way I think our organisational flexibility and openness for change was addressed. At the same time as an ***organisation***, we wanted to admit more pupils and earn more money to continue to provide a good level of care and education and to keep our standards of living, or in more extreme – to survive. The ***individual*** factor arose from the organisational factor, because our organisation is the co-workers' home as well as their work place and therefore it is in everybody's

> individual interest to keep our home and work running. The [organisational and individual] factors therefore interlink.'

Lisa wrote that the decision taken by the administration of the School not to impose the new regime of work on all house communities was justified by the complexity of the organisation and differences between organisational sub-cultures. Still, she was not content with the way the decision was made:

> 'Even if the decision had good reasons I still felt that it was not helpful, to split the organisational aims and efforts and for our leaders to make this decision in what appeared to me with a lack of wider discussion and dialogue.'

Lisa regretted not voicing her support for the adoption of the new regime:

> 'I, as a part of our team, could have taken the initiative to ask for a review meeting however it did not appear to me that that was my responsibility [...] It appears to me that I could have expressed more interest to state my views and opinion about helping each other across the different parts of my organisation. However I was not aware of the other part's needs and I did not inform myself enough.'

In the end of her assignment, Lisa expressed her frustration that 'it takes long time to make a well informed decision' at the School community meetings. On such occasions, she wrote, the School administration should 'just decide quickly on something'.

The assignment bears the hallmarks of various modes of Lisa's internal conversation. Her motivation to join the project team came from her genuine concern for the School's future. She understood that in order to survive the School had to adapt to the changing economic and social conditions. During the pilot stage of the project, Lisa and members of her group implemented changes in the work regime in such a way that they did not affect the daily practices of the house communities. They wanted to preserve the way of life and work in the communities. This was consistent with Lisa's communicative mode of reflexivity and with her desire to maintain the contextual continuity of social environment, in which she exercised it.

The assignment also demonstrates that Lisa developed a rational way of thinking and an instrumental approach to solving practical problems. She was genuinely surprised that some of her colleagues rejected the piloted change in the regime of work. She considered that, if she had known about their views, she would have been able to engage them in a

rational discourse and to influence their decision. Lisa was also surprised that a review of the pilot project and a consultation about the adoption of the new regime did not take place. In Lisa's opinion, both were necessary in order to make a well-informed decision. Lisa took partial responsibility for the failure to implement the new regime in the whole School. These details of her assignment indicate that two modes of her reflexivity, the dominant communicative mode and the subordinate autonomous mode, were complementing each other. As a communicative reflexive, she was concerned about the survival of her quasi-natal environment and as a practitioner of the autonomous mode she employed her instrumental rationality to this cause.

The words at the end of the assignment served as a check by Lisa's relational reflexivity on her rational thinking. Her suggestion that the School leaders should decide on contentious issues, on which the members of the organisation cannot agree, points to her experience during the implementation of the pilot project. This experience brought Lisa to a conclusion that what she called 'complexity' and 'sub-cultures', or, in other words, the diversity of material and ideational interests among the long-term co-workers, turned the School's traditional process of making major organisational decisions through 'discussion and dialogue' into an inefficient, time-consuming process. She conceded that the decision made by the School administration without an organisation-wide consultation was justified because of the resistance to the changes in the 'other part' of the organisation. This conclusion was an outcome of Lisa's relational reflexivity. Thus, the assignment indicates that Lisa's participation in the pilot project boosted her autonomous and relational reflexivity and provided her with an opportunity to apply them in pursuit of her ultimate concern.

There was another telling sign of Lisa's turn from communicative to autonomous mode of reflexivity. In the middle of the last year of her studies, Lisa decided to reduce her workload. In the final assignment of her studies, she wrote about this decision:

> 'At the end of the Winter term I still felt drawn to always to help wherever needed, I became tired and easily annoyed and one day I got involved in an argument. After an additional free day I realised that I cannot respond to every need I see and that I should care for my well-being as well. I decided to be more conscious of my own physical and emotional well-being. Last term, I did offer help but I kept my rest-hours and at least one full day to rest. I did not become tired, annoyed or argue with others.'

Lisa justifies her decision to reduce her workload and protect her time-off by the need to take care of herself. She was aware of her attitude 'always to help wherever needed', which was inculcated into her by her family and reinforced by her house community. Yet, she realised that this attitude made her life and work unsustainable. She prioritised her primary concern about her physical wellbeing over her commitment to the community. Her established social identity made it possible for her to reduce her involvement in the daily work. It was due to her diversified reflexivity that Lisa decided to make this step and, then, realised it in practice. This allowed her by the end of her studies to achieve sustainable practices of life, work and study.

A question arises: how did the turn in Lisa's reflexivity from the communicative mode to the autonomous mode and the awakening of her relational reflexivity affect the development of her personal and social identity? Lisa's personal identity was shaped by the ultimate concerns, which she dedicated herself to during her time in the School. Archer (2012) notes that motivation of communicative reflexives comes from their proximal social relations and that their main concern is to replicate their natal context. That was the case with Lisa when she came to the School. Her house community became her quasi-natal environment. Sustaining the life and work of the community became her ultimate personal concern. When she became a teacher, Lisa became devoted to the pupils of her class. By virtue of these commitments, Lisa developed her personal identity. Through her generous involvement in her house community, dedicated work in her class and inspired engagement in the pilot project, Lisa personified her social role in the School and developed her social identity. Thus, by the end of Lisa's studies, the process of her maturation was complete. She established a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*, albeit not for long, because Lisa decided to leave the School after graduation.

The reason for such a decision was that Lisa had another ultimate concern in her life: her partner. He graduated from the BA, when Lisa was at the second stage, and decided to stay in the School because of Lisa. After her graduation, they intended to leave the School. In the interview, Lisa said:

> 'The thing is that I love [the School] and I would have stayed. But, my partner finished the BA two years ago and I always felt that he is just waiting for me. So, I knew two years ago that we are going to leave. It was actually a clear cut.'

Thus, sometime during her second stage Lisa encountered and solved a problem, which Archer (2012) called a dilemma of two final ends. She realised a necessity of selection

between her two ultimate concerns and chose the life together with her partner over the life and work in the School. As it was a dilemma of human relations, Lisa had to mobilise her relational reflexivity. Lisa's turn from communicative to autonomous reflexivity also helped her to come to the decision to leave the contextual continuity of her life and work in the School and to confront the contextual discontinuity and incongruity of the morphogenetic society.

### *7.3.2 Beth*

During the interview Beth came across as articulate and thoughtful. She was home-schooled. She said: 'I had really good education. My mum and dad did a fantastic job.' Nevertheless, she often worried that her home schooling disadvantaged her. She started working with vulnerable individuals as soon as she reached the legal age. The interest turned into a cause. She said:

> 'I've been working with people with learning disabilities since I was fourteen. I was volunteering for four years and then I had a job in a residential home and then came to [the School]. So, it has been a big part of my life. And I met discrimination [of vulnerable individuals] in different ways in a lot of places. And I think it's not such a personal issue, but I just feel very strongly. I feel the relationship to people I am supporting. And then I feel maybe, you know, offended on their behalf that things are not possible that should be possible. It is a professional thing really. But I think I just feel it personally.'

Beth's early dedication to a cause is an indication of her meta-reflexivity. Her critical attitude towards her social actions points to the same conclusion. In an assignment, Beth wrote that she was worried that her work with a pupil was not 'up to the standard':

> 'I was concerned about not meeting expectations from [pupil], colleagues, [pupil]'s family and other professionals. I think this is to do with my self-confidence and my own sense of professional accountability.'

In the interview, she acknowledged that this anxiety both helped and hindered her:

> 'I think I always challenge myself or expect more from myself, than I manage. Normally, what I have done to meet other people's expectations in what I am doing is enough. But I always have this slight anxiety, which I think partly helps me. I don't ever sit back and think: Oh, I am fine, I know how to do that, I don't worry

about it. Partly, I think it helps me and, partly, it's not healthy to worry about things all the time.'

These words provide evidence that Beth was monitoring and critically evaluating not only her actions but also her internal conversation, which is a strong indication of the dominance of the meta-mode of her reflexivity.

There are also indications that Beth in her reflexive deliberations depended on external conversations. The house coordinator of her house community, who was also her practice tutor, became Beth's trusted interlocutor. Their conversations covered not only Beth's work and study but also her personal life. In the interview, Beth said:

> 'The way I use supervision, it helps me to work through maybe private things, because I think it is necessary to someone whom you know to speak confidentially. That helps to understand them, keep them in their place.'

Beth's tutor recommended her to use a certain method to cope with the demands of her study and work. Beth said this method helped her to plan her actions:

> 'I just found it really-really useful, because it talked about doing things step by step and aiming for small things at achieving them. Taking small steps, small aims, small thoughts, that kind of things, I thought really helped me. I tried really hard to take things just step by step and I wrote a lot of lists. I managed this today. You know, small things, so that I didn't feel like oh, I have a whole assignment to write, but today I am just writing this bit. In my practice I had quite a lot to do. I just tried to manage my time well, so I know what time I do this and that. The other time I won't worry about that.'

Beth's worries about meeting deadlines and expectations point to her difficulty in completing her internal conversation and arriving at a decision and to her dependence on the communicative mode of reflexivity.

The working of both the meta-mode and the communicative mode of Beth's reflexivity is apparent in her participation in the pilot project, which is described in the previous section about Lisa. Beth joined the project group because of her concern for the pupil, with whom she worked in her house community. This pupil was admitted to the School for the fifty-two-week provision and Beth was eager to ensure that the needs of the pupil would be met

in the best possible way. During the implementation of the project, Beth was an active member of the group. In the assignment, she wrote:

> 'We acted out of a need and felt motivated to do it even if it meant changes to our own working routine and required our energy. I felt needed throughout the process; my practical experience was instrumental in the implementation of the decision [...] I experienced implementation of my suggestions during respite when I chaired the daily meeting and, drawing on my experience and knowledge of the individual, proposed the rhythm and activities for the individual. My experience and understanding were recognised and respected.'

The work in the project team and its successful completion were highly satisfying to Beth. But, she was disappointed, when a number of house communities opted out of the new regime of work. In her assignment, Beth deliberated about this decision of her colleagues. Applying her relational reflexivity, she tried to understand their point of view:

> 'I reflected on whether I would have experienced the respite differently if it had been imposed on me. I believe I would have not have felt involved and may have resented the proposal, as it demands I accept the change rather than involving me practically in the process. This practical engagement decreases my naturally apprehensive response to the change and the sense of powerlessness.'

Beth suggested that her colleagues' rejection of the new regime could be explained by their concern for the organisational culture of the School:

> 'Within the organisation I practise in, there is the unique feature of cultural activity which encompasses the whole community through seasonal festivals punctuating the year which are part of its foundation. Establishing fifty two week provision challenged and developed all aspects of our organisation culture [...] There is concern from some members of the organisation that elements of our common identity and culture will be lost with the change to the rhythm of the year.'

Beth's own experience of working on the project convinced her that this concern was unfounded:

> 'I have experienced the contrary and find co-workers are increasingly committed and engaged professionally and socially: generating cultural gatherings and suggestions for activities. I have observed how culture can be created very quickly.'

Beth explained the re-creation of organisational culture and the re-generation of community by the commitment of co-workers to a 'greater purpose':

> 'In my perception, in a life sharing organisation an individual is not only constantly aiming to integrate into a unified whole within a working team but within the environment they are living in [...] Within my life sharing organisation we are not provided with wages in the conventional way but our expenses are paid and we are provided with spending money. Therefore, in my perception, we are able to focus on the work and the meaning behind our practice rather than our job title or income [...] We are led by a greater purpose which we are all individually committed to and therefore we generate community.'

In the conclusion of the assignment, she wrote:

> 'Through writing this assignment I have learnt that organisations are constantly faced with change and the response, rather than reaction, to it can be a positive and generative process. I have also become aware that this is only possible if each individual is willing and able to engage and apply themselves to the proposal as: "A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm".'

The assignment reflects Beth's orientation, as a meta-reflexive, to values rather than to material rewards. She was inspired by the idea of organisational change, though she wanted to retain the cultural traditions of the School and the communal way of life and work. This indicates that she was motivated to participate in the project not only by her concern of serving interests of vulnerable individuals but also by the organisational beliefs which she acquired while being in the School. She incorporated these beliefs into her personal concerns, thus elaborating her personal identity.

Beth recognised that the members of the project group were driven not only by a shared concern to ensure the viability of the School, but also by a shared ideal ('a greater purpose'), which allowed them to 'generate community'. In the course of their collaborative work, they were engaged in 'positive and generative' interaction, in which they willingly applied themselves. It seems that the project group provided a perfect social environment for Beth, who combined meta-reflexivity with communicative reflexivity. While working on the project, she personified her role in the group and developed her social identity. Thus, the year-long participation in the project provided a boost to the process of maturation of Beth.

The pilot project was an additional commitment for Beth, while she remained fully engaged in her house community. In the interview, Beth admitted that sometimes she felt being overwhelmed by the closeness and emotional intensity of life and work in the community. In the assignment, she wrote:

> 'I found it helpful to reflect on the comparison between teamwork and the interaction between hedgehogs: close enough to provide warmth, through interaction and relationship, but with enough distance to avoid harm, stress and emotional pressure.'

Beth, as a meta-reflexive, needed space and time for digesting her experiences and planning her actions in internal conversation. In the assignment, she wrote about her request to the members of her house community for a time off in her daily routine. In the interview, she clarified the reason for that:

> 'Because normally I am full morning in school and then full afternoon with the pupil in a house. In a way, we [Beth and a pupil] both benefit from this time of rest, before the activity, because it also gives me time to a sort of re-orientate myself with whom I am with, what we are doing. It gives us time to tune into each other before we start everything.'

Beth realised that her request could be interpreted by the members of her community as her 'personal issue':

> 'So, it is personally beneficial for me that time as well. But, that is not how I wanted to bring it, because that was not the main point. That was not the main reason I thought we should do that. That's why I felt it could be seen I am just trying to take care of myself.'

Beth was so worried about possible misperception of her request that she needed to talk to her practice tutor:

> 'I felt professionally I needed to check in a way to see if what I was saying is a real need for the pupil and not my own need. On reflection, I was able to discuss it professionally and recognise my intentions as professional, meaningful and purposeful.'

By deferring the resolution of the internal conflict to her interlocutor Beth fell short in exercising her relational reflexivity. This indicates her continued dependence in decision-

making on the communicative mode of reflexivity. Archer (2007) notes that communicative reflexives have propensity for self-sacrifice for the sake of maintaining the contextual continuity of their social environment. With Beth, this trait was amplified by her beliefs and commitments. It clashed with her need for personal time and space, which led her to self-doubting and inability to resolve her doubts without an interlocutor.

Another of Beth's projects, which she described in detail in the assignment for the Practice module, demonstrates a similar struggle of hers to decide independently on a plan of action and then to implement it. In the middle of the year, Beth was planning to take a pupil, whom she looked after in the house community, on an outing, using a public bus. Beth wrote in the assignment that she was motivated to do that by her desire to give the pupil, who was a wheelchair user, an experience of being together with the whole house community and, also, as she put it in her assignment, by her 'personal and professional interest to challenge the perceived restrictions or difficulties which might prevent [pupil] gaining experiences in the wider community.' This statement indicates that in this project Beth pursued her ultimate concern. In the assignment, she reflected on her preparation for the outing:

> 'This was a situation which challenged me and required me to consciously recognise and contain my personal concerns [...] I was aware that this activity required extensive preparation in order to preserve [pupil's] safety, dignity and wellbeing. I was apprehensive about the outing and spent the days before considering what I needed to prepare and mentally rehearsing the activity in order to feel secure with the plan and understand my role. I felt insecure about the situation.'

Despite Beth's meticulous preparation, on the day of the outing, a driver refused to allow a wheelchair on the bus. After an argument with the driver, Beth became overwhelmed. In the interview, she recollected her emotional reaction:

> 'I was actually quite worried for a long time. And then on the day the pupil needs a lot in terms of engagement. I am fully with her [...] I am in a kind of high status alert and then when things go wrong I think I felt it is just too much. I couldn't really take it together.'

In the assignment, Beth described her internal deliberations and actions straight after the incident:

> ‘Therefore, when we arrived, I immediately said I did not think we should come back on the bus. I realised, on reflection, that this was a defensive response directed by my insecurity. I felt that I was solely responsible and this influenced my response. I realised I was not maintaining my professional approach and immediately consulted with a colleague.’

Beth wrote that reflecting later on this situation she realised that she often considers herself to be solely responsible for a situation she is in, without relying on support of her colleagues. In the assignment, she included a feedback from her tutor to the episode during the outing: ‘She needs to remember that she is not alone in such situations’. Beth heeded this advice, concluding her assignment with the following statement:

> ‘I am now more aware of my responsibility to draw on support and collaboration in order to formulate my response and provide the security for me to act confidently and independently.’

Beth’s description of the episode during the outing and her reflection on it points to her efforts to overcome her personal constraints in decision making and acting. As a meta-reflexive, she was focused on self-improvement. The assignment also indicates that Beth realised that in her considerations she had to take into account the relational context of her action. Thus, Beth wrote about her relationships with vulnerable individuals:

> ‘I have come to the conclusion, through experience, that the practice of social pedagogy is inherently encompassed by the concept of relationship [...] I believe, in all my practice areas, that sustaining and developing a relationship with the individuals I support is a vital, constructive, mutual process which is essential to achieving positive outcomes [...] A relationship requires personal commitment and professional consciousness. I invest personally in the relationships I establish with the pupils, informed by my values and attitudes which, I believe, is essential in order to facilitate a genuine exchange and interaction.’

This extract contains Beth’s insight into how her personal values and commitment influences her relationships with vulnerable individuals and her interaction with them. She articulated something that she had been already practicing for some time, namely, that by investing her personal identity in the relationships with vulnerable children she facilitated their personal development. Now, Beth realised that by applying her reflexivity to the relationships with her colleagues and personifying her role in the community she could

make progress in her own personal development. It was, in itself, an outcome of her meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity, mobilised by her personal difficulties and by the challenges of her work.

In the last year of her studies, Beth got a partner, who was a student of her cohort. They were making plans about their future. In the interview, Beth said that after graduation she would take on teaching a class and stay one more year in the house community. After that, she wanted to become an employee and to live outwith the School. She explained a reason for that:

> 'I would like to stay longer, but be employed and live outside, because that's also a private need, I think, for the relationship I am in, and also working with somebody else and needing to find compromises. And I would like to experience not living in community but, still, being part of it, because I feel that is something that I need at least to experience.'

There was hesitation in Beth's words, because such a move would withdraw her from familiar social environment and weaken her ties with a trusted interlocutor. It was a difficult step to make for Beth. Archer (2012) noted that, for a communicative reflexive, the established relationships are precious, owing to the time required to build them, the reciprocity involved and the amount of self-investment entailed, and therefore they are not readily shed. In Beth's situation, her communicative reflexivity became an obstacle that inhibited her response to the necessity of selection. By staying another year in the house community, she seemed to be temporising. Nevertheless, in an effort to reconcile her two ultimate concerns she found a compromise. Now, she needed to make a decisive step and to start shaping her life, progressing towards a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*.

### *7.3.3 Communicative reflexivity and the dilemma of two final ends*

As the above analysis indicates, at the time of the research neither Lisa nor Beth was a pure communicative reflexive. Lisa, in her work as a teacher, was applying autonomous reflexivity. Meta-reflexivity was a dominant mode of Beth's internal conversation. Yet, both of them in completing their internal conversations and deciding on their actions depended on communication with their respective interlocutors. This dependence affected the process of their maturation, in particular, selecting and prioritising personal concerns.

Both Lisa and Beth encountered a dilemma of two final ends: each of them faced a necessity of reconciling their dedication to work and life in a community with their

commitments to partners. Without either choosing between the two concerns or prioritising and dovetailing them, they could not progress further in the process of maturation. Archer (2012) pointed out that this is a dilemma of relationships and its resolution is a task of relational reflexivity. Lisa and Beth's accounts indicate that the challenges and opportunities of their work bolstered the development of their relational reflexivity and reduced their dependence on the communicative mode of reflexivity and that this helped them in seeking a solution to the dilemma of two final ends.

A turning point in Lisa's process of maturation was the accident with a pupil. In the aftermath of it, receiving incongruent messages from her interlocutors, Lisa experienced an acute internal conflict. Soon after this event Lisa took up teaching and partially withdrew herself from the house community, which facilitated development of her autonomous reflexivity. Another milestone in Lisa's development was participation in the pilot project. During realisation of the project and in her work as a teacher, Lisa developed her relational reflexivity. The diversification of Lisa's reflexivity helped her to make a selection between her two ultimate concerns, to prioritise her relationships with the partner and to decide on leaving the School after graduation. In the last two years of her studies, Lisa reconciled the two ultimate concerns in her life, which allowed her to develop a social identity, establish a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi* and at the same time uphold her decision and leave the School with her partner.

For the duration of her work and study in the School, Beth struggled with making decisions on her own due to a combination of the communicative mode and the meta-mode of her reflexivity. Step-by-step planning of her work and study projects, she gradually reduced her dependence on interlocutors. Participating in the pilot and other work projects, Beth developed her relational reflexivity. This helped Beth to arrive at a decision to leave her house community and to live with her partner outwith the School. This decision indicates that at the end of her studies Beth found a compromise between her two ultimate concerns and was about to make changes in her life.

Thus, both Lisa and Beth, responding to challenges in their work in the School, developed their relational reflexivity and reduced their dependence on the communicative mode of reflexivity. This helped Lisa to solve and Beth to come close to solving the dilemma of two final ends. In the course of their work, they elaborated their personal identities, personified their roles in the School and developed unique social identities. It can be concluded that work facilitated Lisa and Beth's progress in the process of maturation.

## 7.4 Role of the BA in maturation of students

In the previous sections of this chapter I argued that relational reflexivity played a key role in the process of maturation of students. By applying relational reflexivity, they modified and reconciled personal concerns and established personal identities and then personified their roles in the School and developed social identities. Work was pivotal in this process. Students elaborated personal concerns in response to challenges and contingencies of their work. Work presented them also with opportunities to pursue personal concerns, to plan and realise projects and, ultimately, to achieve satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. Alongside their work, they were engaged in the BA study. What was the role of the BA in the development of reflexivity of students and in the process of their maturation?

The assignments and interviews of students analysed above provide ample evidence that the BA facilitated the development of their reflexivity by engaging them in reflective educational practices. Keeping learning journals, writing assignments and holding regular conversations with tutors, students mobilised and diversified their reflexivity. But, their motivation to engage in reflective educational practices and to mobilise their reflexivity originated in their personal concerns and the possibility to pursue these concerns in their work and to personify their roles. In other words, it was the congruence between personal identities of students and their roles in the School that made the educational practices instrumental in facilitating reflexivity of students.

A social mechanism that enabled students to personify their roles can be discerned by considering the pilot project, in which Lisa and Beth took part. The implementation of the innovative project in the School was conditioned by its cultural morphogenesis, triggered and sustained by the BA (see section 6.5). The accreditation of the BA and the expansion of the BA curriculum accelerated ideational diversity and differentiation between progressivists and traditionalists in the School. The idea of moving to the ‘fifty-two-week’ provision was promoted by those long-term co-workers, who pursued an agenda of organisational change. They assembled a working group to test it in several house communities and invited students from these communities to join in. Lisa and Beth responded to this call, because the aim of the project resonated with their personal concerns. The participation in the project allowed them to personify their roles in the group during year-long work on the project and gain an experience of satisfying and sustainable work practices. The pilot project demonstrates that the BA changed the cultural and structural configuration of the School to the extent that the mechanism of triple morphogenesis (p.99) was activated. It resulted in elaboration of existing organisational

roles and emergence of new ones, which widened opportunities for students to find roles, congruent to their personal identities, and to personify these roles in a manner expressive of their personal concerns.

The accounts of other students demonstrate that in the course of their studies they also responded to the opportunities, which opened up to them in the School. Peter, soon after he enrolled to the BA, began taking over managerial tasks in a house community. A year later, he initiated changes in the community in accordance with his vision of communal life and work. John, in the last year of his studies, took on a leading role in a house community and persevered in establishing trustful relationships between its members, modifying his personal concern and his role. Lisa took on a teaching position, which was offered to her when she was in a crisis, and developed her new role as an autonomous actor. Ruth, personifying her role in a house community, developed a unique social identity. Max also personified his role in the student group and the house community and developed a social identity, expressive of his cause. In the last year of his studies, he re-prioritised his personal concerns and modified his role in the community accordingly. Thus, all six students in the course of their studies found roles in the School, in which they were able to pursue their personal concerns and to develop social identities in a manner expressive of their personal identities. This enabled students to make progress in the process of maturation and some of them to accomplish it by the end of their studies.

The assignments analysed above provide evidence that all six students used a variety of study resources, based both on anthroposophic and on non-anthroposophic knowledge. In section 7.1.3, I argued that Max and John selected those theories and concepts that resonated with their personal concerns and used them to clarify these concerns and rationalise their actions. Such a conclusion can also be made in respect of other students. Peter wrote about the difference between a manager and a leader of an organisation, referring to a variety of non-anthroposophic sources. He applied this distinction to define his personal goal of becoming a leader in his community. Beth, writing about the relational nature of her work with vulnerable children quoted extensively anthroposophic and non-anthroposophic literature. This piece of her writing was an exposition of her relational reflexivity applied in pursuit of her ultimate concern. Ruth, in her learning journal and assignments, used a variety of approaches, based on anthroposophic and non-anthroposophic knowledge, to advance her understanding of vulnerable individuals in pursuit of her ultimate concern of attaining performative excellence. Thus, in their choice of materials for studies, students were not limited by anthroposophic and organisational

sources and, on the contrary, encouraged by their teachers and tutors to use a wide variety of resources. Such ideational pluralism of the BA enabled students to select those resources which resonated with their personal concerns and the social contexts of their realisation.

The above considerations lead to a conclusion that by bringing ideational differentiation and diversity into the School's cultural system and undermining morphostasis of its structural system, by increasing flexibility and variety of organisational roles, by providing a wide range of ideational resources to students and by engaging them in reflective educational practices, the BA served as a cultural and structural enablement of the process of maturation of students.

# 8 The impact of work, BA educational practices and curriculum on maturation of students

According to Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theory of personal development (sections 6.2 and 6.4), changes in personal emergent properties of individuals are the outcome of their social and socio-cultural interaction, conditioned by structural and cultural emergent properties. In the course of interaction, individual actors mobilise their reflexivity and apply it in pursuit of their ultimate concerns, developing personal and social identities and progressing in the process of maturation and, further, in personal development through the life course. In this regard, the conclusion made in the last chapter about cultural and structural enabling by the BA of the process of maturation of students, needs to be parsed by putting questions as to what features of the BA curriculum enabled students' maturation and how particular BA educational practices (teaching, tutoring and learning) and work practices facilitated this process. In this chapter, I address these two questions.

The analytical distinction, which I make between enabling and facilitating, lies in the temporal separation of stages of conditioning, interaction and elaboration in a morphogenetic cycle (pp.94-95). The BA curriculum, as a part of the cultural system of the School, provided specific enabling conditions for the interaction of students and various BA and organisational actors to result in elaboration of students' reflexivity and personal and social identities. The BA educational practices and work practices in the School engaged students in such social interaction, which resulted in elaboration of students' reflexivity and personal and social identities, i.e. these practices facilitated their personal development.

As the BA was a work-based programme, students' work practices were intertwined with their learning practices. In this chapter, by applying Archer's theorising about practical and discursive (propositional) knowledge (Archer 2000), I attempt to analyse students' work practices and learning practices separately and to link them to the development of students' reflexivity and to the process of their maturation.

In the first section of this chapter, returning to Anna's account, analysed in chapter four, I examine Anna's work and learning practices. I argue that Anna's work practices had a pivotal role in the process of her maturation, while her learning practices were facilitating the development of her reflexivity. I consider the relationship between Anna and her house

coordinator and the impact of this relationship on Anna's personal development. Further, I examine explication and metaphorisation by Anna of her practical knowledge with the use of propositional knowledge of the BA curriculum. I suggest that due to the relation of contingent complimentarity between components of the BA curriculum, students' choice of propositional knowledge to draw upon in their studies and work was not constrained by anthroposophic and organisational ideational resources. This leads me to a conclusion that the BA curriculum was an enabling factor in maturation of students.

In the last section, I summarise the outcomes of the analysis in chapters 7 and 8 and draw up a list of practices which facilitated the process of maturation of students.

## 8.1 Facilitation of maturation of students by work and educational practices

Archer (2000) characterised practical knowledge as intrinsically non-linguistic and embodied. It is performative and procedural, grasped through action, with involvement of all our senses. It includes performative skills and 'know how', acquired through apprenticeship. Archer assigns practical knowledge to those practices which involve manipulation of material objects, i.e. subject/object relations. Such a definition excludes tacit knowledge of social practices. If the latter is included, the notion of practical knowledge becomes equivalent to Bourdieu's concept of habitus (p.60). Bourdieu places an epistemological barrier between practical knowledge and discursive knowledge (p.103) and holds habitus outside the grasp of ordinary consciousness (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Contrary to Bourdieu, Archer (2000) asserts that practical knowledge can be interrogated by common human reflexivity and lends itself to explication in the discursive, propositional form, albeit not fully or easily. Archer notes that while explicating practical knowledge we usually resort to metaphorising it.

According to Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977; 1990b), our embodied practice moulds our habitus, without us being aware of that formative process. Contrary to Bourdieu, Archer (2000) maintains that practice is imbued with reflexivity, which sieves propositional knowledge and applies it selectively in practice, with subsequent incorporation of knowledge as embodied habits and skills. Reflexively deliberating about our practice, we discern, prioritise and commit ourselves to certain personal concerns and then plan and realise life and work projects, aimed at attainment of these concerns. In the course of practice, we seek and personalise social roles, which we deem suitable for pursuit of our personal concerns. This leads Archer to a claim that practice, by way of reflexivity, is pivotal for the development of our personal and social identities. Below, taking cues

from Archer's perspective on practice and practical knowledge and its relation to discursive (propositional) knowledge, I return to Anna's account, analysed above in section 5.2.1.

Anna's assignments and interviews contain ample evidence that throughout her studies she was engaged in reflexive deliberations, incited by her work practice. Thus, Anna said in an interview that she became aware that it was difficult for her to maintain 'boundaries' in her work, when 'you are with [pupil] for the whole day, ten hours, and you become very sensitive to the children'. She noticed that sometimes, when a pupil 'starts to get tense or has problems', she felt the same emotion, which caused her 'instinctive reaction' to keep the pupil in check:

> 'And you just want to stop and then maybe you overstep it by just wanting it to go away instead of realising that it is [pupil's] problem actually.'

In one particular situation, Anna realised that pupil's behaviour provoked in her 'the need to go against his controlling by trying to control [the situation] myself […] his worries become my worries'. Anna said that such realisation prompted her to start delaying her reaction and taking time to consider how to respond:

> 'In the situation you can still observe and then you step back, before you react, you think: Ok, where is it coming from? Why is the child doing that? If I respond like this, what do I think will happen? If I respond in another way, will it may be better?'

Such deliberate delay in reacting calmed Anna's emotions and benefitted her physical wellbeing. In the midway report about her work practice she wrote:

> 'It might be not very obvious from the outside, but I feel that I started to trust the situation more and hence I feel more relaxed recently.'

In the assignment for the Practice module, Anna summed up her recent development in relation to her practice:

> 'By becoming conscious of someone else's influence on me I can understand provoked emotions within me as indicators of the child's experience. I became more aware of the helplessness I sometimes felt if I needed to react unexpectedly to a situation. Working with the situation instead of controlling it and taking charge was a big challenge for me during the practice and I feel that I worked a lot on it.'

Anna's account reveals that, facing challenges in her work, she was engaged in self-monitoring and critical evaluation of her emotions and actions. These are signs of meta-reflexivity. By reflecting on her emotions she became aware of emotional states of the pupil and of her and her pupil's reciprocal emotional influence on each other. This was a working of her relational reflexivity. Anna's reflexive deliberations helped her to overcome her anxiety about her performative competence, which was the cause of her 'controlling' behaviour. The emergent power of Anna's reflexivity liberated her from the grip of her emotions and woke up her creativity. She started to improvise, gaining practical knowledge, explicating and feeding it into her reflexive deliberations. Anna became engaged in learning from her practical experience, in which her meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity were mobilised and applied to her practice.

Anna's account demonstrates how the BA educational practices facilitated her reflexive deliberations and explication of practical knowledge. During periods of assessed practice, students were required to make notes in their learning journals and discuss them at regular meetings with their practice tutors and practice supervisors. During her practice at stage three, Anna applied a technique of 'process recording' by focusing on and noting in her learning journal the contexts and details of her interaction with pupils. She wrote in her assignment that she was able to apply her 'new learning' while working with a pupil, recently admitted to the School. In the interview, Anna said: 'In the beginning I spent my whole day with him for so long that it was just always in my head, anyway.' She said that she did recording in the same way, as in the learning journal, 'just in the head', and that she was 'very aware of really looking at the details, really observing gestures and what he is saying, what time of day it is happening'. Anna said that she discussed her observations daily with the house coordinator, who was also her practice tutor, and with other colleagues. Thus, Anna turned a learning technique, which she applied during a period of assessed practice, into a practical skill of her work. This skill became her tool for on-going explication of practical knowledge.

Anna reflected on her habitual behaviour in working with vulnerable children. In the interview, she said that she used to base her work on 'habits', which came from her family upbringing. She said:

> 'I think it's not bad and one can't change and pretend not having all these habits, but, then, sometimes it was more about me when I work with the children and not so much for the children.'

When Anna realised this, she started asking herself a question: ‘Ok, do I think it might help the person?’ She said that her work became ‘more about meeting the children’s needs than my own needs’. Thus, Anna applied her reflexivity to discern a concern related to her work with vulnerable children and to prioritise it over her other personal concerns.

In chapter 5, I explained what was happening with Anna in terms of Bourdieusian analysis, as inculcation by Anna of the habitus of her house community through unconscious substitution of her familial dispositions by the dispositions of communal life and work. However, in the interview, Anna said that she became aware of her familial ‘habits’ by ‘getting more involved with theories and studying and being more reflective’. It appears that in her reflexive deliberations Anna brought up her old and new dispositions to her awareness and, applying discursive knowledge from her studies (e.g. ‘working with children’ vs. ‘working for children’), explicated them as her old ‘habits’ and her new concern about meeting the needs of vulnerable children. Anna’s new concern was congruent with norms and beliefs in the School and in her house community. She discerned and prioritised this concern through her reflexive deliberations, incited by her work practices and facilitated by her learning practices.

Within the framework of the Morphogenetic Approach, Archer (2000) theorised attainment of personal identity as a process of reflexive elaboration of emotions, corresponding to the primary personal concerns about physical wellbeing in the natural order, performative achievement in the practical order and self-worth in the social order. Archer maintains that in the process of such elaboration these concerns are articulated and prioritised with one of them being designated as an ultimate concern. In her reflexive deliberations, Anna went further. By applying knowledge from her studies, she elaborated her primary concern about performative competence into a concern about vulnerable children. Anna committed herself to this concern and embarked on planning and realising practical projects.

In chapter 5, I described how Anna selected a concept of lifespace from her studies and resolved on establishing in her house community this type of social environment. Pursuing this goal, Anna invited a short-term-co-worker to a pupil review meeting. Doing this, she went against an unwritten rule in the School not to involve first-year co-workers in such meetings. I also described how Anna, writing a report about a pupil, realised that the experiences of other professionals, working with the child, might differ from her experiences. Anna’s practice tutor/house coordinator put a question to her: ‘How do you think A would manage in a completely unfamiliar setting?’ This question mobilised her

relational reflexivity and opened her mind to the views of professional workers outwith the School. Anna said that it helped her to overcome her School-centred perspective on her work.

Applying Bourdieusian analysis, I viewed this part of Anna's account as evidence that by the third stage she developed a well-formed habitus of her house community. I suggested that she selected the concept of lifespace due to the correspondence, or, in terms of Bourdieu's theory, ontological complicity, between Anna's habitus and the field of the house community. However, her assignment and interviews indicate that her discernment of a personal concern for vulnerable children and her dedication to it, far from being the result of unconscious inculcation of the communal habitus, was an outcome of Anna's reflexive deliberations, facilitated by her learning practices. In pursuit of this concern, Anna consciously selected the concept of lifespace, because she considered that she could apply it in her work practice. Her desire to establish 'lifespace' in the house community motivated Anna to engage in collaborative work and to share her practical knowledge with colleagues inside and outwith her community. Prompted by the question put to her by the house coordinator, she realised that through such engagement she could apply practical knowledge explicated by others in her work with vulnerable children. In this way, she developed and personified her roles, as a community member and as a professional worker, and established her social identity.

The analysis of Anna's account in this section indicates that an impulse to engage in reflexive deliberations was coming from Anna's work, while the BA educational practices facilitated such engagement. The work provided an impetus for Anna to incorporate the technique of process recording in her practice and to explicate her practical knowledge, applying discursive terms from her studies. In her internal and external conversations about her work, Anna mobilised her meta-reflexivity and relational reflexivity and discerned and prioritised her concerns and commitments, thus, elaborating her personal identity. Pursuing her ultimate concern, Anna initiated projects, applied selected propositional knowledge from her studies, explicated her practical knowledge and shared it with her colleagues. Realising her initiatives, Anna personified her role in the community and established her social identity. This leads to a conclusion that Anna's work practices played a pivotal role in the process of her maturation and that her learning practices facilitated this developmental process.

The same conclusion can be reached in regard to other students participating in the research. There is ample evidence in the accounts of students, analysed in the previous chapter, that reflective educational practices of the BA mobilised and diversified their reflexivity and, by that implication, facilitated their maturation. At work, all the students were confronted by challenging situations, which prompted them to modify and prioritise their personal concerns. Having dedicated themselves to these concerns, they pursued them in their work and work-related projects. In the course of their work, all of them personified their roles and developed social identities, thus, making progress in the process of maturation.

John, having encountered problems in relations with co-workers in his house community, re-evaluated and modified his ultimate concern, and then took practical steps to remedy the situation and achieved by the end of his studies a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. Lisa and Beth, responding to the contingencies of their work, diversified their modes of reflexivity and reconciled their personal concerns, which allowed each of them to progress in the process of maturation. Peter was constrained in implementation of changes in his house community by its customary work and cultural practices. This prompted him to mobilise his relational reflexivity and to modify his plans, while establishing and personifying his role in the community. Ruth was challenged by the demands of her work due to her poor health. But, it was due to her focus on her performance at work that Ruth discerned and prioritised a personal concern about vulnerable children. Her dedication to this concern allowed her to personify her role in the community and to achieve a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. Max discerned his cause through his work and study and remained dedicated to this cause for the duration of his study, pursuing it in his work and study projects. Max was the only one from the participating students who did not alter his concerns, though he shifted a priority from his work to his family in the last year of his studies. Thus, the accounts of all students in the previous chapter broadly support a conclusion that their work was pivotal in the process of their maturation.

In the previous chapter (pp.170-171) I suggested that the BA by bringing ideational diversity into the School's cultural system undermined morphostasis of its structural system and increased flexibility and the variety of organisational roles available to the students. Anna's account contains evidence in support of this proposition. In her assignment, Anna gave credit to her practice tutor/house coordinator for supporting her initiatives and trusting her to take on more responsibilities in the house community. In the interview, she said:

> ‘For me, how I felt it was like when I suggested things, yeah, that’s a good idea, you just go ahead with it.’

Anna said that for her and other students it was important that ‘people feel potential for development and they support things that you bring up.’ This indicates that Anna’s relationship with the house coordinator of her community enabled her to personify her role and develop a social identity.

To what extent was such a trusting relationship between a student and his/her practice tutor and house coordinator common in the School? In the interview, Anna said that she knows a number of students, who ‘had lots of problems that they were not trusted’, and that the reason for that was ‘control’ exercised by their house coordinators:

> ‘That you have a kind of house coordinator who is doing it and then students who want to do things different and have their own ideas and they don’t really manage to come together.’

The accounts of other participants provide limited data about relations between students and house coordinators of their communities. Still, some details of these relations can be discerned. For Beth, regular conversations with her house coordinator were essential for completing her internal conversation and deciding how to act. It was her house coordinator, who advised her to use a particular method to plan her actions. This allowed Beth to reduce her dependence on communicative reflexivity and to make progress with work projects. This indicates that Beth’s house coordinator was not only supportive of her work initiatives but also in tune with her personal development. In Max’s case, on the contrary, a lack of understanding between him and the house coordinator undermined his self-esteem, de-motivated Max in his work and prompted him to re-prioritize his concerns. Max, in his reflexive deliberations, became overwhelmed by recriminations with his practice tutor/house coordinator. This constrained Max in realizing study and work projects and, as a result, impeded the process of his maturation. Ruth had a strained relationship with her house coordinator, which prompted her to ask the BA administration to assign her a second practice tutor. The second practice tutor assisted Ruth in negotiating changes to her work routine, which allowed Ruth to achieve a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi* and to accomplish the BA.

Thus, the accounts of Anna and other students provide evidence that the relations with their practice tutors/house coordinators were an important factor in students’ maturation.

These relations, formed in the course of students' collaborative work, possessed emergent powers (p.93) to enable or to constrain students while they pursued their concerns. Students' accounts indicate that cultural morphogenesis in the School, triggered and sustained by the BA, conditioned relations between some students and their practice tutors/house coordinators in such a way that they enabled students to plan and realize their initiatives and projects. This supports a suggestion made above that the BA activated a mechanism of triple morphogenesis in the School, which increased flexibility and diversity of organisational roles, available to students, thus enabling the process of their maturation.

## 8.2 Enablement of maturation of students by the BA curriculum

In the previous chapter (pp.171-172) I made a provisional conclusion that the ideational pluralism of the BA curriculum enabled students (whose accounts I analysed in chapter 7) to select resources which resonated with their personal concerns, and to use these resources in their reflexive deliberations, thus advancing them in the process of maturation. Anna's assignment and interviews provide evidence in support of this proposition.

In the assignment for the Practice module, Anna referred to two theories which she studied in the Social Pedagogy modules, a theory of the circle of courage (Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern 2005) and a theory of lifespace (Smith 2009) . She divided the assignment into four parts according to four individual 'developmental needs' of the circle of courage theory: mastery, belonging, generosity and independence. In a section about mastery, she reflected on her work with a recently admitted pupil, invoking the lifespace theory. Anna wrote that it was the theory of lifespace that helped her to 'discover the possibilities of everyday moments' with the pupil. In the interview, she said:

> 'I always thought that this is something I really need to learn to let go a bit of control and trust the situation, give more space to the child and just let them react even if something doesn't go how I planned it, that it is ok.'

In the assignment, Anna also wrote that understanding of this theory helped her 'to create a safe and mutual connection' between the pupil and her. For that, she needed 'to give space and opportunities to the child to be listened to.' In the interview, Anna said: 'Lifespace is just about working with him […] working with everyday situations and not knowing him.' These statements indicate that Anna in her reflexive deliberations sieved through propositional knowledge of her studies and selected a theory that resonated with her personal concerns (see previous section). This theory provided Anna with language to explicate her practical knowledge, while, also, enabling her to elaborate and clarify her

ultimate personal concern and commit herself to upholding it in her work, thus defining her personal identity.

The selected propositional knowledge also enabled Anna to pursue her ultimate concern in her daily work and to plan and realise her work projects. In a section of her assignment with a title ‘Generosity’, Anna described how being inspired to establish ‘lifespace’ in her house community she shared her knowledge of a therapeutic technique with her colleagues in order to engage them in collaborative work. In the same section Anna described two other episodes of her practice, mentioned in the previous section, in which she shared her knowledge with colleagues inside and outwith her community. In the interview, Anna said that the theories of lifespace and of the circle of courage were a ‘big inspiration’ to her and helped her to develop ‘an informed approach’. She compared these theories with the theory of seven life processes, based on anthroposophy, which, in her opinion, was ‘too complex to really work with’, because it was connected to ‘the whole philosophy behind it and to understanding of reincarnation and so many different things’. Anna said that she found the theories of lifespace and of the circle of courage ‘very practical and as well everything what is written is very easy to read and for everybody to understand’. She said about these theories: ‘You can explain to people, who are not studying [at the BA], very fast and very easy and they can do something with it’. It was important for Anna, because, with fewer students in her house community, it became, as she said, ‘very limited how you can make things understandable and work with it in a helpful way’. This part of Anna’s interview confirms a conclusion made in the previous section that Anna consciously selected the concepts of lifespace and of the circle of courage theory in order to pursue her personal concern in her daily work and to realise her work projects. It follows that these two theories enabled Anna to personify her role in the house community and establish a social identity, thus, progressing in the process of maturation.

Anna’s account corroborates with the accounts of students, analysed in chapter 7, in that their choice of resources was not constrained by anthroposophical knowledge or organisational knowledge of the School. The BA curriculum provided students with a sufficiently wide range of materials to select knowledge that resonated with their personal concerns and enabled them to pursue these concerns in their practice. In terms of the Morphogenetic Approach, the ideational resources of the BA curriculum conditioned socio-cultural interaction of students with their tutors, teachers, house coordinators and colleagues in such a way that it facilitated reflexivity of students and resulted in their maturational progress. Below, I argue that the BA curriculum enabled maturation of

students due to the configuration of contingent complementarities of its ideational resources (p.97). To prove that the BA curriculum had such cultural configuration, it has to be demonstrated that the components of the BA curriculum were in relations of contingency (independence) and complementarity (non-contradiction) and that the situational logic of opportunity guided the use of the ideational resources in the educational practices of the BA.

The courses and practice modules of the BA curriculum contained a mix of practices, theories and approaches, both anthroposophical and non-anthroposophical (BA in Social Pedagogy Handbook, Section B, 2010; Section C, 2012; Section D, 2012). For example, in the courses of the modules Understanding and Responding and Social Pedagogy, students were taught Steiner's theories of twelve senses and of seven life processes (Steiner 1990; Steiner 2014) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of ecology of human development. Students undertook practical assessments of vulnerable individuals, based on these three theories. Studying the module Development across the Lifecourse, students were introduced both to Erikson's (1982) theory and to anthroposophy-based theory of Lievegoed (1997). In their assignments for this module, students were free to choose which of the two theories to apply. The BA curriculum also contained organisational knowledge of the School, linked to the corpus of anthroposophical knowledge. Reading lists of a number of courses contained literature about the School and similar organisations with life-sharing communities, which described their distinctive ethos, traditional work practices and way of life, founded on the ideas of anthroposophy. Thus, the BA curriculum contained two strands of knowledge, anthroposophical knowledge and linked to it organisational knowledge, as one strand, and non-anthroposophical knowledge (called by students and tutors 'mainstream'), as another strand, which was contingent to the first one. While the resources of the first strand were all related to each other through a doctrine of anthroposophy, the resources of the second strand represented various schools of thought, from established academic theories to recently developed alternative approaches (e.g. the circle of courage theory), independent of each other. This indicates that relations of contingency dominated among ideational resources of the BA curriculum.

Observations of teaching sessions and interviews with teachers, conducted during the first round of data collection, indicated that they were tolerant of students' critique of anthroposophy. A teacher, who taught the anthroposophy-based parts of the modules Understanding and Responding and Social Pedagogy, said that he requires students to express clearly what they think and feel about what they have read. He said that he finds it

totally acceptable if a student disagrees with what Steiner wrote, as long as the student makes an argument about it. Another teacher, who taught ‘mainstream’ content of the same modules, expressed his doubts about practical usefulness of anthroposophical knowledge for students’ daily work. He said that even those students, who express interest in anthroposophy, do not use Steiner’s ideas in daily practice. He pointed out that students are enthusiastic and write long entries in their learning journals about ‘mainstream’ theories and approaches, which they find more accessible and usable, than anthroposophical ones. This indicates that in the delivery of the BA courses anthroposophical theories and approaches were not privileged over non-anthroposophical ones and that students were free to make their choice of ideational resources. This also suggests that the teachers regarded anthroposophical and non-anthroposophical ideational resources of the BA curriculum as non-contradictory and complementary.

It should be noted that some of the ideational resources, for example, the theory of the circle of courage and the concepts of Social Pedagogy (Eichsteller et al. 2017), were widely used by students in their assignments. It is likely that they were included into the BA curriculum by the BA teachers and tutors, because they matched their own practical knowledge as long-standing workers of the School and members of the house communities. Therefore, students’ choice of ideational resources for their studies and work was likely affected by the preferences of their teachers and tutors. However, Anna’s account and the accounts of other students indicate that their choice of resources was a result of their reflexivity and reflection about their practice, personal concerns and social contexts. It did not matter to students whether the taught knowledge was anthroposophical or ‘mainstream’. The knowledge that appealed to them was the one which provided them with language to explicate and metaphorise their practical knowledge or the one which they could incorporate into their practice. Thus, Ruth insisted that she used anthroposophical approaches in her work because ‘it made a lot of sense for that individual, for that situation’ and that various approaches allowed her ‘to see’ a vulnerable individual ‘in more depth’. She said that she and others ‘can come to the same understanding [of an individual] through very different ways’. The idea of convergence of knowledge was expressed also by other participating students. This indicates that the two strands of the BA curriculum were perceived by the students as non-contradictory and complementary in application to their practice.

It was acceptable on the BA programme for students to use literature sources, which were not on the reading lists of the BA modules and courses. For example, John in his

assignments for three different courses at stage three liberally cited Fromm (2001; 2009). Though Fromm's philosophical ideas were not studied in any of the BA courses, it seems that John had no hesitation in referring to them in his assignments. Jane in her assignment for the Practice module used a metaphor of cheese from a book of Johnson (1998), which was not on the reading list for this module and was recommended to her by the practice tutor. This leads to a conclusion that students were guided by the logic of opportunity in their use of ideational resources of the BA curriculum and beyond it.

The result of such unconstrained use of ideational resources was the sustained generation of knowledge variety, which is evident in students' assignments. Writings of students analysed above testify about diversity and creativity of their thought. As students' learning journals and, at least, parts of their assignments were read and discussed with their personal tutors, it is likely that by and large personal tutors were appreciative of their writings and giving them positive feedbacks. Thus, it is plausible to suggest that the logic of opportunity guided the interaction between students and their personal tutors in regard to the use of ideational resources.

Students' accounts contain evidence that their practice tutors/house coordinators were not uniformly supportive and accommodating of students' practical initiatives. In the interview, Anna said that she knows a number of students who were 'not trusted' by their house coordinators, because students had 'their own ideas' and wanted 'to do things differently' in their communities. The accounts of Jane, Peter, Lisa and Beth testify that their creative and innovative ideas on the stage of their implementation contradicted the old cultural conspectus of the organisational knowledge of the School. While students were free to generate ideas about organisational change during their studies, the implementation of these ideas encountered resistance from individuals and groups with vested interests in maintaining the status quo in the house communities and in the School. The students' accounts indicate that the attempts by students to bring about change to their house communities and to the School, as a whole, activated not only a competition of ideas but also a conflict of interests and that, in consequence of that, the socio-cultural interaction within the organisation was progressively driven by the logic of competition and elimination.

This supports a tentative conclusion, made in section 6.5, that at the time of the research the cultural system of the School had a configuration of competitive contradictions. The 'fault lines' within the cultural system of the School were running not along the division

between anthroposophical and ‘mainstream’ knowledge but along the divide between traditional organisational knowledge and innovative ideas, promoted by students. Students developed these ideas with the knowledge which they selected among the resources of the BA curriculum and beyond it, guided by the logic of opportunity. The selected ideational resources helped students to explicate their practical knowledge, mobilise and diversify their reflexivity and to elaborate their personal concerns, defining their personal identities. Students used the selected ideational resources to plan and realise work projects, personifying their roles and developing their social identities. The above leads to a conclusion that the components of the BA curriculum were in relations of contingent complementarity and that it was due to such configuration of its components that the BA curriculum was an enablement of the process of maturation of students.

## 8.3 Outcomes of the Archerian analysis

The analysis of students’ accounts, developed in this and in the previous chapter, leads to an overall conclusion that the BA was a formative, developmental programme. It enabled and facilitated the process of maturation of students, in which they developed personal and social identities.

In the macro-analytical perspective, the BA created enabling conditions for students’ maturational progress by undermining the morphostatic cultural and structural configuration of the School to the extent that a mechanism of triple morphogenesis was activated. The BA curriculum broke the cultural hegemony of anthroposophical and organisational knowledge in the School and infiltrated it with new ideas. The cultural change loosened the morphostatic structure of the School through groups and individual members sponsoring new ideas in pursuit of their ideational and material interests. The elaboration of cultural and structural systems of the School expanded a choice of ideational resources and a range of organisational opportunities, available to students to plan and realise work projects and to select and personify roles in a manner expressive of their personal concerns.

In the micro-analytical perspective, the relations of contingent complementarity between ideational resources of the BA curriculum enabled students to select those resources which resonated with their personal concerns and to use these resources in reflexive deliberations to elaborate their personal identities and to plan and realise work projects in pursuit of their concerns. Engaging in work practices and educational practices, students mobilised and diversified their reflexivity and developed relational reflexivity, which allowed them to

personify their roles and develop social identities, thus advancing in the process of maturation.

Work was pivotal to maturation of students, because, on the one hand, it mobilised their reflexivity, which allowed them to discern and prioritise their personal concerns, and, on the other hand, it provided students with opportunities to pursue these personal concerns in their daily work and by initiating or engaging in work projects. Through work and work projects students personified their organisational roles and established their social identities.

The following BA educational practices facilitated the process of maturation of students:

A. Learning practices of students:
   - keeping a learning journal about their work and study,
   - writing reports and assignments with self-assessments of their progress in work practice, study and personal development with a broad set of criteria,
   - conversing with tutors about their work, study and private life,
   - making reports on their progress at regular PDP and practice assessment meetings.

   These practices were, by design, reflective in relation to students' performance and progress at work and study and therefore reflexive. Engaging in these practices, students mobilised and diversified their reflexivity. The learning practices allowed students to explicate and metaphorise their practical knowledge, to select matching propositional knowledge and to apply it in work practice. These practices stimulated students' on-going internal conversations about their personal concerns, roles and social contexts of life, work and study, thus, facilitating development of their personal and social identities.

B. Support practices of tutors:
   - allocating a practice tutor and a personal tutor for every student,
   - regular informal one-to-one meetings of each of the tutors with the student,
   - regular PDP and practice assessment meetings of both tutors and the student.

   These practices provided students with regular feedback about their work and study. Conversations with tutors gave students opportunities to extend and complete their internal conversations. Trustful relations between students and their tutors allowed students to converse about their work and life in house communities and about their private lives. For students with a dominant communicative mode of reflexivity,

conversations with tutors were essential for completing their reflexive deliberations and deciding how to act. For students with a dominant autonomous or meta-mode of reflexivity, conversations with tutors provided opportunities to reflect on their work and life experiences, personal concerns and actions. In conversations with tutors, students mobilised and diversified their reflexivity and developed their relational reflexivity.

C. Teaching practices:
   - lectures and seminars, conducted by the School and university staff,
   - appointment of BA teachers and personal and practice tutors from former BA students, familiar with the BA curriculum;
   - appointment of experienced BA teachers and tutors as practice supervisors;
   - regular meetings of personal and practice tutors with their students,
   - regular meetings of practice supervisors with their supervisees during periods of assessed practice,
   - provision of feedback to students on their assignments by tutors and assessors.

   These practices exposed students to a range of propositional knowledge from the BA curriculum, which enabled them to explicate and metaphorise their practical knowledge, apply selected propositional knowledge in their work and incorporate it as embodied practical skills. In doing this, students followed the logic of opportunity, due to the relations of contingent complimentarity between components of the BA curriculum. The teaching practices also provided feedback to students on applications of propositional knowledge of the BA curriculum in their work, counteracting constraining influences of traditional organisational knowledge and of the morphostatic structure of the School on planning and realisation of students' work projects. The teaching practices assisted reflexive deliberations of students about their personal concerns and social roles, thus facilitating development of students' personal and social identities.

The above conclusions differ from the ones that were reached in chapter 5 about the function of the BA in the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities and maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School. The two sets of conclusions were reached by applying respectively Archerian and Bourdieusian analytical frameworks. In the final chapter, in the light of the original objectives of the research I consider reasons for the difference between the outcomes of the two analyses.

# 9 Assessment of research outcomes

In the first part of this chapter, I consider the findings of the research in the light of its original aim and objectives. I argue that applications of Bourdieusian and Archerian analytical frameworks to analysis of collected data address the aim and objectives and result in two substantively different perspectives on the BA, and that this reflects differences in the ontological, methodological, epistemological and theoretical standpoints of the two analytical approaches. Bourdieusian analysis, based on the principle of inseparability of structure and agency, foregrounds conditioning by organisational fields of agency of students, tutors and other organisational actors. This leads to accentuating the role of the BA in social reproduction of house communities and in maintenance of cultural and economic capital of the School. Archerian analysis, grounded in emergentist ontology and the principle of analytical dualism of structure and agency, results in establishing the role of the BA in sustaining cultural morphogenesis in the School and in enabling and facilitating maturation of students. I conclude that Archerian analysis leads to a fuller view of the BA, than Bourdieusian analysis.

In the second part of the chapter, I assess descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity and generalizability of the research outcomes from a realist epistemological perspective. In conclusion, I suggest what contribution to knowledge this research makes.

## 9.1 Outcomes of Bourdieusian and Archerian analyses in the light of objectives of the research

The original objectives (pp.19-20) framed this research as an investigation of learning cultures of the BA, their characteristics and changes from the standpoints of students and tutors. I intended to examine how the impact of organisational and academic fields on the educational practices was discursively mediated by students and their tutors and how students constructed their identities in the course of such mediation. The investigation was to yield research-informed principles for the formation and transformation of learning cultures in work-based learning. These objectives guided my analysis of collected data, presented above.

Application of Bourdieu's theoretical framework to the analysis of assignments and interviews of two students (section 5.2) indicated a process of inculcation by the students of dispositions, corresponding to two organisational fields of the School, the local field of house communities and the wider organisational field. Both students, by immersing

themselves in the communal work and life, developed a well-formed habitus of the field of house communities. One of the students, who operated also in the wider organisational field, inculcated dispositions of that field, but her actions, aimed at transformation of established organisational practices, were opposed by her colleagues in the group of house coordinators. Bourdieu's principle of ontological complicity between habitus and field provided an explanation to students' selections of theoretical concepts from their studies. Taken as metaphors, these concepts were congruent to two different logics of practice of the organisational fields. The concepts allowed students to constitute their social environment as a meaningful world, endowed with sense and value, in which it was worthwhile to invest their labour and accumulate cultural and social capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 127).

The analysis of the events leading to the cessation of the BA (section 5.3) led me to a conclusion about dominance and stability of the field of house communities and pointed to an economic interest of the long-term co-workers in preservation of the status quo within the organisation. The analysis indicated that the function of the BA in the mechanism of social reproduction of house communities involved transfer of cultural capital from students to newcomers.

The developed Bourdieusian analysis allowed me to characterise the learning culture of the BA as being strongly conditioned by the field of house communities. I viewed the process of construction of students' identities as an inculcation of dispositions of the organisational fields, with changes in their habitus corresponding to the changes in their positions in the organisational fields. I found that students in their assignments and interviews articulated the organisational doxa of the School, using terms which they appropriated from their studies. I concluded that the ontological complicity between habitus and field resulted in the misrecognition by students of social, cultural and economic conditions of their work and study.

Difficulties with applying Bourdieusian analysis to the accounts of students prompted me to turn to Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development. Archerian analysis indicated that the structure and culture of the School conditioned but did not determine students' actions. In work and study, students pursued their personal concerns, reflexively mediating the constraining and enabling effects of the structure and culture of the School.

Archerian analysis of students' assignments and interviews revealed the maturational progression of students: in the course of work and study, students diversified their reflexivity and developed relational reflexivity, discerned and prioritised personal concerns and dedicated their work and life to their pursuit, planned and realised work projects, personified their organisational roles and established social identities. I concluded that work practice was pivotal to the maturation of students by giving them an impetus to engage in reflective learning practices, in which they explicated and metaphorised their practical knowledge, selected propositional knowledge, congruent to their personal concerns, and incorporated it in their practice. The logic of opportunity, which guided students in selecting ideational resources and applying them in work practice, counteracted structural and cultural constraints to students realising their projects and ultimately achieving satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*.

The developed analysis, based on Archer's theoretical framework, led me to the conclusions that the BA curriculum was enabling maturation of students by sustaining cultural morphogenesis in the School and undermining its structural morphostasis, and that the BA educational practices were facilitating mobilisation and diversification of reflexivity of students and development of their personal and social identities. Developing Archerian analysis, I incorporated perspectives of research participants into my analytical account, aiming to close a gap between the standpoint of participants and my standpoint as a researcher.

The outcomes of Bourdieusian and Archerian analyses differ substantively. This is because the original objectives of the research invoke three interlinked problems in social theory (Archer 2000), which Bourdieu and Archer approached from different ontological, methodological, epistemological and theoretical positions.

### *9.1.1 The problem of structure and agency*

The original objective of the research to investigate the effects of organisational and academic fields on students' learning practices and on the construction of their identities invokes a problem of structure and agency.

Mahar et al. (1990) pointed out that Bourdieu's work contains a powerful theory of social reproduction but not of social change. In the missing explanation why social transformations happen and fields take and change their shape the authors saw a 'synchronic tendency' (ibid, p.216) of Bourdieu's work. This 'synchronic tendency' is the consequence of analytical inseparability of structure and agency. The elision of systemic

and agential properties, habitus and habitat (Sayer 2005), hinders investigating their interplay and variability in the outcomes of this interplay in terms of personal development and systemic changes. Therefore, in this research, Bourdieusian analysis was not conducive for examining how the BA curriculum and educational practices and work practices of the School were interlinked and impacted on students' personal development and on the transformation of the School's culture and structure. On the micro-analytical level, Bourdieusian analysis accentuated cultural and structural conditioning of actions and interaction of students through inculcating dispositions of the organisational fields. On the macro-analytical level, a lack of theorising of social change in Bourdieu's theory resulted in foregrounding the role of the BA in social reproduction of house communities and in overlooking its role in systemic changes in the School.

Archer's theorising is based on emergentist ontology and on the principle of analytical dualism, which allow assigning separate, yet mutually interdependent, emergent properties and causal powers to structure and culture and to individual and group agents. In the category of personal emergent properties, Archer developed a theory of reflexivity with four distinct modes. This theory allowed me to examine how students reflexively mediated the impact of the School's structure and culture on their work and learning practices. Archer's Morphogenetic Approach, which separates structural and cultural conditioning and social and socio-cultural interaction on a temporal basis, allowed me to discern not only reproduction but also changes in the structure, culture and social integration of the School over time.

On the basis of stratified social realist ontology and methodology of analytical dualism, Archer developed a theory of personal development and linked it to structural and cultural morphogenesis on the macro-level through the notion of social actor/role and the mechanism of triple morphogenesis. This theory and the macro-micro link allowed me to establish the role of the BA in enabling and facilitating maturation of students.

Thus, it can be concluded that Archerian analysis, due to its grounding in the ontology of emergentism and methodology of analytical dualism of structure and agency, provides analytical advantages, compared to Bourdieusian analysis, for the investigation of social phenomena both on the level of an institution and on the level of individual actors. The advantages provided by Archerian analysis over Bourdieusian analysis were augmented by the nature of the School, as an institution undergoing structural and cultural transformation, and of the BA students, as individuals progressing in their maturational development.

### *9.1.2 The problem of subjectivism and objectivism*

The original objective of the research to investigate the characteristics and dynamics of learning cultures from the standpoint of students and tutors invokes a problem of subjectivism and objectivism, or of 'understanding' and 'explanation'.

It was pointed out above (p.103) that Bourdieu assumes existence of an epistemological barrier between 'totalising' scientific knowledge, produced by the academic community, and practical knowledge which, according to Bourdieu, defies conscious explication but nevertheless guides a semi-conscious operation of habitus. This assumption leads Bourdieu to reject a possibility of reflexive practice outwith the scientific field, because the subjective understanding by individual actors of objective conditions of their practice necessarily misrecognises these conditions and serves to obscure the logic of practice and a struggle for symbolic capital. Bourdieu considers that aims and reasons for actions, stated by individual actors, often conceal their true motives, rooted in their economic interest. In Bourdieusian analysis, perspectives of participants are of interest to a researcher only as expressions of implicit doxa and of explicit dogma of their social field. Thus, according to Bourdieu, there is a gap between subjective understanding and objective explanation of practice, which can be crossed only by a researcher, operating within the scientific field.

For Archer, such a gap does not exist. All people possess a mental ability to reflect upon their actions in their context and explicate their embodied practical knowledge through internal conversation. This follows from an assumption of realist emergentist ontology that human reasons are a category of causes and therefore a process of understanding of practice is a matter of grasping (by anyone) causal efficacy of people (own and others'), conditioned by the causal powers of structure and culture. An understanding of practice can be explicated in various forms of propositional knowledge, which are models of generative mechanisms, interconnecting causal powers of people, structure and culture. All such models are epistemologically legitimate outcomes of human reflexivity. Archer (2000) points out that, ontologically, agents and structures are being lodged in the same world, and, therefore, agential properties and cultural 'products' derive from the engagement of agents with the world. It is that practical engagement and the emergent power of reflexivity that links subjectivity and objectivity, 'understanding' and 'explanation', and practical and propositional knowledge in the generated elements of culture and science, with no division between the two.

These ontological and epistemological assumptions of the Morphogenetic Approach allow a researcher to investigate social phenomena from the standpoint of research participants by treating their accounts as continuations and outcomes of their internal conversations, which mediate between the two sets of causal powers, those of the external reality and those of their own. By removing a separation between the inner and the outer lives, Archer opened a possibility to explore a process of maturation and personal development of research subjects from their own perspectives and to anchor the researcher's explanatory account of participants' lives in their subjective accounts.

Sayer (2005) pointed out that Bourdieu in his later work 'The weight of the world' (1999) accepted that the distinction between conscious and unconscious (practical) knowledge is overdrawn. With reference to 'the paradoxes of the scientific habitus' Bourdieu (ibid., p.621) noted that the principles of scientific practice can be both present to consciousness, to varying degrees, and function in the practical state in the form of incorporated dispositions. Sayer argued that in order to overcome a split between understanding and explanation, the concept of habitus should be elaborated by allowing some dispositions to be based on understanding, thus accepting that reasons and other discursive objects are causes and can become embodied.

The split between understanding and explanation was successfully overcome by Archer (2000) in her theorising of practical and discursive knowledge (see section 8.1). Archer (2010) argued that the proposed by Sayer (2005; 2009) and Elder-Vaas (2007) theoretical adjustment of Bourdieu's theory towards a reflexive modification of habitus is not possible because of Bourdieu's ontological commitments: ontological complicity between habitus and field prevents subjects' inquiry into objective conditions of possibility of their lived experience and therefore outcomes of their reflexivity cannot appear in explanation. Archer noted that the principle of ontological complicity effectively means a merger of ontology and epistemology both for the researcher and the researched and makes objective and subjective positions inseparable, while reflexive deliberations in internal conversation depend on a clear object-subject distinction. Archer argued that the suggested elaboration of the concept of habitus on the realist platform is not feasible because Bourdieu's theory is based on central conflation and is therefore hostile to emergentism.

A realist turn in this research resulted in a shift in my analytic perspective from a standpoint of a researcher-observer towards the standpoints of research participants. This allowed me to overcome my critical bias towards the School and the BA (see section 1.2)

and to discover the processes of maturation of students and of cultural and structural changes in the School, as well as the role of the BA in these processes.

In this thesis, the macro-level analysis of institutional morphogenesis in the School (section 6.5), conducted from a standpoint of a researcher-observer, is followed by the micro-level analysis of students' accounts (chapter 7), which incorporates their perspectives and reflexivity. In the analysis of the role of the BA in maturation of students and in the outcomes of the Archerian analysis (chapter 8), the macro-level and micro-level analyses come together. Thus, the ontological and epistemological foundations of Archerian analysis allowed me to combine the 'subjective' accounts of students and my 'objective' explanatory account into one analytical account, presented here, in an attempt to fulfil the original objective of the research.

### *9.1.3 The problem of agency*

The original objectives of the research to study dialogic mediation between social fields and individual actors in construction of their identities raised a question about a theoretical approach and analytical tools which are suitable for that purpose. These are theoretical and methodological issues related to a third problem of social theory, the problem of agency, which concerns how to avoid in conceptualising identity the extremes both of social determinism and of individualisation (Mahar, Harker, and Wilkes 1990; Archer 2000; Reay, Crozier, and James 2011).

Mahar et al. (1990) argued that Bourdieu did not avoid some degree of social determinism in his account. Although an individual has some choice of strategies, this choice is constrained by the habitus which embodies the history of the group or class to which the individual belongs. In the authors' opinion, the concepts of habitus, capital and field dissolve agency into structures which, however flexible, make no allowance for unique, innovative individual actions. The authors suggested that agency presents a problem for Bourdieu because he does not admit any influence on it which is exogenous to his model and which would give agency some measure of autonomy from the structures.

Reay et al. (2011) argued that the concept of habitus captures in a subtle way the dynamic relationship between social structures and the self, though it is often mistakenly regarded by researchers as more or less equivalent to 'personality' and then found wanting as a predictive category which leads to accusations of Bourdieu in determinism, e.g. by Jenkins (1992). The authors pointed out that such a view is based on a misconception of the nature and the purpose of Bourdieu's approach which is to study complex, situated actions, which

reflect actors' locations in a social space and their specific historical circumstances. The authors argue that Bourdieu's theoretical tools facilitate units of analysis other than individual, such as social class, class faction, group or family. Hodkinson (in Grenfell & James 1998, p.145) also pointed out that Bourdieu's analytical tools are designed for explaining patterns in actions and strategies of individuals as members of social groups, rather than for interpreting each individual action and strategy.

Adherence to emergentism and analytical dualism of structure and agency allowed Archer to theorise personal and social identities which are conditioned but not determined by the external forces. This is due to reflexivity which Archer theorised as a personal emergent property that mediates between systemic and social powers and individual agency. In her theory of personal development Archer describes a developmental cycle, with stages of development of self, personal identity and social identity, driven by the powers of self-consciousness and reflexivity in practical encounters with the world. For Archer (2000), reflexivity is synonymous with inner conversation and is therefore literally dialogic. The inner dialogue constitutes a unique identity of each human being by finding bespoke solutions to the problems involved in discerning, prioritising and committing to personal concerns, pursuing these concerns in practice, personifying social roles and establishing a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. In Archerian analysis, a study of dialogic mediation in the construction of identity is an examination of reflexivity of subjects, while they progress through the stages of maturation and personal development. Such a study is assisted by Archer's categorisation of reflexive inner conversation into four distinct modalities. Thus, by developing theories of reflexivity and personal development Archer advanced a social realist solution to the problem of agency.

The above ontological, epistemological, theoretical and methodological differences between Bourdieu's and Archer's theoretical frameworks explain why in this research the latter amplified explanatory power of analysis of students' assignments and interviews. Archer's theory of reflexivity and personal development illuminated students' accounts and provided explanations to their motives and actions. Archer's theorising about a role of practice and practical knowledge in emergence of personal and social identities prompted me to recognise a pivotal role of work practices in the process of maturation of students. My conclusion that the BA curriculum enabled and the BA educational practices facilitated this process rests on Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development. Overall, it was turning from Bourdieu's social theory to Archer's one that allowed me to develop an explanatory account about how in the course of work

and studies the BA students not only were shaped by their social environment but also shaped it themselves, while actively shaping their lives.

This leads to a conclusion that for the reasons outlined above Archer's theoretical framework presents methodological and analytical advantages, compared to Bourdieu's theoretical framework, for an investigation of a work-based learning programme which generates cultural, structural and social transformations of the institution that hosts it and enables and facilitates maturation of the individuals who undertake it. In this research, Bourdieusian analysis was instrumental in establishing a social reproductive function of the BA but produced a partial, incomplete view of the programme; Archerian analysis was instrumental in revealing processes of organisational morphogenesis and personal development and resulted in a fuller, more adequate view of the BA, in relation to the reality.

## 9.2 Validity and generalizability of research outcomes

In this section I assess validity and generalizability of the research outcomes. My assessment follows the approach to validity in qualitative research, developed by Maxwell (2012). It is based on the same realist ontological and epistemological assumptions, which the Archer's theoretical framework rests on. From a realist standpoint, validity is a property of inferences made, an account produced and conclusions reached in research. Validity is inherent in the relationship between a researched phenomenon and an account of it. Maxwell conceptualises this relationship as based not on similarity or resemblance but on contiguity: there is an actual and causal connection between the phenomenon, collected data, the account and conclusions; each step in the research process has implications for validity and generalizability of the account and conclusions, how they can be applied and what they permit. The assessment of validity of research outcomes consists in testing the produced account and conclusions that follow from it against existing and potential evidence with an aim of identifying and considering plausible alternatives, or 'validity threats', in the specific context of the study.

Maxwell proposes a typology of validity, which he derives from three consecutive (or iterative) steps undertaken in qualitative research: description, interpretation and explanation. He links these steps to three kinds of understanding, being developed by a researcher, descriptive, interpretive and theoretical, and to three corresponding types of validity. Maxwell claims that his typology of validity is an explication and elaboration of a

widespread commonsense conceptual structure, which is implicit in the work of many qualitative researchers.

Maxwell defines descriptive validity as concerning the factual accuracy of the researcher's account of physical and behavioural events, which the researcher either saw or heard himself/herself or inferred from data (e.g. accounts of events, given by participants). This constitutes, respectively, primary and secondary descriptive validity.

Reliability, in Maxwell's typology, refers to a particular type of threat to descriptive validity in a situation when different observers or methods produce descriptively contradicting data or accounts of the same event. This problem may arise, when a researcher compares his/her field notes of an event with participants' accounts of the same event.

Interpretive validity, in Maxwell's definition, concerns understanding by a researcher about what the physical objects, events and behaviours mean to the people in the research field. Maxwell stresses that interpretive understanding refers to comprehending phenomena by a researcher not from the researcher's perspective but from the perspectives of participants. In realist ontology, people's 'meanings', which include their intentions, motives, beliefs and evaluations are considered to be real and possessing causal powers, therefore, developing understanding of participants' 'meanings' and 'reasons' is a necessary step towards producing an explanatory account.

The third type of validity, the theoretical one, concerns an explanatory account of researched phenomena. Issues of theoretical validity arise in application of a concept or a theory, which a researcher brings to or develops during analysis, to the descriptive and interpretive account. Maxwell discerns two aspects of theoretical validity: the validity of concepts and categories as they are applied to the researched phenomenon and the validity of the postulated relationships among these concepts and categories in the context of the research. The latter aspect includes 'causal validity', if a researcher claims to have established a causal explanation of the phenomenon in question. From the realist standpoint, the latter means suggesting contiguity relationships between events and based on these relationships actual mechanisms or processes in the studied phenomenon.

Generalizability of the researcher's account and conclusions refers to the extent to which the account and conclusions, given for particular individuals in a particular situation at a particular time, can be extended to other individuals, settings or times. Maxwell points out

that in qualitative research generalisation usually takes place through development of a theory, which shows how the theorised process in a variety of situations, different from the one being researched, leads to a variety of outcomes. This is external generalizability of an account, theory and conclusions.

Maxwell points out that qualitative research almost always involves drawing from observations of particular individuals in particular places at particular times inferences about behaviour of these and other individuals of the studied population in other places and at other times. He refers to the validity of such inferences as internal generalizability of the research outcomes.

In the following sections, I assess descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity and generalizability of the analytical account, presented in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8, and the conclusions, drawn in section 8.3.

### *9.2.1 Descriptive validity*

In the context of this research, primary descriptive validity concerns the account of observations of lectures and seminars and the transcripts of interviews. As no audio or video recording was allowed during the observations, the account of them is based on the field notes, the accuracy of which in relaying speech and details of the observed sessions can be questioned. The observed sessions were full of interaction between students and teachers, which often overwhelmed my ability to keep handwritten notes. However, when I discussed some of my observations with students during interviews, there was no factual discrepancy between their recollections and my notes of the events. This indicates reliability of the field notes in regard to the accuracy of the description.

Even if the field notes were not accurate in some minor details, it would have no impact on the interpretive and explanatory account and the conclusions of the research as they are largely based on other data. Some of the observations are featured in the BA case study (section 4.4), which was written after the first round of data collection, but the minor details of sessions were unimportant for the broad description and characterisation of the BA educational practices that was given in the case study. Further in the thesis, observations, conducted in the first round, are mentioned only in the account about Max (p.115), though they are insignificant as the account is based predominantly on interview data and written assignments of the student. Thus, possible inaccuracies in the field notes do not threaten the validity of the analytical account and research outcomes.

Descriptive validity of the transcripts of interviews with research participants depends on whether verbatim transcription of audio recordings missed or omitted details of interviews, which, if included, could have substantially altered interpretive understanding of interviews. I addressed these issues in section 4.2.2 (p.46).

In Maxwell's typology, secondary descriptive validity refers to accounts of events, which are reported by the research participants during interviews or inferred by a researcher from other data. Most of the events, which are significant for the developed analysis, feature in the collected students' assignments, all of which were read by students' tutors and supervisors. This makes it highly unlikely that any of the events were made up by students. However, a possibility of a discrepancy between perceptions of an event by a student and by another witness or participant of the event remains. For example, Max's description of the events in his student group differed from how other students described these events, and Beth's recollection of the incident during an outing differed from the actual report of it, submitted to the School management. This is because students' descriptions were made from their perspectives and were affected by their emotions. All their accounts were a mix of description and reflection about the events. This underscores that the descriptive and interpretive accounts in this research are intertwined. Even if some of the details of students' accounts of the events are incorrect, this would not detract from the validity of the interpretive and explanatory accounts and of the research conclusions, because such factual discrepancies are irrelevant for Archerian analysis, which 'conceptualises the experiential, namely that which is accessible to actors at any given time in its incompleteness and distortion and replete with its blind spots of ignorance' (Archer 1995, p.150).

Some events that feature in the research, such as the ones that led to the cessation of the BA, are only partially described in the collected documents. In their analysis, I relied not only on the documents but also on my own recollections and notes about these events, which I either had knowledge about from various sources or directly participated in. The same applies to a number of events, described by students, for example, the pilot project, in which Lisa and Beth took part, and the accident with misadministration of medicine in Lisa's house community and the events that followed it. Thus, my knowledge as an insider enhances both the primary and the secondary descriptive validity of the account presented in this thesis.

### *9.2.2 Interpretive validity*

The purpose of interviewing students, tutors and teachers in this research was to establish what various events, their actions and actions of others meant for them. However, treatment of these meanings differed in subsequent Bourdieusian and Archerian analyses. This difference has implications for assessing the validity of the interpretive aspects of the account, given in Chapters four, six and seven.

In Bourdieu's theory of practice, people's meanings are held to be an expression of doxa of the field in which they operate, i.e. shared pre-reflective, taken-for-granted arbitrary assumptions, beliefs and values (p.61). Doxa is a source of misrecognition by individuals of objective conditions and generative processes of the field, which, according to Bourdieu, is necessary in order to obscure an implicit logic of practice with its struggle for maximizing capital. For that reason, Bourdieu insisted that motives, intentions and beliefs, articulated by participants, should never be taken at face value by a researcher. How people act should be looked at separately from what they say, and it is by 'breaking through' from the space of symbolic stances and products to the space of social positions that a researcher develops an analytic account (Grenfell 2012). In Bourdieusian analysis, interpretive understanding by a researcher of people's meanings is inferred from their practice and incorporated into an explanatory account. Therefore, validity threats to the interpretive aspect of a researcher's account are, in essence, theoretical.

In the Bourdieusian analysis, developed in chapter 5, the concepts and theories, selected by two students from their studies to make sense of their work and life in the School, reflected their and their colleagues' social practice and were taken as metaphorical expressions of habituses of the organisational fields. In the account about the accreditation and cessation of the BA, reasons, given by the BA directors and tutors for establishing and running the programme, did not match actions of School workers in the events, which preceded the break-up of the partnership with the university. The views of BA staff and School workers about the BA were interpreted as misrecognition of its function in the mechanism of the social reproduction of the School's house communities. The two strands of the analysis based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, presented in sections 5.2 and 5.3, seemed to complement and support each other, until the analysis of assignments and interviews of other students challenged the validity of the developing account. In the thesis, this was done (section 5.4) not by putting forward a plausible alternative explanation but by presenting available data and concluding that Bourdieu's theory had limitations in explaining some of the students' decisions and actions and that its conceptual framework

was inadequate for analysing reflexivity of the students. In particular, it was concluded that the accounts of some of the students could not be viewed only as an expression of the logic of their practice but also of students' commitments (see section 5.4.4). These conclusions, made on the basis of collected data, challenged the validity of both the interpretive and the explanatory aspects of the account, which was developed by applying Bourdieu's theory.

An interpretive and explanatory account, alternative to the one based on Bourdieu's theory, was developed by applying Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development. In the Archerian analysis in chapters 7 and 8, meanings, beliefs, intentions, and perspectives, articulated by students in their assignments and interviews, were taken at face value, because they were held as real and actual outcomes of their reflexive deliberations and as causal powers in the events reported by students and in the process of their personal development. Such ontological assumptions, though, do not remove validity threats to the interpretive aspects of the developed account, due to a possibility that the participants distorted or concealed their views, expressed in their assignments and interviews. I considered these validity threats in section 4.2.2 (p.48).

All the students, participating in the research, wrote in their assignments or talked at the interviews about the importance for them to be 'authentic', meaning honest and genuine, in communication with vulnerable individuals and colleagues. They applied this norm to conversations with their tutors and to their academic writing. Thus, social norms and values of life and work in house communities made it less likely that students deliberately distorted or concealed their views in the assignments and interviews.

There remains a possibility that the participants might not have been able to articulate fully or fairly their understandings, meanings and reasons in regard to the topics discussed at the interviews or covered in their assignments. This, however, does not detract from the validity of the interpretive and explanatory account and the research conclusions in chapters 7 and 8, because Archerian analysis deals with people's reflexivity as it is evidenced by their talk and written accounts. In this respect, the interpretive aspect of the produced analytical account can only be tested against understandings, meanings and reasons, explicated by the students, and not against pre-reflective motives and taken-for-granted beliefs, which can be attributed to them. It is in this respect that the analytic account in chapters 7 and 8 differs from the one in chapter 5, which indicates that the considered validity threat is theoretical, rather than interpretive.

### *9.2.3 Theoretical validity and generalizability*

It is pointed out above that the analysis in section 5.4 challenges the validity of the account, developed in sections 5.2 and 5.3 on the basis of Bourdieu's theory of practice, by considering evidence from collected data, which arguably cannot be explained by this theory. However, a threat to theoretical validity of the analytic account in chapter 5, based on Bourdieu's theory, presents the analysis, developed in chapters 7 and 8 by applying Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development. The Archerian analysis presents a plausible explanation of the events and developments in the BA and the School and of the accounts of individual students, which is alternative to the explanation developed by applying Bourdieu's theory. Nevertheless, the Archerian analysis does not invalidate the outcomes of the Bourdieusian analysis, but rather limits the applicability of Bourdieu's theoretical framework to the morphostatic processes in the School. After comparing the outcomes of the two analyses in section 9.1, a conclusion was reached that the Bourdieusian analysis produced a partial view of the BA, while the Archerian analysis resulted in a view, which is fuller and more adequate in relation to the reality. What are the threats to the theoretical validity of the developed Archerian analysis?

This research has a similarity with Archer's study of students of Warwick University (Archer 2012) in respect that the first step of the substantive analysis in both studies was to deduce dominant modes of reflexivity of participating students. However, there is a difference between the two studies. In Archer's study, the Internal Conversation Indicator (ICONI) questionnaire was applied to the whole student cohort to establish for each student relative scores of four modes of reflexivity and get an indication of a dominant mode, if there was one. In this research, the conclusions about dominant modes of reflexivity of participating students were made only on the basis of their interviews and assignments and Archer's qualitative descriptions of types of individuals with dominant communicative, autonomous or meta-mode of reflexivity. Archer noted that the ICONI instrument was never intended to stand alone in her study. At most, it was a way to identify participants with four dominant modes of reflexivity for subsequent interviewing. It was by interviewing participants of her studies (Archer 2007; 2012) that Archer developed the definitions of the four modes of reflexivity. Thus, the fact that the ICONI instrument was not applied in this research does not invalidate its conclusions about the modes of reflexivity of the research participants.

In regard to the objectives of this research, the conclusions made about changes in reflexivity of students over the period of their studies were more important than

establishing relative dominance between modes of reflexivity for each student. Changes in reflexivity, namely, its mobilisation and diversification and development of relational reflexivity, seemed to be more pronounced for the BA students, than for the undergraduates in Archer's study (2012). The same can be said about maturational progress of the BA students. The BA students made their vocational choices before starting the BA and in the course of study and work in the School established their personal identities and developed their social identities by personifying their organisational roles. Some of them accomplished the process of maturation by achieving a satisfying and sustainable *modus vivendi*. The undergraduates in Archer's study could not accomplish this process, because they were still to embark on their work careers. Thus, the context of life, work and study of the BA students in this research lends itself to applying Archer's concepts of personal and social identity and theory of personal development to a fuller extent, than the context of the undergraduate students' life and study in Archer's research.

The explanatory account in chapters 7 and 8 is preceded by macro-analysis of cultural and structural changes in the School in section 6.5. The latter is based on the data that characterises the School at the time of initial accreditation of the BA and at the time of the research, separated by fifteen years. The collected data says nothing about how the BA curriculum was developed in the years after the accreditation and how the cultural systems of the School evolved from ideational hegemony to plurality. This lack of historical data opens the analysis in section 6.5 to criticism that it is based on patchy evidence and therefore undermines the validity of the research conclusions.

It is important to distinguish between the parts of the analytical account in section 6.5, which contribute to the research conclusions in section 8.3, and those parts, which are not essential to these conclusions. The research conclusions refer to the structural and cultural conditions and practices in the School at the time of the research. The presence of particular cultural and structural conditions, which enabled or constrained development of reflexivity and maturation of students, is evidenced in students' stories in chapter 7. Details of the accounts in chapter 7 provide a basis for the explanatory theory developed in chapter 8 about the causal links between the BA curriculum, students' work and educational practices and the process of their maturation. It is on this explanatory account that the conclusions in section 8.3 are based. Thus, the lack of data and details about the history of morphogenesis in the School does not undermine the validity of the developed explanatory theory and research conclusions.

The evidence, vital for the research conclusions, was obtained from assignments and interviews of the participating students and, in a small part, from observations of lectures and seminars and interviews with BA teachers. Sampling of research participants among tutors, teachers, practice supervisors and students of three cohorts was opportunistic. It was affected by the restrictions on data collection, imposed by two organisations, other than the School. In the School, no tutors and only one practice supervisor volunteered to be interviewed. Fifty percent of the total number of students in the School over the period of research were interviewed, while twenty seven percent of the total number of students provided their assignments to the research (see Tables 4.1 and 4.5). Such limited number of participants raises a question about the internal generalizability of the developed explanatory account and research conclusions.

It is the case that this research does not reflect the diversity of conditions and practices of life, work and study in the whole population of BA students at the time of the research. Work practices of some of those students, who did not wish to participate in the research, were different from the practices, described by the participating students. Anna mentioned in her interview that house coordinators of some of the students of her cohort were not as supportive of their initiatives as her house coordinator. Some house communities were not as accommodating to students' personal circumstances as Ruth's community. Some of the tutors were not as insightful of their tutees' development as Beth's practice tutor. Thus, the sample of students in this research was not fully representative of all of the BA students in the School, let alone of the whole population of the BA students, which included workers from other organisations.

With this admission of limited internal generalizability of the research conclusions, the explanatory account and the conclusions of the research remain valid, because they refer to the particular cases of students, who participated in the research, and to the conditions and practices of their life, work and study in the School. In this research, a claim is made about causal relations between these conditions and practices and personal development of these students by examining the actual process of maturation in the case of each student. This is done in accordance with the realist view of causality, which refers to actual causal mechanisms and processes that are manifested by particular events and situations (Maxwell 2012). Maxwell points out that such a view of causality and the corresponding process explanation of social phenomena lends itself to in-depth research of a relatively small sample of individuals and of textual forms of data that retain chronological and

contextual connections between events. Limited internal generalizability of conclusions of such research to a wider population does not invalidate them.

Internal generalizability of the research can be put into question because of its reliance on interview data in making conclusions about students' personal development over the period of their studies. Only two participating students, Max and Ruth, had multiple interviews over three years, while for other participants the inferences about development of their reflexivity and their maturational progress were made on the basis of interviews conducted in the last year of their studies (see Table 4.5). This raises a question over whether collected data provides sufficient evidence for making claims about development of personal and social identities of these students.

Indeed, only the accounts of Max and Ruth contain details about the first three years of their studies. In the accounts of other students, the preceding years in the School are described in brief or not mentioned at all in the case of John. This restricts claims made in regard to these students to the last year of their studies. The internal generalizability of these claims is enhanced by the cross-referencing of interview data with the texts of students' assignments. Even if these claims are valid, an account about each participating students is not a complete description of his/her personal and social identity. The accounts are necessarily selective, accentuating those details, which allow making broader conclusions about the impact of work and educational practices on students' process of maturation. This enhances the internal generalizability of the research conclusions across the participating students.

From the realist epistemological perspective, internal generalizability of research and a validity of research conclusions remain always in question. The conclusions of this research derive from my understanding of the School and the BA, which is based both on collected data and on my own experience of living and working in the School. My understanding is informed by Archer's theoretical framework. Thus, the research conclusions presented in this thesis were reached from my subjective standpoint. This is an implication of the realist assumption that there is no possibility of attaining a single, 'correct' understanding of the world, independent of any particular viewpoint (Maxwell 2012). A consequence of such epistemological assumptions is an acceptance of the possibility of an alternative account of the BA, based on the same or different dataset but made from another theoretical standpoint.

The external generalizability of this research refers to the extent to which the theoretical explanation of processes in the School and the BA, developed in chapters 7 and 8, can be applied to other settings and institutions. Provided that the validity threats to the descriptive, interpretive and explanatory account, considered above, are dismissed and there are no other plausible alternative accounts and explanations, there is no reason why the explanatory theory, developed in this research, cannot be applied in studies of work-based learning, as well as in the broad fields of research in adult learning, Higher Education and vocational education and training.

## 9.3 Contribution to knowledge

The research demonstrates methodological and analytical advantages of applying Archer's Morphogenetic Approach and theories of reflexivity and personal development for the investigation of social phenomena both on the level of an institution and on the level of individual actors. Such advantages are demonstrated in comparison with an application of Bourdieu's theory of practice in a particular case when structure and culture of the institution undergo changes and the individuals are progressing in their maturational development. This is a contribution to knowledge in the field of applied sociological studies.

The research develops an explanatory theory of processes at a work-based learning programme and its hosting institution. The theory links the curriculum and educational practices of the programme and work practices of the institution with personal development of student-workers. This is a contribution to knowledge in the fields of studies in education, work-based learning, adult learning, higher education and vocational education and training.

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