



Master Thesis

Alternative to Schooling

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	ii
Abstract in English	iii
Abstract in German	iv
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Personal approach	1
1.2 Theoretical framework of the research	3
1.3 Literature review	5
Chapter Two: Research design	9
2.1 Aim of research and research questions	9
2.2 Sources	11
Chapter Three: Analysis of school system	13
3.1 Ivan Illich and his theoretical approach	13
3.1.1 Ivan Illich on schooling	13
3.1.2 Myths of school	16
3.1.2.1 Necessity	16
3.1.2.2 Learning as a product	16
3.1.2.3 Learning as a product of schooling	17
3.1.2.4 Indoctrination and instruction	18
3.1.2.5 Hidden curriculum	18
3.1.2.6 Learning v/s education	20
3.1.2.7 School as an instrument of influence and control	20
3.1.2.8 Discrimination	21
3.1.2.9 Counterproductivity	22
3.2 Hartmut von Hentig and his theoretical approach	23
3.2.1 Hartmut von Hentig's educational philosophy	23
3.2.2 Need for alternatives	25
3.2.3 Characteristics of school	26
3.2.3.1 Curriculum	26

3.2.3.2 Instruction	27
3.2.3.3 Role of adults	28
3.2.3.4 School as a polity [Schule als Polis]	29
Chapter four: Alternatives to school and their applicability	
4.1 Alternative schools and alternatives to school	30
4.1.1 Short overview of some alternative schools	31
4.2 Replacing the school	32
4.2.1 Alternative to school – learning webs	34
4.2.1.1 Characteristics of the new education system	35
4.2.1.2 The four learning networks	35
4.2.2 CIDOC as a learning experience	38
4.2.2.1 Structure of CIDOC	39
4.2.2.2 Aim of CIDOC	40
4.2.3 Achieving disestablishment of school	40
4.3 The Illichistas	41
4.3.1 CIDECI, Chiapas, Mexico	42
4.3.1.1 Working of CIDECI	42
4.3.1.2 Objectives of CIDECI	43
4.3.2 Uni Tierra, Oaxaca, Mexico	43
4.3.2.1 Gustavo Esteva: on Illich’s footsteps	44
4.3.2.2 Learning in UniTierra	45
4.3.2.3 Aim of Uni Tierra	46
4.4. Deschooling the school	46
4.4.1 Characteristics of a deschooled school	47
4.4.2 The Bielefeld Laboratory School: the deschooled school in practice	49
4.4.2.1 Learning principles and objectives of the laboratory school	49
4.4.2.2 Working of the laboratory school	52
4.4.2.3 The different learning levels	53
4.4.2.4 Outcomes of the laboratory school	55
Chapter Five: Conclusion	57
5.1 Illich and Hentig’s approaches: some similarities, some differences	57
5.2 Analysis of the alternatives	58

Bibliography

Curriculum Vitae

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Abstract [English]

The school as an institution has been always considered one of the central, inherent, innate pillars of the society. Since the foundation of this institution, it has been discussed over and over again to make it better and more efficient. But the 1968 students' movement and other revolutionary movements across the world around the 1970s doubted strongly the authority, monopoly and purpose of the school and schooling for the first time.

This research focuses on the analysis of the school by two thinkers Ivan Illich and Hartmut von Hentig who challenged the popular belief, the myth that education is the outcome of compulsory schooling. Both these thinkers were convinced that the school in contrast to its goal of overall development of the children was in fact causing harm to the society at large. Thus the school had to be 'deschooled' and alternatives to school needed to be planned. After a thorough analysis of the school, both Illich and Hentig came up with their own approaches that explain their respective alternatives. Although Illich and Hentig had some points of criticism in common, they did not agree upon a similar alternative. Illich, the anarchist proposed in a radical manner replacement of the school while the progressive educationalist Hentig opted for the start over of the school.

The outcome of the study shows that both the alternative ways to learn suggested by Illich and by Hentig respectively have been successful to a limited extent only. In case of Illich or the Illichistas the focus is on adults or indigenous youngsters in Mexico. Hentig's laboratory school on the other hand still retains a few typical characteristics of school and thus remains as a balance between the conventional school and no-school at all. The research concludes that one can get away from the dependency on schooling only if the society at large realizes and acknowledges the failure of the institutionalized school and also wishes to resolve that failure. The conclusion leads to the further scope for research in this field and encourages for a comparative study of efforts to educate various tribes, comparison of alternatives to school in different nations etc.

Abstract [German]

Die Schule wird als eine der zentralen, inhärenten Säulen der Gesellschaft betrachtet. Seit ihrer Entstehung als eine Institution hat man über die Schule immer wieder erneut diskutiert, um sie dadurch zu verbessern. Die 1968er Studentenbewegung und die anderen revolutionären Bewegungen in verschiedenen teilen der Welt um die 1970, bestritten zum ersten Mal die Autorität, das Monopol und die Ziele der Schule.

Diese Arbeit richtet sich auf die Analyse der Institution – Schule aus der Perspektive der sozialkritischen Denker Ivan Illich und Hartmut von Hentig, die den populären Mythos, dass allgemeine Schulpflicht Wissen produziert, infrage stellten. Die beiden Denker waren davon überzeugt, dass die Schule, im Gegensatz zu ihrem Ziel der Gesamtbildung der Kinder, sich auf ihre Entwicklung und Erziehung nachteilig auswirkte und die Gesellschaft allgemein gefährdete. Die Schule musste aus diesem Grund ‘entschult’ werden und Alternativen zur Schule mussten ausgearbeitet werden. Nach einer gründlichen Analyse der Schule stellten Illich und Hentig ihre eigene theoretischen Auffassungen auf und erklärten dadurch ihre vorgeschlagenen Alternativen. Obwohl die beiden Denker bei der Analyse des Schulsystems in einigen Punkten übereinstimmten, stehen ihre vorgeschlagenen Alternativen im Gegensatz zu einander. Der Anarchist Illich bevorzugte den radikalen Weg der Abschaffung der Schule und der Progressive Hentig dagegen entschied sich für den Neubeginn der Schule.

Die Analyse der Alternativen zeigt, dass diese Alternativen nur einen begrenzten Erfolg genießen. Illich und die Illichistas engagieren sich hauptsächlich für die [Aus-] Bildung der Erwachsenen oder der eingeborenen Jugendlichen in Mexico und Hentigs Laborschule bewahrt einige typischen Merkmale der Schule noch und dient als einen Ausweg zur Pflichtschule oder zum Schulersatz. Aus der ganzen Studie ist zu folgern, dass die Vollmacht der Schule und das Abhängigsein von Schule ist erst dann zu überwinden, wenn die Gesellschaft das Versagen der institutionalisierten Schule erkennt und diese auch abschaffen will. Das Ergebnis der Studie führt zur weiteren Forschung in diesem Bereich und empfiehlt unter anderem eine komparative Analyse der Versuche, die Eingeborenen oder verschiedene Volksstämme [aus] zu bilden oder eine vergleichende Studie unterschiedlicher Alternativen zur Schule in mehreren Nationen.

1 Introduction

After the family, school is the first institution, where a child meets other individuals, is confronted with various matters, situations and problems and is taught to observe, analyse, understand, solve or master these situations, circumstances. In the school a child learns about rules and regulations, rights, duties and responsibilities. In short the school tells an individual the do's and don'ts of life and prepares him or her to be a good citizen, a good professional. Thus, the school is one of the fundamental institutions of a society and is considered to be the only popular source to gain education.

The school as an institution, which is today more than two centuries old, has been analyzed often. Around 1970s in many parts of the world some revolutionary movements took place. Among these movements was the students' movement of 1968 which across the world questioned each and every institution and spoke against authority. This movement brought into light the need for reform of an important institution, namely the education system. Many thinkers focused on the analysis of the basic, foremost educational institution: the school and challenged the monopoly of the school as the most reliable source to get 'educated.'

Margaret Mead, a re-known American academic anthropologist resumed this school scenario as follows: "My grandmother wanted me to have an education, so she kept me out of school." ¹ This quote by Mead states explicitly the topic of my thesis which deals with the Alternatives to schooling. The aim of my topic is to analyze the critical approaches of the two thinkers Ivan Illich, a speculative thinker but not an educational critic [Pädagog] on one hand and on the other hand that of Hartmut von Hentig, an educational philosopher and educator, on the school system around 1970 and to study the alternatives they proposed to the conventional school.

1.1 Personal approach

During the first semester at the University of Vienna, I had the opportunity to take part in the seminar called 'Education and Revolution in 1968.' As coursework of this seminar, I visited the Library of the Latin American Institute and found there some

¹ Reimer, Everett: 'School is dead', in <http://ebooks.du.ac.in/edu-resources/Resources/books/dead.pdf>, p.3

articles and draft of the book 'Deschooling Society' in two of the CIDOC [Centro Intercultural de Documentación] Cuadernos.² This led to reading of the work 'Deschooling Society' and also to another related book by Illich 'Schulen helfen nicht'. Both the books at first seemed to suggest that schools are hindering development of individuals and need to be abolished. This was a shocking statement and forced me to go deeper in the topic. And as I was dealing with Illich's 'Deschooling Society', my attention was caught by the concept 'deschooling the school' by Hartmut von Hentig. I wanted to know, how similar these two approaches were and decided then to venture into Hentig's theory as well.

Schools and education is a topic on which all have to say something as they all have been directly or indirectly a part of the education system. I have also always questioned my own schooling experience and asked myself what has the schooling gave me and how has it influenced or changed my life.

What is the value of making schooling compulsory to all people? Many people perceive their right to learn as an obligation. The state forces its citizens to go to school and thus people seem to believe that in order to learn they must go to school. Everywhere parents are concerned about their children's schooling. They want to send their children to the best available school. For most parents a good school has following characteristics:³

- A school where children's intelligence, learning abilities, interests are tested and encouraged
- A school having good teachers and a certified curriculum
- A school which has a good reputation, where the number of drop outs and failed pupils is the least
- A school having modern tools and equipments to assist teachers in teaching

² Illich's drafts of 'Deschooling Society' first appeared in the compiled edition [known as Cuaderno] Nr. 75 and 77, published by the CIDOC.

³ These characteristics are summed up after a discussion the researcher had with some friends who are parents between the age group of 30-40years.

- A school that also provides certain extra-curricular activities and contributes to an individual's overall personal growth

Do schools in reality have all these characteristics? Do schools achieve these aims? What is to be understood as good teachers and a certified curriculum? Is education outside schools possible and practical? These questions come to my mind often especially when I see people around me worried about their children's schooling even before the children are born. In India even to get into the Kindergarten is not an easy task. The little kids as well as their parents are examined and interviewed and both have to prepare for these tasks. At the tender age of three or four years a child is thrown into the education system which is supposed to teach him or her everything needed in life.

The parents, teachers and even some educators are slowly realizing that the mainstream schooling that comprises of teaching the National Curriculum, the emphasis on testing and grading, compulsory attendance and learning in a classroom having a large number of children, is preventing the children from growing in a healthy, natural way and develop their personality. Therefore a growing number of parents as well as teachers are looking for new, alternative ways to educate children; the ways that will inspire and involve each and every child. Illich and Hartmut von Hentig both doubted the viability of the school system more than thirty-five years ago. What was the situation then, around the 1970s?

1.2 Theoretical framework of the research

Ivan Illich, the radical political and social thinker in the second half of the twentieth century wrote a book titled 'Deschooling Society' [1970] where he scrutinized and criticized the institutional structures of industrialized society, especially targeting the schools and proposed disestablishment of the school as an institution in order to bring change in the society.

After having spent four weeks at CIDOC in Cuernavaca, Mexico, discussing the school and education system with Illich, Hartmut von Hentig regarded as one of the most influential educational philosophers in post-1945 Germany thought again of the important

question about reform of school OR alternative to school OR reform of the society.⁴ Hentig did not agree with Illich, who had proposed the disestablishment of schools. He rather suggested deschooling of the 'ready made institution - school'⁵ in his book 'Cuernavaca ODER Alternative zur Schule?' [1971] which was a criticism of Illich's work 'Deschooling Society'.

These two books by Illich and Hentig respectively make up the primary source for my research. Although these books were published in the 1970s and deal with the contemporary school system, the role and validity of school had been in discussion even before that. Already in the 1960s both Illich and Hentig had already started studying the school system. Illich opened CIDOC in 1960 and was very much engaged with the analysis of schools. Hentig became professor of education in 1963 and soon after that he started to plan his alternative school. The timeframe for this research therefore starts from the 1960s. The time span focuses mainly on the two decades 1960 and 1970. But it is not restricted to these two decades. In order to have an overview of some alternative, innovative schools which preceded Illich's and Hentig's alternatives to school and also to find out how the alternatives to school recommended by Illich and Hentig look like today, references will be made to time period before 1960 as well as post 1970s. Another reason to keep the timeframe open is to make the topic relevant to the present time.

The spatial framework is difficult to specify. Illich and Hentig both refer basically to North American and German school system. But Illich is also concerned about the Latin American schools and often gives examples from the countries in Latin America. Another problem is that Illich often talks of in terms of developed or privileged communities. This could be understood as a generalization. But as mentioned earlier the direct references made in both the primary texts are either about the West [USA and Germany] or Latin America.

The main method for research on Illich and Hentig's theoretical approach would be text analysis in a descriptive manner. It is very important to see what Illich meant by deschooling society, what were his major points of criticism against the school and what

⁴ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Cuernavaca ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.11

⁵ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Deschooling the school', in Lister, Ian: 'Deschooling. A Reader' [Cambridge, 1974] p. 36

alternative did he propose as opposed to the school. The book by Hentig will serve as primary as well as secondary source. It analyses Illich's criticism on school system and criticizes his suggested alternative. This work also states Hentig's own ideas of an alternative, his assumptions and axiomatic propositions about the alternative to school and also the objectives of 'deschooled school' as he calls his theoretical approach. After having done the text analysis, the two approaches and the alternatives will be compared.

1.3 Literature review

Apart from the primary literature, to broaden my outlook I have been engaged with different types of secondary literature. The secondary sources for my topic include newspaper articles, interviews, book reviews and even a Ph.D. dissertation. Finding material on Ivan Illich and his deschooling theory was not at all difficult. The only problem was to get recent literature dealing with Illich's theory and proposed alternative. As I am looking at the alternatives to school from perspective of Hartmut von Hentig along with Illich, it was also important to read criticism of Hentig's theoretical approach. But in this case, I was very disappointed. I was not able to find articles that analyse Hentig's idea of alternative to school. To give an idea of the sources that I have referred to, I have chosen to present review of seven articles.

Robert Polk Thomson's review of Illich's 'Deschooling Society' discusses to what extent Illich has contributed to the problematic of education system. Thomson wants the reader to note that they should not consider Illich's ideas about education out of the context of the social order that he envisions and should keep in mind that the central object of criticism for Illich is the society and not the school. The review points out clearly what disturbed Illich the most: the fact that the harm causing, counterproductive schools still enjoyed success and reputation and nobody questioned their existence, objectives. "Illich does not propose that schools be abolished because they have failed. He thinks they succeed extremely well in the work of perpetuating a technocratic, bureaucratic society."⁶ Thomson finds that though Illich succeeds in convincing the problematic of the school but his idea of the alternative is utopian, especially because at

⁶ Polk Thomson, Robert: 'Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich' in: Peabody Journal of Education, Vol.50, No.2 [Jan., 1973] p.164

the end of his book, Illich provides mythological models suggesting that “man is capable of improving on the functioning of the institutions he creates to serve him.”⁷

Howard S. Becker’s article titled ‘The School Myth’, published in Ian Lister’s reader ‘Deschooling’ deals with the phenomenon of institutionalisation in general. It supports Illich’s view of school producing the myth that to learn something people must go to school and learn from the teacher whatever they need to know. Becker further writes, what Illich has also implied, that schools are the problem and not the solution. The educationalists do agree that the school has some drawbacks but they do not see those as being created, caused by the school system itself. Therefore the need to replace or reform school is not felt.

Ruth Latta’s article ‘The Critics of Schooling’ was quite useful to gain an overview of the analysis and criticism of the education system in North America. The article reviews some of the works published in the 1960s and 70s. Amongst these are following: ‘Deschooling Society’, ‘The Failure of the Education System in Canada’, ‘Crisis in the Classroom’, ‘Freedom to Learn’, ‘The Night is Dark and I am Far from Home’. In short the article discusses positions of some reformers, progressive educationalists and anarchists. The author also illustrates the discussion on the theoretical approaches of these thinkers. For example the author first reviews Illich’s book *Deschooling Society* and then presents the analysis of it by John Goodlad.

Lee Hoinacki’s text ‘Reading Ivan Illich’ is in fact an introductory article of the book titled ‘The Challenges of Ivan Illich - A Collective Reflection’. Reading of this article was beneficial as it explains how to understand Illich’s statements in the best way. Illich has been often misunderstood or wrongly interpreted. This happens mainly because people get attracted by Illich’s provocative language and radical thoughts and then they do not go deeper into his thoughts. This article recommends that to understand Illich’s works, it is necessary first to understand Illich as a person and to keep in mind that all of his works are closely related. All of his works basically deal with following key topics: ritualisation, industrialisation, productivity, and institutionalisation.

⁷ Polk Thomson, Robert: ‘Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich’ in: *Peabody Journal of Education*, Vol.50, No.2 [Jan., 1973] p.164

Edith Kohn's Ph.D. dissertation 'Versuch, sich dem Werk Ivan Illichs aus verschiedenen Perspektiven zu nähern. Ein Beitrag zur pädagogischen Ideen- und Wirkungsgeschichte einer radikalen Gesellschaftskritik', helped me to get to know more about Illich's personality, his theory of deschooling, as well as the reception of deschooling in the USA, Germany, UK. Edith Kohn also compares Illich with Everett Reimer. The dissertation does not approve Illich's radical idea of disestablishing the school and doubts the alternative to school that Illich proposes.

Martina Kaller-Dietrich's contribution in the *Enzyklopädie des Wiener Wissens* titled 'Ivan Illich [1926-2002] Sein Leben, Sein Denken' is the most recent source I got to read and it proved to be of great help. Until I got to read this portrait, I was convinced that Illich and his theory of deschooling are not being discussed anymore by the intellectuals when it comes to the education system. The portrait describes Illich as a person as well as a speculative thinker. It also illustrates Illich's confrontation with the church, how he became a deschooler, working of CIDOC, the institution he founded in Mexico and the atmosphere at CIDOC, his popularity with the theory of deschooling and most importantly it explains why Illich's thoughts are even today not outdated.

The reason why I can not help mentioning Hartmut von Hentig's 'Cuernavaca ODER Alternative zur Schule?' in this section is that although Hentig's book is in fact the primary source for my topic it is at the same time analysis of Illich's deschooling theory. As the title of the book already reveals, Hentig doubts Illich's Deschooling Society as an alternative. Hentig's main criticism against Illich is that, Illich always inevitably connects everything [in this case, schools] with capitalism and productivity.

As mentioned earlier, it was very difficult to find secondary literature on Hentig which analyses his reformatory approach of 'deschooling the school.' For this reason I have relied on the second part of Hentig's autobiography titled 'Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus.' In this second part he explains how he became an educationalist, what were his ideas of an alternative school and how did he manage to implement those ideas in practice. I found the section where he describes his experience with his young nephew very useful. This part shows that for Hentig a child's happiness, willingness, overall interest, imagination were very important in order that he/she learns

on his/her own. Hentig illustrates how his nephew was happy to be in the nature and to learn through experience. Hentig's experience from his own schooling period in Germany and USA also helped him while planning the structure and objectives of his alternative school.

Martin Spiwak's article 'Das Lernen lernen' is a recent article, published in May 2008, in the online version of the German newspaper 'Die Zeit'. It helped me to look at Hentig's project of alternative to school from a third person's perspective. The article on the Laboratory School, Bielefeld describes the characteristics of the laboratory school, its ways of functioning and the pedagogical principles it follows. It also describes the experiences of the present and the past students of the school about the learning process in the school. Reading of this article also helped me to compare the laboratory school with other German schools as the article gives information about the German school system in general.

2 Research Design

This chapter states how the whole research has been done and how the thesis has been structured. It will also give an overview of the research done on this same topic earlier and try to relate this research with it.

2.1 Aim of research and research questions

“Many schools are like little islands set apart from the mainland of life by a deep Moat of convention and tradition. . . . Why do . . . young people go over to the Island? They go there in order to learn how to live on the mainland. When they reach the island they are provided with a supply of excellent books that tell about life on the mainland. They read these books diligently, even memorizing parts of them. Then they take examinations on them.”⁸ Schools and the education system in general have been the objective of criticism since their birth. As the school is one of the basic institutions of the society and the most common source to acquire knowledge, information, skills, the society is always concerned about smooth functioning of the school. The modern society is so much dependent on the schools that it can never consider having to function without them. If the school as part of the education system is so indispensable, the school must be able to justify its existence. Should the schools survive even if they are found to be counter productive? The aim of the research topic is first to discuss the implicit and explicit aims and functions of a school and how far has the school been able to achieve these. As the title of the research shows, it does not complete at analysing the schools but goes further, in fact focuses on the alternatives to schools. This means that the research takes the position that there is a need for alternatives.

There has been lot of research done on the topic of alternative schools and school reform. Alternative schools are mostly considered as alternatives to traditional, compulsory school. The alternative school differs from the normal school in the way it is planned. The major points of criticism on a school have been: compulsory attendance,

⁸ Carr, William: ‘An Island Apart’, in Myers, Douglas [Ed.] ‘The Failure of Educational Reform in Canada’ [Toronto, 1973] p. 95. Coated from Latta, Ruth: ‘The critics of schooling’, in Canadian Journal of Education, Vol.14, No. 4 [Autumn, 1989] p.482

hidden curriculum, instruction, knowledge production. The alternative schools work on the principles that oppose these objections.

My topic is concerned with the alternatives to school proposed by the two thinkers Illich and Hentig. But to have an idea about the alternatives in general I have also looked for information on some schools, centres, institutions in which individuals could learn in an alternative way. These alternatives range from the ‘Waldorf-School’, Alexander S. Neil’s ‘Summerhill’ up to the Centre for Indigenous People in Chiapas, Mexico, started in 1989.⁹ It is relevant and important too, to see the initiatives taken by others and then to see Illich and Hentig’s contribution to the field of alternatives to schooling. To look into the efforts and approaches by others also enabled me to know people whose theories, viewpoints had an impact on these two thinkers and also whom these thinkers influenced by their ideas.

The findings of this short research on alternatives showed that Illich and his notion of deschooling caught attention of people from all over the world instantly. Illich’s book ‘Deschooling Society’ gained immense popularity and was translated instantly in many languages. It was also in the lime light of discussion. It remained one of the most popular objects of discussion amongst educators and social thinkers during the 1970s. For example in 1974 a reader titled ‘Deschooling’ was edited by Ian Lister in which authors like Paulo Freire, Herbert Gintis, Paul Goodman, Hartmut von Hentig, John Holt, Jurgen Zimmer shared their opinions on the problematic of school and whether replacing the school is the right choice. Illich’s idea to deinstitutionalise the well established school and create learning communities seemed at first glance the best solution to the problematic of school. Illich’s position was similar to that of an anarchist, suggesting life without school. Hentig’s philosophy on the other hand followed the path of progressive reformers and he believed in starting up all over again with the school.

The interest of the researcher thus lies in to find out how these two contemporary thinkers deal with the same problem, what connects these two and to see where their ways separate from each other. The further section of the research includes the theoretical and practical dimension of the alternatives. The conclusion will show the results of the

⁹ These alternatives will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

research done and will also illustrate the achievement of the alternatives stated by Illich and Hentig respectively.

2.2 Sources

As mentioned earlier, this research has its roots in the seminar the researcher attended at the University. During this seminar on 'Education and Revolution in 1968' the researcher got to know in detail about the various discussions on school system in developed and developing countries [in Latin America].

The first useful source for the research topic was the Library of the Latin American Institute in Vienna. There I got information on Illich's deschooling, on his CIDOC and also found reviews and criticism on 'Deschooling Society' in this library. To understand Illich's views on school system, it was also necessary to read his other articles on school and the book 'Schulen helfen nicht'. In order to have a general idea about Illich's theoretical base, the researcher also referred to Illich's other works like 'Celebration of Awareness' and 'Tools for Conviviality'. Other secondary sources include Illich's articles on deschooling and alternatives in the CIDOC Cuadernos [No. 75 and 77 in particular], reviews of the work 'Deschooling Society' and Ian Listers reader 'Deschooling', an important reference is Everett Reimer's book 'School is dead' which shares many of Illich's standpoints. Finding these sources was not difficult. Internet was the main source to find reviews on Deschooling Society. Some of the above listed books were also available on internet. The only constraint for me at this point was to find recent articles dealing with deschooling, to see how today Illich's ideas are perceived. It was therefore very difficult to find out whether deschooling has any impact, any relevance today.

In case of Hartmut von Hentig's theory, I felt disappointed as I did not come across analysis of Hentig's approach on alternative to school. The reason behind non-availability of articles dealing with Hentig's viewpoints could be that Hentig's theory is not new. He is influenced intensively by John Dewey and the progressive education and his own theory is a modification of this school of thought. To gain an insight in Hentig's theory, I have mainly relied on his various books on schooling that were easily accessible in the library for education of the University of Vienna, like 'Die Schule im Regelkreis.

Ein neues Modell für die Probleme der Erziehung und Bildung', 'Die Schule neu denken. Eine Übung in pädagogischer Vernunft' and also on the second part of his autobiography that explains his career as an educator. To find about the Laboratory School, Hentig started in Bielefeld, Germany, Hentig's own report on the laboratory school as well as some online articles were studied. The internet proved to be a helpful source to gain recent information. Hentig's interviews in the German newspaper 'Die Zeit' reveal information on his ideas about the school system at large and about his own position as a reformer.

3 Analysis of school system

This chapter discusses the school as an institution from the perspective of Ivan Illich and Hartmut von Hentig and why both these thinkers are against the school. In the first part Ivan Illich's viewpoint will be discussed and the second part of the chapter will deal with Hentig's criticism of the school.

3.1 Ivan Illich and his theoretical approach

Ivan Illich, 1926-2002:

Ivan Illich was born in Vienna, Austria in 1926 to a Croatian father and a Jewish mother. He grew up in Europe where he studied history, philosophy and theology. After finishing his PhD, he went to New York in 1951 and began to work there as a priest in a Puerto Rican neighborhood. At a young age of thirty years, in 1956 he became the Vice-rector of the Catholic University at Ponce in Puerto Rico.

While working in Puerto Rico in the field of education as well as later in Mexico as a founder and director of the institute CIDOC, in 1960, he concentrated on the issue of compulsory mass education and criticised the formal schooling heavily. But his main concern remained the institutionalisation and generalization of concepts like progress, development, democracy, justice and the effect of these institutionalised concepts and beliefs. During his life at CIDOC he published his most widely read books: 'Deschooling Society' [1971], 'Tools for Conviviality' [1973] and 'Medical Nemesis' [1976].

1980s onwards Illich travelled extensively, dividing his time between North America, Mexico and Germany. He delivered lectures at different universities, took part in seminars and workshops on various issues like practice and use of medicine and health care, energy use, industrialisation, education.

3.1.1 Ivan Illich on schooling

Although Illich himself was a bright, good student, received good grades and had the normal, conventional schooling, he is still against the conventional schooling. In his

interview with David Cayley, he says “I never took school seriously. Practically everything I learned occurred outside of school [...]”¹⁰

Whenever we talk about Illich we have to always consider the fact that he is neither an educator nor did he ever want to become one. He is a speculative thinker, not an empirical researcher whose object of thought was the society. Illich is a socially concerned and an analytical human being who himself had experienced the effects of a profound dependent relationship between the industrialized, developed and over privileged North and the exploited, developing Latin American countries. Illich started to deal with the problematic nature of compulsory schooling while he was actually part of the education system. He was administrator in both an adult education program and at the University of Puerto Rico. The general opinion of educationalists in the then contemporary Puerto Rico was to increase the compulsory school. Illich doubted the apparent discrepancies between objectives, intentions and promises of schooling and its actual outcomes. Illich therefore began to search for ways to overcome these obsolete, discriminating social and economic systems that divide the world into the highly industrialized and the so called poor or developing societies which hinder human integration by alienating them from one another.

Illich's theoretical approach could be understood as that of radical humanism.¹¹ Radical humanism proposes questioning everything, especially the ideological concepts, theoretical assumptions or institutions that are usually being taken for granted and understood as common sense or natural and therefore self explanatory and self evident. The objective of doubting the existence or nature of these elements is not necessarily to negate or discard them but to unfold or discover, to perceive a thing consciously by liberating oneself from preconceived notions and becoming imaginative, creative.

Illich's main concern was the social discrepancies and the institutionalization of everything including the social values produced as a result of industrialization. His object of criticism was the institutionalized industrial society where individuals were

¹⁰ Kohn, Edith: 'Versuch, sich dem Werk Ivan Illichs aus verschiedenen Perspektiven zu nähern. Ein Beitrag zur pädagogischen Ideen- und Wirkungsgeschichte einer radikalen Gesellschaftskritik' [Uni. Zu Frankfurt a. Main, 2006] p. 34

¹¹ Illich, Ivan: 'Celebration of Awareness. A call for institutional revolution' [London, 1972] p.7

conditioned toward passive, material, consumerist behaviour. In such societies people thought that increased consumption made them happier and therefore their aim of life should be having or gaining instead of using or being. Another common belief in industrialized societies was that newer and modern was always better than the older and that the industrialization is indispensable for the progress of mankind. Illich wanted people to question these premises.

In 'Deschooling Society', Illich has chosen to use the school as an example of one of the basic institutions of a society to illustrate his theory of deschooling. The object of his thought is as mentioned above the human society, not the instruction of the school per se. Therefore it would not be appropriate to consider Illich's ideas about education out of the context of the social order he envisions. Schools claim a monopoly on the power to educate and by accepting this illusion; the poor are consented to their own capabilities for self-learning. Illich wants to create a society in which people will not give in their own, individually inherent powers to institutions. The school guarantees survival of various institutions, systems and ideologies in a society, makes the life to some extent predictable and monotonous. "[...] school is not, by any means, the only modern institution which has as its primary purpose the shaping of man's vision of reality [...] But the school enslaves more profoundly and more systematically, since only school is credited with the principal function of forming critical judgment and, paradoxically, tries to do so by making learning about oneself, about others, and about nature depend on a pre-packaged process."¹² Schools prepare children to lead a mechanical life in a society where better performance and consumption regulate the routine. In this way school is the representative and an expression of the above mentioned materialistic society. Therefore for Illich it is important to disestablish the school in order to bring change in the society. Illich defines school as "an institution which is age-specific, teacher related, requires compulsory attendance and has a fixed curriculum".¹³ And by deschooling he means, secularization of teaching and learning, learning that is creative, exploratory, and

¹² Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling Society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.28

¹³ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling Society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.16

convivial and contributes to personal growth of an individual. Therefore deschooling for Illich means, deinstitutionalization.

3.1.2 Myths of school

The following segment describes and illustrates the drawbacks of school from Illich's perspective.

3.1.2.1 Necessity

Every country tends to be proud of its 'good' schools and the 'good' people it has shaped or produced and at the same time every country is also embarrassed by the 'bad' schools that exist and want to either get rid of these bad schools or improve them as soon as possible. All over the world schooling has the prime priority. Schooling is considered as indispensable especially to be member of any managerial middle class.¹⁴ Schools are not to be understood as synonymous to all formal education but more in the sense of a form of child care. Comprehensive schooling comprises of compulsory classroom attendance in small or big groups which is imposed on citizens over a certain period of life. This time spent in school is supposed to educate, teach children all the necessary things required to adapt in the society.

3.1.2.2 Education as a product

Industrialization has made us believe that results are products of specialized institutions and instruments and so education is wrongly believed to be the product of schooling and schools are taken for granted as life without school is absolutely unimaginable. In fact school is wrongly identified with education and education without or outside school is perceived as superficial and unaccredited. The education gained in the school is measurable; degrees and certificates received in the education system determine the market value of this product.¹⁵

Every nation invests a lot of money into the education system. Puerto Rico for example invested around 30% of its governmental budget that is, around 6-7% of its GDP

¹⁴ Illich, Ivan: Celebration of Awareness. A call for institutional revolution [London, 1972] p.109

¹⁵ Illich, Ivan. Schulen helfen nicht – Über das mythenbildende Ritual der Industriegesellschaft. [Rowohlt. 1972] p.13

into its education system.¹⁶ This shows that the issue of education and schooling is considered to be an important one by the government and the government has taken this issue seriously. The government seems to be worried about schooling of its citizens and wants to 'educate' as many citizens as possible by making schooling compulsory. This means that Puerto Ricans feel educated only after they have spent the required number of years in school. Thus it can be said that Puerto Ricans are schooled but not necessarily educated.¹⁷

The school has in fact become the real sacred cow in Puerto Rico.¹⁸ Everyone takes is for granted. It has taken over the functions and responsibilities that once the church had. Even the role and image of the teachers could be compared to that of the priests once preaching the religion. The teachers are well respected and their ideologies are accepted without doubt like the preaching of a priest.

3.1.2.3 Learning as a product of schooling

People learn that their market value is greater if they invest more time in schooling and education. They learn that whatever a major institution produces has value, even invisible things such as education or health. They learn to value grade advancement, passive submission. For them following a curricular life, being a good, obedient student is like a ladder towards respect and success in professional and social life. People see that the degrees and certificates authenticate their abilities, competencies and knowledge to a great extent and in turn they accept their place in society in the class and career corresponding to the years they have spent in education and to the field of their academic specialization. Education becomes necessary not only to grade people for jobs but to upgrade them for consumption too.¹⁹

¹⁶ Illich, Ivan: 'Celebration of Awareness. A call for institutional revolution' [London, 1972] p.124

¹⁷ Illich, Ivan: 'Schulen helfen nicht – Über das mythenbildende Ritual der Industriegesellschaft' [Rowohlt, 1972] p.13

¹⁸ Illich, Ivan: 'Celebration of Awareness. A call for institutional revolution' [London, 1972] p.126

¹⁹ Smith, M. K: 'Ivan Illich: deschooling, conviviality and the possibilities for informal education and lifelong learning', in: <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-illic.htm>

Illich criticizes the school as an institution extensively and points out various negative aspects of it. He wants to make people aware of the dangers of the schooling and the damages the school is causing to their physical, mental and social health.

3.1.2.4 Indoctrination and instruction

Schools propagate values; the most basic and common 'value' being – being taught what is good and bad.²⁰ “The man addicted to being taught seeks his security in compulsive teaching.”²¹ The children learn to depend on others and expect and take it for granted that they are always taught, instructed and guided. The ability to learn by one-self is considered unreliable, experimenting, method of trial and error unfortunately cease to exist. The children learn to accept these values and also understand its worth in order to get along the system.

The learning in school is thus very passive. Children are not supposed to question whatever their teachers teach them. Children are introduced only to those concepts, ideologies which their teachers believe in. This way the children can not explore and develop their own interests and form their own judgments. Their minds are shaped, formed according to their teachers' moral, cultural values and political, economic, social and historical ideas and convictions. These teachers represent the society into which the children should later fit without any problems and are expected to contribute. This is one of the major criticisms Illich poses against the school as a system. School forces us not to use our own brains, imagination, experiences and feelings, in short our potentials to its full extent to understand something. It makes us believe to be like others, to follow the stream and be part of the mass and thus hinders the growth of a human being.

3.1.2.5 Hidden curriculum

The problem of indoctrination is closely connected with that of hidden curriculum. These two elements strengthen a human being's belief in the system or institutionalization. Illich argued around one key notion - the ritual that “unerringly reveals the frightening power of the world's most ambitious and prestigious institutions

²⁰ Reimer, Everett. School is dead. <http://ebooks.du.ac.in/edu-resources/Resources/books/dead.pdf>, p.20

²¹ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling Society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.24

to seduce the ‘favoured’ who participate in those institutions. In a disenchanted world, people above all hunger for the reassuring order, the drama, the magic enclosure, the alembic of a ritual.’’²² The manifest curriculum consists of what students are openly taught, such as academic subjects or non-academic skills or ideology. It refers to a course of study, often in a particular field when describing a set of lessons within a specific class or grade level.²³ Hidden curriculum has always had a negative connotation but is difficult to define explicitly because it varies among its students and their experiences and because it is constantly changing as the knowledge and beliefs of a society evolve. But in contrast to manifest curriculum the hidden curriculum is essentially the opposite, what students are, either intentionally or unintentionally, actually taught without their realizing it.

It does not matter whether the school is in a poor or a rich country or in a democratic or in an authoritarian regime, whether the school follows conventional or non-traditional methods of instruction, it always has one common factor: it teaches the same things, it has a hidden curricula. “Modern institutions may vary in their design, methods of instruction or in the way of administration but they all inevitably lead to some kind of slavery.’’²⁴

Illich believed that “The hidden curriculum teaches all that economically valuable knowledge is the result of professional teaching and that social entitlements depend on the rank achieved in a bureaucratic process. The hidden curriculum transforms the explicit curriculum into a commodity and makes its acquisition the most secure path to wealth and the key to power and privilege.”²⁵ Through this hidden curriculum the school as an institution is considerably successful in forcing its pupils to disguise their original self and shaping individuals for particular roles that they need to take up in the society. Compulsory school attendance does not necessarily mean more knowledge and schooling and higher education also do not imply higher posts, more money and more authority. In fact in many cases obligatory attendance reduces the interest span and will to learn.

²² Hoinacki, Lee and Mitchmam, Carl [Ed.]: The Challenges Of Ivan Illich. A Collective Reflection. [2002, New York] p. 4

²³ As defined in: <http://www.autismnetwork.org/modules/social/hidden/index.html>

²⁴ Hoinacki, Lee and Mitchmam, Carl [Ed.]: The Challenges Of Ivan Illich. A Collective Reflection. [2002, New York] p.5

²⁵ Zype, Hank: ‘Iavn Illich 1926-2002 - brilliant critic of western institutions’, in: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0MKY/is_9_27/ai_108881858

Learners should not be forced to commit to an obligatory curriculum. Anything that is imposed or forced, creates a burden and it is done without pleasure and interest. Such obligatory learning is not long lasting, brings hardly anything to the learner and the learner can not benefit from such learning. In this way the hidden curriculum is the tool by which schools are used as societal control mechanisms. Therefore in order to change the society first it is necessary to alter the school system, giving special attention to the problem of hidden curricula.

3.1.2.6 Learning v/s Education

Illich seems to differentiate between two kinds of learning – one kind is the conventional, traditional learning and the other kind is ‘liberal education’ which can not occur in compulsory schooling. He also distinguishes between education and learning. When talking about education, Illich means skills that are drilled but with supervision and are result of instruction. Learning on the other hand is creative; an individual has to ask constantly various questions while learning.

3.1.2.7 School as an instrument of influence and control

Schools claim to teach skills needed to earn money and respect in modern life. Power and wealth are not everything but many other things depend on them in capitalist countries. And schools promise to buy these other things. Schools serve as mechanisms to distribute values and try to replace other institutions like family, church among others. But obviously this value distribution is unequal and imbalanced, depriving the majority of people of their potentials and opportunities.

In most countries only a minority completes the school. In many cases more than 1/3 of the pupils drop out before the sixth grade and many more at the high school level. And those who finish schooling are often frustrated to see a totally different world outside the school. School also initiates unhealthy competitions where a fast learner is always showered upon with success and praise and failure of any kind leads to punishment, shame, guilt, feelings of inferiority and inability. The idea of ‘learning’ is left far behind and winning becomes most important. In this way school divides its pupils into categories, labels them as good-bad, intelligent-dumb etc. and this creates a sense of

inequality and hierarchy.²⁶ This is where the paradoxical school situation becomes very clear. School on one hand makes the children to get used to the hierarchical order or pattern, but on the other hand boasts of aiming at well integration of its pupils in the future in the society.

3.1.2.8 Discrimination

Schools are believed to be non-discriminating and contributing to the equality and integration in the society. But schools indeed divide pupils for example according to age or their learning abilities. It divides pupils into two groups: one group consists of the bright, intelligent pupils and the other of dull, average children. The bright children are separated from the dull ones and to help the dull children the school arranges for them special syllabus and extra coaching. This makes the 'not so bright' children more and more dependent on the school.

Schools also strengthen the discrepancy between the poor and the rich. The learning methods, devices suggested by the school and educational opportunities in general readily available for the higher and middle class children are not easily accessible or affordable to the poor children.²⁷ The list of these learning opportunities could include expensive books, materials or even field trips. Another point here is that the syllabus mostly comprises of middle class situations. The conversations, the incidents or the language used in the books are very standard and the poor can hardly identify themselves with such language or situations. As a result the poor children generally feel discouraged; they fall behind and lose interest in learning. To be on par with their fellow classmates, the poor children must find financial aid to support their education. At this point the school succeeds in spreading its central myth that schooled children are superior and privileged.

²⁶ Pohl, Heinrich: 'Strategien Regionaler / Bildungs- und Entwicklungsplanung in Lateinamerika – Empirische Konkretisierung am Beispiel der Hochschulplanung für Brasilien [Braunschweig, 1975] p.31

²⁷ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling Society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.5

3.1.2.9 Counter-productivity

Counter-productivity means that a process, situation or event which was suppose to be beneficial, is producing contrary results. In most of his work Illich has discussed the problematic of the phenomenon of counter-productivity, the pursuit of technical processes to the point where their original goals are undermined. Public schooling, first aiming at advanced learning, later became an impediment to real education.²⁸

School aims at developing a child into a self reliant, responsible and self determinant individual who can act consciously on his/her own and is also willing to accept the results of his/her action. But instruction, indoctrination and the curriculum all hinder a child from becoming a 'free' individual. A child is constantly instructed to do something and thus loses self confidence and becomes submissive. "[...] once our institutions developed beyond a certain scale, they became perverse, counterproductive to the beneficial ends for which they were originally conceived. The end result of this paradoxical counter-productivity was schools which make people dumb, complacent and unquestioning [...]"²⁹

The modern education system handicaps a human being by depriving him/her of self-actualization. The transformation of learning into education paralyzes an individual's creativity, his/her power to see the world from his/her own perspective and to give the world a personal meaning. The human being can not grow and enjoy life, if he/she has no contact with the nature, can not relate to his/her own work, or has to follow what others have planned for him/her.

The society decides to build more schools as a solution to the problem of providing education to all. Apart from that it engages more and more experts to fight back the social disparities or to analyze failure of a school. In this way the schooling proves to be supporting professionalism and expertise. "[...], beyond a certain threshold

²⁸ Mitcham, Karl: 'Unexpected Friendship', in:
http://ournature.org/~novembre/illich/remembering_ivan_illich.html

²⁹ Wall, Richard: 'A Turbulent Priset in the Global Village. Ivan Illich, 1926-2002', in:
<http://www.lewrockwell.com/wall/wall28.html>

of institutionalized expertise, more experts are counterproductive - they produce the counter effect of what they set out to achieve.”³⁰

3.2 Hartmut von Hentig and his theoretical approach

Hartmut von Hentig, 1925-

Hartmut von Hentig is considered as one of the most influential educational philosopher of Germany. Hentig was born in 1925 in Poznan, Poland. He grew up and did his schooling in altogether thirteen different schools, in Germany as well as the USA. Later he went on to study in Göttingen and Chicago.

In the beginning he worked as a teacher in the Black Forest and Tübingen. Later in 1963 he became a Professor and Director of the Faculty of Education at the University of Göttingen. In 1968 he moved to the University of Bielefeld, where in 1974 he set up the well-known ‘Laboratory School’. He was also the first principal and director of the laboratory school. In 1987 he retired and since then he has been living in Berlin.

Although Hentig has retired from his post, he is still engaged with the make over of the school. He has published numerous books and articles elaborating his educational philosophy and continues to contribute to the concept of shaping a new, re-formed school.

3.2.1 Hentig’s educational philosophy

Hartmut von Hentig’s own childhood experiences and especially that of his nephew contributed a lot to his understanding of need for learning in a free atmosphere. His nephew was considered since a baby a problematic child by most of the family members and friends because it constantly asked different questions, protested when it was forced to do something and was not behaving like other normal kids of his age. The child was neither mentally retarded nor physically impaired. It had lot of energy and enthusiasm which unfortunately was not being creatively channelled. Hentig and his friend undertook a long trip with the child and during this trip Hentig realized how important it is to have freedom of will and active participation of an individual in the

³⁰ Smith, M. K. [1997, 2004, 2008] ‘Ivan Illich: deschooling, conviviality and the possibilities for informal education and lifelong learning’, in: <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-illic.htm>

process of learning and what a crucial role do experiments and experience play while learning.³¹

There were also other social thinkers whose ideas had an impact on Hentig's own theoretical framework. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's book 'Émile' which describes learning process of an individual outside the school and also his integration into the society, his knowledge about himself and his surroundings etc. influenced Hentig's understanding of terms like education, school, learning. Hentig was also influenced by John Dewey [1859-1952] an American psychologist, philosopher, educator, social critic and political activist and his theory of 'progressive education'. The progressive education movement described ideas and practices that aimed to make schools more effective organizations of a democratic society. Although the style and emphasis among different progressive educators varied to a certain extent, they all believed that active participation by all citizens in social, political and economic decisions that affect their lives, was in fact practicing democracy. Hentig's understanding of progressive educational philosophy was similar to the ideas and attitudes of the 1968 generation but he did not stop at criticizing the institutions radically.

The school as a system was heavily criticized during 1960s and 1970s and many thought of reforming the then existing school system. According to von Hentig following points need to be considered while discussing school reform and OR developing alternatives:³²

Alternatives can not be just looked for in the existing society and then be chosen. They need to be created consciously and with passion and creativity. The understanding of alternative, need for alternative, creativity and willingness to develop alternatives etc. are found in people only if they perceive that the alternatives are connected to their problem and having these alternatives is worth it.

To have alternatives it is first necessary that the society is made aware of what existing system does not provide and also that there do exist different learning networks,

³¹ Hartmut von Hentig: Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus. [München, 2007] p.258-268

³² Hartmut von Hentig 'Deschooling the school' in Lister, Ian: Deschooling. A Reader [Cambridge, 1974] p.37

street schools etc. and the society should learn their proper usage. It also means that a society has to be open for changes. A society which is rigid, un-liberated, does not offer various opportunities can not foster alternatives. To enable reform, the school needs to evaluate its own work, it should be empowered to deal in politics and it should direct its educational tasks and opportunities back to society.

3.2.2 Need for alternatives

Hentig believes that neither perfecting schools nor abolishing them is going to bring about changes in the education system. The more perfect, modern, technical and institutional schools become, more they distance away from the society. The other extreme disestablishment of schools could lead to a disastrous scenario. As no other proper substitute to school will be available, any industry would take up the task of educating children according to its own interest and purpose. This will make education a saleable, consumer product in free market.

The alternative to school also does not mean more money, more and modern tools, and more teachers. Even in the developed countries like USA there is not enough money to provide good education to everyone. And even if more money is invested the problems like drop out rate among other still exist. If developed, rich countries can not afford to have enough schools and teachers how could and why should the developing countries try their best to spend more and more money on schools which separate life from learning, society from school? Alternatives to school should be especially considered by the developing countries.³³

Hentig chooses to remain within the framework of the existing societal and education system to develop an alternative. It is necessary for him to make the best use of the institutions while being part of them. To change or reform an institution is up to the individuals who build it. The individual must learn to assert himself and to use his powers to full extent. According to Hentig a school should have following characteristics:³⁴

³³ Hartmut von Hentig: Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule? [München, 1971] p.51

³⁴ Hentig, Hartmut von: 'Die Schule neu denken. Eine Übung in pädagogischer Vernunft' [Weinheim, Basel, Berlin, 2003], p.186-87

- It is an institution where an individual acquires certain skills and gets certain information that he/she can not get otherwise.
- It is a place where a child is introduced to an artificial, imaginary world that the adults have prepared for him/her to grow up in, without being disturbed and influenced by the harsh, cruel reality of the outside world.
- It is a place where a child is protected either from being attacked by old ideas or being carried away by new ideas.
- It is a place where a child is helped to grow. Apart from family, school also undertakes the responsibility of a child's upbringing and development. It prepares the children to adjust in society, prepares them for challenges in professional, social, cultural, political aspects of life. In short the school prepares them to be fit to live in a world outside the school and after the schooling period is over.

3.2.3 Characteristics of school

Hentig does not list the criteria of school analysis neither does he point out the drawbacks of school as Illich does. Instead he always describes how a school should be or what characteristics an alternative school would have. In his criticism of Illich's 'Deschooling Society' he comments on the drawbacks Illich has listed and points out his own arguments. In the following section some of these arguments are illustrated:

3.2.3.1 Curriculum

The main concern of the school reform has been the curriculum. Schools always have had a fixed curriculum which suits the established orders and structures. Hentig states that "Whatever form the curriculum takes, it must not be regarded as a cassette that only needs to be inserted and played: nor can it be regarded as a 'correct' curriculum because it was produced and examined by scholars."³⁵ Schools need new curricula, new ideas and ways to function which are relevant to the constantly changing surroundings of society.

³⁵ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Deschooling the school in Lister, Ian: Deschooling. A Reader' [Cambridge, 1974] p.37

For Hentig curriculum need not be understood always in a negative way. He defines curriculum as: a thoroughly planned lesson [Unterricht]. It consists not only of subject matter listed in books prescribed in the syllabus, that has to be studied and that a teacher has to discuss and supervise. He explains curriculum as “Ein Curriculum gibt die Voraussetzungen seines Gelingens, die Ziele und seinen Platz im Zusammenhang der Bildung, die Verfahren, Mittel und didaktischen Prinzipien, die erwartbaren Schwierigkeiten, möglichen Überprüfungen und sinnvollen Alternativen an.”³⁶

Hentig gives an example from his own experience how a curriculum can be planned. He shares his experience from 1964 when he had gone to Harvard University, to take part in Donald Oliver’s conference on curriculum.³⁷ In this conference the participant’s ability to think and decide was encouraged and participants were made aware of this ability. The exercise was – reading of a story and stopping at the point where a character had to choose between two or more options or the process in the story depended on two or more factors. The participants then had to first choose their option and explain it and later defend it in front of others. This exercise made it clear that to use imagination, creativity, to start thinking and questioning something and to consider its consequences, it is very important that an individual is first confronted with a situation or problem where he/she has to stop and think before going further. This means that if an individual is encouraged to think and then to act, to explain his/her position, decision and also to justify it then he/she is actively participating in the learning process. In this way, knowledge is acquired consciously.

3.2.3.2 Instruction

Instruction is a key factor that obstructs a child’s free thinking and acting. Adults hardly let the youngsters/children experience, evaluate, investigate, find out different things on their own. On the contrary adults tend to show children that they [adults] are already learned, knowledgeable and know how to make use of their knowledge. The children learn either because they are forced by adults or because the adults use the

³⁶ Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus’ [München, 2007] p.386

³⁷ Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus’ [München, 2007] p.235

technique of carrot and stick or because the children just want to be like their peers. This kind of forced learning, learning without any self initiative and interest leads to serious problems during the schooling period as well as in the later phase of life when the children become adult citizens.

In school such children who have never used their own brains, senses, and imagination power but have only followed blindly what their elders wanted them to do are scared when they have to work on their own. Routine tasks like writing an essay or solving mathematical equations are found difficult to fulfil. Instead of working on their own children then tend to copy from available ready made sources or they steal ideas from someone and do not want or dare to be creative.³⁸ They are more concerned about passing, getting good grades than concentrating actually on the content or concentrating on whether they are at all learning something.

As a result children often protest or refuse to learn, become neurotic or in the worst case they just surrender to the system. They become so uncompassionate and passive that they slowly forget what they actually like, what interests or scares them.³⁹ Thus instruction damages an individual severely and this damage is almost irreparable.

3.2.3.3 Role of adults

Adults instead of just instructing and expecting from children to follow their instructions and thus creating a wall between children and themselves should be open enough to exchange their view freely with children. The aim of any teacher, educator or even an elder should be to enhance an individual through self discovery, self criticism and self discipline.⁴⁰ It is important that adults or teachers consciously change circumstances to save the youngsters or children from wrong problems or false ideals. And here, von Hentig makes an important point and states that education of teachers or adults is needed to bring about changes in the school.

³⁸ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.123

³⁹ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.123

⁴⁰ Hentig, Hartmut von: 'Die Schule neu denken. Eine Übung in pädagogischer Vernunft' [Weinheim, Basel, Berlin, 2003] p.104

3.2.3.4 School as a polity [Schule als Polis]

The school separates children from the real world as most of the learning takes place in the classroom; the children do not get enough opportunities to interact with others apart from their classmates. Even though children spend a major part of their life in the school the school limits their exposure to world within its four walls.

If the school could be perceived as a community - *polis*, children can benefit more from it. A Polis means not only a different understanding of school but also of politics. Politics is an art to live actively and peacefully in a large community, which does not consist of one's own family or relatives.⁴¹ The politics of the political parties, the articles on the front page of newspapers is of a different kind and thus needs to be differentiated from the 'Polis'. In the Polis one learns to co-operate, to have consideration for others, to think of the consequences of one's own actions on oneself as well as others, to take responsibility. One realises the importance of rules and regulations and their practicability the best while living in a community. This gives an individual to get to know how the society at large actually functions.

⁴¹ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus' [München, 2007] p.426

4 Alternatives to school and their applicability

This chapter discusses first some of the alternative schools [non-conventional schools] founded since beginning of the 20th Century and without evaluating them, describes their educational objectives in short. The next section elaborates Ivan Illich's approach of 'deschooling', the alternative that he proposes and the feasibility, practicability of that alternative. The section after that contains description on Illich's CIDOC, the center in Cuernavaca, Mexico which is an example of the alternative he has suggested. The last part related to Illich's approach discusses two institutions that are founded to a considerable degree on Illich's viewpoints and assumptions.

The second part of this chapter deals with the ideas of Hartmut von Hentig. It discusses Hentig's theory of 'deschooling the school' and how he has applied his theory in to practice in form of the Laboratory school at Bielefeld, Germany.

4.1 Alternative schools and alternative to school

Alternative schools and alternative to schools are two distinct concepts. The first concept deals with the reform of school. Free Schools, Community Schools or Innovative Schools fall in the category of alternative schools. These schools believe that specific changes in the school, especially regarding curriculum or attendance or instruction will make the school a better place to learn. The structure and functioning of the alternative schools vary from school to school but they all still follow most of the typical characteristics of school.

The second concept proposes disestablishing the school and by doing so, the supporters of this concept also try to clarify the myth that schooling guarantees education. Therefore alternative to school means replacing the school and instead creating new possibilities to learn. Home-schooling could be considered as an alternative to school. John Holt is a supporter of Home-schooling. Home-schooling takes children away from compulsory school attendance and children are taught at home either by family members or by professionals. Alternative to school also means breaking the conventional framework of the school and structuring an altogether new school.

4.1.1 Short overview of some alternative schools

There have serious been efforts made in the past [prior to 1968 movement] to develop schools according to the principle of learning through experiment and experience and also on individual educational theories. Some of these non-traditionally established non-conventional schools are: 'Waldorf- school', 'Summerhill', 'Jena-Plan' founded in 1927 by the educator Peter Petersen or the Montessori method of learning and teaching especially meant for the children in elementary and preschool.

The Waldorf School, based on pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner and founded in 1919, is an independent education system for the children from the Kindergarten up to the 12th class. It is structured considering the overall – emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual development and development of a growing child in the modern society.⁴² Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf wanted the schools to cater to the needs of the child rather than the demands of the government or economic forces.⁴³ Thus the educational philosophy of the Waldorf School is to encourage creativity and free-thinking while learning and the teachers contribute to this aim by supporting the children to become as independent as possible.

Summerhill is one of the most famous schools in the world that practises 'democratic schooling',⁴⁴ and has had a great impact on the school system overall. Alexander S. Neill started Summerhill in 1921 as an experiment to let children learn in a free atmosphere. At the time when A.S. Neill founded Summerhill, beating the children or forcing them otherwise to learn was a common practice. Schooling meant compulsory attendance, obeying the teacher's orders and following the prescribed curriculum. Summerhill protects and supports the right of children and children are given enough space to fulfil their wishes, projects, objectives while learning. Summerhill does not aim to educate children to fit well into the existing order but to rear children who will become

⁴² 'Waldorf Education: An Introduction – What is Waldorf Education?', in: http://www.whywaldorffworks.org/02_W_Education/index.asp

⁴³ Hale, Bob; MacLean, Karen: 'Overview of Steiner Education', in: <http://www.steiner-australia.org/other/overview.html>

⁴⁴ 'Introduction to Summerhill', in: <http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk/pages/>

happy human beings, men and women whose values are not to *have much*, not to *use much*, but to *be much*.⁴⁵

Free Schools have existed in USA since long. Their number and popularity increased during the 1960s and 1970s. But not many Free Schools survived longer than ten years. The 21st Century has brought back the popularity of Free Schools and today there are a number of Free Schools existing in North America. The working principle of a Free School is decentralization of the school and full freedom of learner. It also promotes self reliant, conscious learning and personal development.

The School of Barbiana is an alternative to the conventional hierarchical state school of the 1950s and 1960s.⁴⁶ It was started especially for the drop outs from state schools. It did not engage professional teacher. Individuals who had more information, knew more, taught those, who knew less than them. The pupils decided what and how they wanted to learn. The School of Barbiana stood as an opponent school [Gegen-Schule] that basically protested against the authority of the conventional bourgeois school.⁴⁷

In the field of alternative education Paulo Freire has contributed to a large scale. He emphasised on Informal education for the oppressed, poor, underprivileged and the method he used was – learning through respectful [non-hierarchical] dialogue or interaction, through experience, learning by doing and learning in a community, in a group.⁴⁸

Ivan Illich and Hartmut von Hentig both have proposed another kind of alternatives than mentioned so far.

4.2 Replacing the school

“The alternative to dependence on schools is not the use of public resources for some new device which ‘makes’ people learn; rather it is the creation of a new style of

⁴⁵ Fromm, Erich: ‘Forward to A.S.Neill’s Summerhill – A Radical Approach to Child Rearing.
<http://www.connexions.org/CxLibrary/Docs/CX5370-Fromm-Summerhill.htm>

⁴⁶ Botsford, David: ‘The School of Barbiana’, in: <http://www.libertarian.co.uk/lapubs/educn/educn023.pdf>

⁴⁷ Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule?’ [München, 1971] p.55

⁴⁸ Smith, M. K. (1997, 2002) ‘Paulo Freire and informal education’, the encyclopaedia of informal education in: www.infed.org/thinkers/et-freir.htm

educational relationship between man and his environment.”⁴⁹ Illich does not support the popular idea of founding new schools. He is very much against the popular belief that for more and better education, more schools, more teachers with more responsibilities, more resources or advanced technology etc. is the solution. The existing schools represent faulty systems and still they are being popularized, are functional. This very success of a failed institution disturbed Illich. Therefore he stated that founding new schools will only support institutionalized education and not make the situation better. In fact identifying education with school itself is the biggest fallacy. In contrast to this, deschooling would be making its students independent, self confident, aware of their situation and of the economic, social and political situation of their society. A good educational system should have three purposes:

- it should provide everyone easy access to resources,
- encourage exchange of ideas, knowledge between any two individuals irrespective of their position,
- “furnish all who want to present an issue to the public with the opportunity to make their challenge known.”⁵⁰

The notion of deschooling does not propagate that the learners should be in-charge of the schools. But at the same time students’ opinions, interests and needs should be considered while financing schools. The students have the right to know where and how the money is being invested.⁵¹ Though Illich does not believe in the existing education system, he still is not for the abolition of the education system as a whole. Illich proclaims that the existing school is institutionalised and therefore needs to be deinstitutionalised, decentralised. He realises that it is extremely difficult to re-form the existing institution and therefore he rather suggests creating a new system. By education without schools or ‘free’ education Illich means education outside the four walls of the classroom and not taking schooling into the home. Most people learn best by doing things

⁴⁹ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.41

⁵⁰ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.43

⁵¹ Illich, Ivan: ‘Schulen helfen nicht – Über das mythenbildende Ritual der Industriegesellschaft’ [Reinbeck bei Hamburg, 1972] p.18

on their own, from experiencing various matters on their own. Yet the school denies them the opportunity to get first hand practical knowledge. What is essential, is exchanging and sharing of information in a pleasant, familiar atmosphere; the need for educational webs to improve the learning ability and interest in learning.⁵²

Do industrialization, modern tools and techniques give human beings more freedom, liberty and independence? Has the life of people become easier, better and happier due to these commodities? Illich is convinced that modern institutions and tools in fact manipulate and dominate human life. Instead of becoming independent, responsible and free, individuals are becoming puppets in the hands of these machines, slaves of the system. Illich suggests the ways in which these tools, equipments, systems can bring about activity, creativity and conviviality instead of paralyzing human beings and making them passive.

4.2.1 Alternative to school - learning webs

In Illich's opinion one can get rid of the dependency on schools by developing an educational relationship between human being and his/her surroundings instead of finding new tools, devices or ways to force people to learn.⁵³ Illich neither argues from a pedagogical perspective nor does he represent children or pupils. He is concerned about the learners in general. In case of education of adults, Illich proposes learning networks as the alternative way to learn. A learning network or community consists of people sharing similar interests, wanting to get same information and facing similar problems. In this kind of learning community people will meet other persons having chosen and defined the same problem by their own initiative.⁵⁴ This means that teachers and educationalists will no longer decide and manipulate the learners and the learning process but the learners themselves have to decide what and how they wish to learn. The learning web will neither function nor group learners according to their age. Instead the key factor will be a learner's willingness to learn. Learning would then become a self motivated process.

⁵² Gajardo, Marcelo. Ivan Illich. <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/ThinkersPdf/illiche.PDF>, p. 3

⁵³ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.41

⁵⁴ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.12

4.2.1.1 Characteristics of the new education institution

A schooled individual believes that the classified knowledge is available and accessible only to those who are certified, who carry the required and acknowledged tags. A schooled individual therefore thinks that information or knowledge must be delivered by teachers. But in the new educational institution, the learner will have full and direct access to information without any certificates or references. Such an education system will have the following three objectives:⁵⁵

- it should guarantee the learner at any time of his/her life all the available resources to learn,
- it should permit everyone who wishes to share or pass on his/her knowledge or information, to find those who in turn wish to learn from this person,
- it should give everyone who is concerned about the education, an equal opportunity to present his/her concerns, challenges in public.

In this kind of institution education learners will be free from hidden curricula and accreditation and education will be in true sense for everyone by everyone. The channels who would function as learning exchanges will be elders around an individual whom he/she considers as role models for skills and values and who will guide him/her. Another channel will be the peers of an individual who understand him/her and with whom he/she can argue or compete. The most important source of learning will be things around an individual which he sees in his daily life.

4.2.1.2 The four learning networks

When an individual has easy access to these resources, acknowledges these despite of their being considered as unconventional and unauthentic educational resources and makes use of these then he/she can definitely profit from these resources or channels. The four learning networks Illich puts forward are: ⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.43

⁵⁶ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by->

- Reference services to objects for formal education - which will facilitate access to information, events, processes, procedures. Examples of some reference centers would be museums, laboratories, libraries, farms, theaters among others. Objects or things around us are our basic sources to information or learning. For example one can easily learn about certain processes from machines, computers or by visiting factories, airports etc... The nature itself is also a primary, authentic and large source to learn from. The degree to which an individual learns from his environment and the quality of the learning depend upon the individual's relationship with his/her environment and how much he/she avails himself/herself from the things or nature available as resources. Usually the above listed resources are readily available and often also not difficult to access but they are used only when it is essential to use them and especially when the learner is instructed to make use of them for educational purpose. Thus the learner associates these things with the curriculum, with the assigned task or schoolwork which he has to complete. School turns these simple resources into special tools reserved for educators and experts increasing their cost. "School removes things from everyday use by labeling them educational tools."⁵⁷ This is the reason why incidental learning does not take place so often. The access to above mentioned objects, services will make an individual realize that he can easily get lot of information and can learn from things around him.
- Skill exchanges – where a list containing contact and conditions of access of skilled individuals who are willing to transmit their skills is available to those who wish to learn from these skilled persons.

As discussed in the earlier point, skilled persons as learning sources are also easily available. There are ample people around us who possess skills and are even willing to pass them to others. But these skilled persons are

Ivan-Illich.p.44.

⁵⁷ Illich, Ivan: 'Deschooling society', in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.46

not allowed to teach or transmit their skills, knowledge unless the society approves of their talent through a certificate. Illich recommends people to look beyond the accreditation, beyond labeled degrees and recognize skilled persons as a learning resource outside the educational sphere.

- Peer matching – will be a communication network to find like minded persons.

This communication network will enable individuals sharing common or specific interests to find and meet each other to discuss their likings, problems, books etc... The communication network will also lead to deschooling; to abolition of the monopoly, control, power and authority of any single person to instruct others to attend a meeting.⁵⁸ Instead it will recognize and grant the right of every individual to meet or gather to exchange their views on various issues. In a school or at university students can choose courses according to their interest and thus do get an opportunity to get to know some other students sharing that specific interest. But in such kind of classroom situation one can not neglect the presence of the teacher who supervises and controls the discussion. The classroom discussion can not go beyond the framework of the course. In the community network people having various backgrounds, living in different neighbourhoods, of different age, sex, religion would come together to discuss on one specific issue. “Peer matching could significantly help in making explicit the many potential but suppressed communities of the city.”⁵⁹

- Reference services to educators in general- a list containing contact details and job profiles of various kinds of educators, professionals, free-lancers.

The individuals can select from a wide range of professionals or educators to profit from their expertise. The references of educators are needed for

⁵⁸ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.52,53.

⁵⁹ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>, p.54

their intellectual leadership that is based on lifetime experiences. These experts or educators could guide parents as well as students in using the learning networks; they can show the children how to benefit from these networks. They could work as administrators and operate the learning networks, making the networks easily accessible to youngsters.

While discussing this fourth learning channel, Illich goes back to the medieval ages and talks about the ‘true master – pupil relationship’.⁶⁰ The professionals will be there only to guide learners to explore the available opportunities. The leadership will not depend on being right but on being intellectually superior, creative and being open to a number of views and opinions. The relationship between a student and his guide will go beyond the intellectual discipline and both will benefit from each other’s conscious, critical exchange of views. It will be ‘an activity meaningful for both, having no ulterior purpose’.⁶¹

4.2.2 CIDOC as a learning experience

When Illich founded the Centre for Intercultural Formation [CIF] with two of his friends in 1960 in Cuernavaca, Mexico, he had in mind an open club for future missionaries from USA. The CIF was a place where people were not required to answer given questions nor were they instructed to perform different activities. In this centre people were to be encouraged to use their creativity and imagination and re-think about various issues and find excitement while learning.⁶²

CIF was later, in 1966 turned into CIDOC where Illich delivered many lectures and composed some of his famous radical works like ‘Deschooling Society’, ‘Celebration of Awareness’ or ‘Tools for Conviviality’. The main objective behind founding CIDOC functioned was to teach Spanish to American clergy involved in the so called Alliance of Progress, an initiative undertaken by the USA government in the 1960s for development of Latin America. The Spanish language courses as well as other topics in guest lectures

⁶⁰ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>.p.57

⁶¹ Illich, Ivan: ‘Deschooling society’, in: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/4207142/Deschooling-Society-by-Ivan-Illich>.p.58

⁶² Kaller-Dietrich, Martina: ‘Ivan Illich (1926-2002) Sein Leben, sein Denken’ [Weitra, 2007] p. 65

and seminars dealt ultimately with American students' and clergy men's understanding of the concept of 'development' based on Western thinking and values and to analyse the development process and its implications. Illich hoped that the discussions, seminars and lectures held at CIDOC might motivate the clergy to rethink their participation in the American project for development of Latin America.

4.2.2.1 Structure of CIDOC

CIDOC was a well equipped, modern institution. It had its own printing press, a language laboratory, a room for film screening etc. At CIDOC Spanish as a language was taught not only through language courses but the learner also got ample information about the culture and politics of Latin America while discussing on various issues in different Latin American countries.⁶³ At the same time in the discussions it was prohibited to make propaganda about any issue. CIDOC also did not support any kind of religious movements, political or economic instigations.⁶⁴

While founding CIDOC Illich had in mind the alternative to school, that was based on his own deschooling theory. That is why the central principle at CIDOC has been 'Learning in a totally free atmosphere.'⁶⁵ To get admitted into CIDOC a person does not need specific educational prerequisites and also no grades are required. A learner at CIDOC chooses his subject matter as well as his teachers. CIDOC functioned as a catalyst between learners and teachers.⁶⁶ A list of teachers and their topics is made and it is published so that all interested in learning can have a look at it. The first meeting the teacher gives a general idea of his class, explains his topic in an open lecture. This gives learners opportunity to know a bit more of the subject matter and they can decide whether they want to take that course. Not only the learners but the teachers also have an opportunity to get to know their students' interests and reason behind having chosen their course. In the first class the teacher asks students whether and what they already know about the topic, what they expect from the class, whether they have any preference regarding course material, method, and subtopic. This meeting with students enables a

⁶³ Kaller-Dietrich, Martina: 'Ivan Illich (1926-2002) Sein Leben, sein Denken' [Weitra, 2007] p. 70

⁶⁴ Kaller-Dietrich, Martina: 'Ivan Illich (1926-2002) Sein Leben, sein Denken' [Weitra, 2007] p. 73

⁶⁵ Hentig, Hartmut von: 'Cuernavaca ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.17

⁶⁶ Hentig, Hartmut von: 'Cuernavaca ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.17

teacher to decide how many students can in fact fit into his class. In this way at CIDOC both learners and teachers have equal right to chose one another. “So kann am CIDOC jeder lehren, wenn er Studenten findet, und jeder lernen, wenn er einen Lehrer findet. Beiden steht das gleiche Recht auf Zuruckweisung des anderen zu.”⁶⁷

CIDOC functioned in close co-operation with the Jesuit University of Fordham. It was not only a language school but also an educational institution and a platform for conferences. Illich invited reputed professors from the USA and Europe to give lectures in seminars and workshops arranged in CIDOC. CIDOC also claimed to be a free university and publishing house that published yearly around 60 works dealing with the economic, political, social and cultural changes in the contemporary Latin America. Researchers and scientists from various countries who were interested in studying Latin America were given opportunities to carry forward their research at CIDOC.

4.2.2.2 Aim of CIDOC

Illich wanted the centre to be a place for open discussions on different issues, a place where people from all over the world could come together and exchange their views in a friendly manner. Thus CIDOC functioned as a think tank bringing together scholars, philosophers, social critics, Catholics as well as non-Catholics from North – and South America and Europe.⁶⁸ Educationalists like Paulo Freire, Paul Goodman, Hartmut von Hentig, John Holt and Everett Reimer along with Illich himself enriched CIDOC with their thought provoking contributions. Also “CIDOC became a mandatory meeting place for members of the radical left and students of the third world.”⁶⁹

4.2.3 Achieving disestablishment of school

Illich has successful in convincing the readers of the need to decentralize the school. But he falls short of practical implementation of the deschooling theory. He provides no concrete measures to deschool the society. “He lacks in convincing practical

⁶⁷ Hentig, Hartmut von: ‘Cuernavaca ODER Alternativen zur Schule?’ [München, 1971] p.18

⁶⁸ Berger, Peter L.: ‘Remembering Ivan Illich’, in http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=456

⁶⁹ Pacquot, Thierry: ‘Ivan Illich: A Tribute. The non-Conformist’, in: http://www.pudel.uni-bremen.de/pdf/lemonde_en.pdf

evidence while suggesting alternatives.’’⁷⁰ Illich argues that the real world is different from what is taught in the schools and that is the reason why individuals later fail to face the world. But contradictory to own position Illich separates education system totally from the society in which it exists. Deschooling proposes ‘learning webs’: Illich assumes that a group of people will come forward and take on the responsibility to guide others or share their knowledge outside school, with flexible, interactive curricula, where knowledge will not be measured with tests and nobody will be forced to learn anything. The free atmosphere of learning itself should move people to learn and this will be ‘real’ education. This is a very idealistic picture. It describes what ought to be done, namely ‘idealism’ without specifying where and how exactly this ‘real’ education is supposed to be attained.

Even CIDOC, Illich’s only concrete measure of a learning community, did not survive longer. In 1976 CIDOC had to be shut as the centre could no longer resist from being institutionalised. CIDOC has been since known as Cuernavaca Language School [CLS] and works now as a pure language school, focussing mainly on teaching Spanish language to people from various fields of life and from different places.

Disestablishing schools without replacing them with other ‘ideal’ deschooled institution will cause chaos. As John Goodlad, the Canadian educational researcher writes “If we were we to go the opposite direction and close all public schools tomorrow, a bewildering array of substitutes would pick up the tasks of teaching children to read, write and spell. Companies in the education business [. . .] would experience the bonanza many have dreamed about.”⁷¹

4.3 The Illichistas

Illichistas are activists, especially in Mexico, who are influenced by Ivan Illich’s theory of critical reasoning and his other arguments regarding the urbanisation, modernisation, dependency on techniques and tools.⁷² The Illichistas deal with social,

⁷⁰ Leiner, Marvin: ‘CIDOC Documenta. Alternatives in Education’, July 1970-June 1971, p.381

⁷¹ Latta Ruth: ‘The Critics of Schooling’, Canadian Journal of Education, Vol.14, No. 4, Autumn 1989. p.492

⁷² ‘A University without Shoes’ - Interview of Raymundo Sánchez Barraza by Nic Paget-Clarke, in: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/rsb_int_eng.html

economic or educational problems in a similar way to that recommended by Illich. I will give here two examples which clearly reflect implementation of Illich's ideas.

4.3.1 CIDECI ,Chiapas, Mexico

The CIDECI [Centro Indígena de Capacitación Integral] is an indigenous training centre by and for indigenous people and functioning in an indigenous manner and was started in 1989.⁷³ The centre is engaged with the demands and struggles of the marginalised group of Mesoamerica, the Indian community. CIDECI follows the political viewpoint of democracy and does not want to get indulge in any kind of political power game. It wants to transform the nation state from its grass root level and it believes that a different world, having other paradigms, systems, structures is possible without using violence and without establishing a counter power.

4.3.1.1 Working of CIDECI

One of the key concepts that initiated the formation of the CIDECI, was to see how despite of clashes due to expansion and settlement these indigenous people have managed to survive, to resist the force of civilisation, urbanisation and have preserved their own language, traditions, values, ideas, perspectives. In short it was interesting to see how these people have managed to keep their identity intact.⁷⁴

After opening the centre the members decided to go a step further and established themselves as a university as they also transmitted valuable knowledge. Like Illich the CIDECI also seeks to dispose the professionals and experts, monopolising knowledge and expression of their prestige. The centre provides courses that combine theory and practice in form of workshops that also require certain skills. The curriculum designed by the centre deals with an individual's day to day life, it is concerned with the micro level; a world which is real and with which the learner can identify himself easily. At the macro level the world of capitalism, globalisation has institutionalised every aspect of life and people feel they are like puppets in the hands of destiny. Thus they go on being a part of

⁷³ 'A University without Shoes' - Interview of Raymundo Sánchez Barraza by Nic Paget-Clarke, in: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/rsb_int_eng.html

⁷⁴ 'A University without Shoes' - Interview of Raymundo Sánchez Barraza by Nic Paget-Clarke, in: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/rsb_int_eng.html

these systems that are sometimes not even familiar to them. Following Illich's theory of critical reasoning, the members at CIDECI also began to question the Western concepts of modernity, development, democracy, equality and realised that they can build a different world themselves if they are prepared to face some hindrance. Like Illich at CIDECI also people believe that there is still hope to fight back the dependency on systems, orders, technology.

4.3.1.2 Aim of CIDECI

CIDECI is an open centre, where people can go and come whenever they have time and interest. The people who come to the centre do not have to pay anything; they can choose any program but they usually have to participate in various activities. Apart from their participation in activities like cooking, cleaning, painting, planting, the centre does not ask for any rewards. The key pedagogical idea the centre believes in, is that of self learning with pleasure. People coming there should first learn to do and then learn to learn and only after that learning to get more.⁷⁵ CIDECI aims at bringing back the individuals to their communities.⁷⁶ After having spent some time in the centre and acquired a certain skill like carpentry, metal work, the individual should go back to his community and make use of his skill in the community, for the community. Thus the individual can contribute to the sustaining of the local economy.

4.3.2 UniTierra, Oaxaca, Mexico

Gustavo Esteva is a Mexican activist, who describes himself a 'deprofessionalised intellectual' and is an admirer of Ivan Illich. He founded in Oaxaca, Mexico two institutes: Centre for Intercultural Encounters and Dialogues [CEDI] which is a base for learning about cross-cultural interaction and encounters as well as intercultural dialogues and UniTierra [Universidad de la Tierra] that has been set up as an alternative to formal education and as a space for free learning. But before going into the details of the above mentioned two institutes, it is necessary to know more about its founder, Gustavo Esteva.

⁷⁵ 'A University without Shoes' - Interview of Raymundo Sánchez Barraza by Nic Paget-Clarke, in: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/rsb_int_eng.html

⁷¹ 'A University without Shoes' - Interview of Raymundo Sánchez Barraza by Nic Paget-Clarke, in: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/rsb_int_eng.html

4.3.2.1 Gustavo Esteva: on Illich's footsteps

Gustavo Esteva has always been concerned with the relationship between the developed and therefore perceived to be privileged and the developing or underdeveloped communities. He believes that the Western concepts like modernity, development and the financial and technical help from the West⁷⁷ to the developing countries to improve the living standards, work conditions, are in fact destroying the culture, traditions and lifestyle of those countries. The Western influence in most cases is so strong that the developing, underprivileged societies feel they are inferior to the West.

Development and development plan is in strict sense a monopoly of the experts and professionals. "Im Grunde bedeutet 'entwickelt sein', sich in die Hände von Experten zu begeben, die dann entscheiden, was zu tun ist. Entwickelt sein meint für den [...] 'Unterentwickelter' [...] unter der Diktatur von Experten und Professionellen zu leben."⁷⁸ This is the basic, main reason why many underdeveloped people do not take initiative, responsibility to do something and are being passive and inactive. They do not act until they are instructed, guided, recommended to perform an activity from the developed, experts, professionals whom they believe to be better, superior in knowledge and correct.

By 'deschooling' Illich means deinstitutionalisation, decentralisation of power and authority of an institution or a single person - in most cases an expert or a professional. Gustavo Esteva's concept of 'deprofessionalisation' is very similar, very close to that of deschooling by Illich. Esteva explains deprofessionalisation as breaking up with the dominance, monopoly of experts and finding ways to disestablish the institution, systems that foster expertise, give experts as well as their know-how immense importance, prestige.⁷⁹

Another issue common to both Illich and Esteva is that they both are not suggesting the abolishment of expertise or the institutions altogether. They want people to resist the authority, power the experts exercise on their life. Esteva wants that experience and knowledge should be given equal prestige and experience should be

⁷⁷ Gustavo Esteva means by West the developed societies, especially in North America and Europe

⁷⁸ Interview of Gustavo Esteva by Martina Kaller, from Esteva, Gustavo: 'Fiesta – jenseits von Entwicklung, Hilfe und Politik', Brunner, Markus [Hrsg.], [Frankfurt a. M., 1995] p.160

⁷⁹ Interview of Gustavo Esteva by Martina Kaller, from Esteva, Gustavo: 'Fiesta – jenseits von Entwicklung, Hilfe und Politik', Brunner, Markus [Hrsg.], [Frankfurt a. M., 1995] p.160

considered as authentic too, especially as the daily, routine world, the ‘real’ world differs from the imaginary, pure theoretical world as it is often described in books.⁸⁰ That is why there is always a discrepancy between the ‘Alltagserfahrung’ and experts’ opinions.

Many people still believe that development is inevitably related to education; in fact for these people to attain the status of being developed, means first to get education. The majority of people have been so much dependent on school that in fact, the whole of society has become a school and we all are forced to be continually taught by someone, on legitimate or illegitimate grounds: the government, corporations, scientists, gurus, advertisers, professionals, usually for their own interests.⁸¹

The UniTierra is an open, free university having neither teachers nor curriculum. It works on the principle that “while changing the world is very difficult, perhaps impossible, it is possible to create a whole new world.”⁸² The people from villages in Mexico, the indigenous community realised that the schooling their children were receiving is taking the children away from the community. Schooling was making those children look down on their communities and cultures, and had subordinated their minds and hearts to the authority of the teacher.⁸³ Schooling also prevented their children from learning what is actually useful to continue living in their communities, contributing to the common prosperity of their community and of soil.

4.3.2.2 Learning in UniTierra

Youngsters without any conventional educational or professional background are most welcome at UniTierra. Here they can learn whatever they want to learn, a trade, a skill or even philosophy or agriculture. They can either take part in workshops to learn a trade or they can be apprentices of someone who practices these skills or activities. They

⁸⁰ Interview of Gustavo Esteva by Martina Kaller, from Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Fiesta – jenseits von Entwicklung, Hilfe und Politik’, Brunner, Markus [Hrsg.], [Frankfurt a. M., 1995] p.162

⁸¹ Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Back from the future’ in:
http://berkana.tomoye.com/ev_en.php?ID=3832_203&ID2=DO_TOPIC

⁸² Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Reclaiming our freedom to learn’, in:
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=2091>

⁸³ Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Reclaiming our freedom to learn’, in:
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=2091>

can also make use of modern tools and equipments that are not available in their community to learn a skill.

In UniTierra apprenticeship is complemented with some contemporary practices for shared learning and study. After their arrival at UniTierra, the youngsters look around for the work, skill they would like to learn and start to work with a person who is ready to accept them as apprentices. While working, they observe their mentors and often find out that they can also refer to a book and their mentor can help them to use and understand the matter in the book. If the apprentices wish for guidance or class, a reading circle is organized where youngsters can learn a subject matter in group in open discussions.

4.3.2.3 Aim of UniTierra

UniTierra is a “convivial place, where we all are enjoying ourselves while learning together.”⁸⁴ Although youngsters coming to UniTierra are free to choose their routine, courses and there are no obligatory activities, the youngsters are still committed to their mentors, peers and ultimately to their own community. After having accomplished certain skills, activities the youngsters do receive a degree. The competence and the accomplishment are assessed by the peers along with the community of the learners. But these degrees or certificates have no market value as the UniTierra is itself not a ‘recognised’ university. Rather the certificates are “an expression of people's autonomy. As a symbol, they represent the commitment of our ‘students’ to their own communities, not a right to demand anything.”⁸⁵

4.4 Deschooling the school

Hartmut von Hentig proposes deschooling the school as an alternative to school. What he means by deschooling is not disestablishing the school but rather to re-form it. Deschooling the school means implementing a new idea which first has to be understood, discussed; it means starting from zero and building a school which will never be complete, perfect and thus can not pose as a role model to further schools. When Hentig

⁸⁴ Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Reclaiming our freedom to learn’, in:
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=2091>

⁸⁵ Esteva, Gustavo: ‘Reclaiming our freedom to learn’, in:
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=2091>

started his own Laboratory School, he wrote: “Das war die Aufbauzeit! So sind wir vorangestolpert. Auch geplante Planung kann planwidrig verlaufen. [...]”⁸⁶

Hentig’s aim is to enable him as well as others to conscious learning, responsibility and self-determination. “I remain committed to the principle of enlightened learning, as well as to scientific principles, the critique of ideologies, and the fostering of peaceful conflict management skills”.⁸⁷

Hentig’s approach to alternative to school is based on three dimensions.⁸⁸

- a critique of school as an existing institution,
- criticism offered by educationalists on school,
- a practical plan, namely the Laboratory School in affiliation with the University of Bielefeld that he planned to open in near future.

4.4.1 Characteristics of a deschooled school

The deschooled school will bring back the importance of genuine experience in process of learning. It means knowledge will be gained as far as possible through real life situations, experience and experiment. Schools should not be seen as a complete and perfect institution which can offer instant solutions to any problem. In contrast schools should be open to changes, have always space for experiments and exchange of experiences and ideas. Teachers and pupils should come together to develop school and decide its aims and methods.⁸⁹ A teacher’s job would not be restricted to teaching, instructing children to perform a task but the teacher could [would] also counsel, guide, research, report political incidents etc. and will be as human as the pupil, having family and friends and living in the same society as the pupils. In this way the teachers can encourage their pupils to work in similar manner. The pupils will learn in a deschooled school through participation in various activities in- and outside of school either with the

⁸⁶ Hartmut von Hentig: *Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus.* [München, 2007] p.303

⁸⁷ Interview of Hartmut von Hentig by Christine Sommer-Guist, in: <http://www.goethe.de/ges/ztg/dos/dos/wdp/bil/en3160390.htm>

⁸⁸ Hartmut von Hentig ‘Deschooling the school’ in Lister, Ian: *Deschooling. A Reader* [Cambridge, 1974] p.36

⁸⁹ Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule?’ [München, 1971] p.110 and Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Deschooling the school’ in Lister, Ian: *Deschooling. A Reader* [Cambridge, 1974] p.38

help of their teachers, classmates or on their own. They would also research, enquire, experiment, will make use of their imagination, creativity and feelings in understanding various social, economic, cultural and political processes which take place in their surrounding and become self-reliant and also conscious of the happenings in their society. This would help to decrease the distance between society and its individuals.

The parents will be an important element in the learning process of the children. Parents on their part will also be actively involved in their children's education. They could offer their help and guidance out of their own experience, share time and energy for the children's extra curricular activities, would let the children learn about different things outside school, like in the kitchen, garden garage etc. In this way the deschooled school would re-establish the dialectical relationship between knowledge and experience.

Also in this kind of shared, group learning activities or learning through experience the children find their education meaningful. Adults are not prescribing solutions or ways to find a solution but children are encouraged to work on their own. This gives them confidence as well as brings the sense of responsibility.

This kind of learning in a social network is only then possible when the number of pupils is limited, namely in small scale schools, in a small community, where interaction and integration is easier and children learn in the atmosphere in that they also live⁹⁰. The pupils in such a school will not be divided on the basis of their family background, ambitions or talents and capabilities or their professional aspirations. To enable learning in such small scale deschooled schools, more teachers are needed. But as mentioned earlier, it is not feasible to engage more teachers. In this situation the best possible option would be taking help of the non teaching staff or adults who are interested in children's activities and their development and whose guidance would not harm children. As mentioned above the parents will be also playing role of teachers at home and complement the teacher's tasks.

It is necessary to make schools a place where learning happens with pleasure and spontaneously, meaning that situations are not created artificially nor are they fictitious in nature. Hentig gives an example from his own childhood to explain his idea of

⁹⁰ Hartmut von Hentig: 'Cuernacava ODER Alternativen zur Schule?' [München, 1971] p.111

spontaneous learning in a deschooled school.⁹¹ In his primary school in Chicago once during lunch break he could not explain his classmates what exactly his sandwich was made of. It was a traditional German bread-spread Hentig was having and that is why he did not know how to explain its nature, characteristics to the American children. As Hentig felt disappointed, the teacher came to his help. She asked all the children to tell what they had in their lunch boxes. Hardly anyone could satisfactorily answer the teacher's question. The task for the next class was then to find more about the food stuff each one had. This task lasted longer than the usual tasks but was found to be interesting by most children. They had gathered information from various fields – geography, agriculture, economy and also learnt about the cultural diversity in their class. This was an enriching learning experience for Hentig which he still remembers vividly.

The deschooled school unlike the free schools will be open to public involvement and public criticism. It will be taking decisions on its own and also be responsible for them. It will be able to exist actively in the society which evaluates it.

4.4.2 The Bielefeld Laboratory School: the deschooled school in practice

Hartmut von Hentig implemented his theory of an alternative to school in form of the Laboratoty School, [Laborschule] in Bielefeld, Germany in 1974. Though this experiment is on small scale Hentig has taken the initiative to show people that a parallel kind of school can exist and can also serve the society its dues.

4.4.2.1 Learning principles and objectives of the laboratory school

Unlike other alternative schools, the Bielefeld laboratory school is not an independent school but exists as a co-operation between the Ministry of Education and a research centre at the University of Bielefeld. Its motto is: “So viel Lernen wie möglich, so wenig Belehrung wie nötig”.⁹² The school was set up to develop new forms of teaching and learning in school. Teachers and researchers together with parents and children develop new curriculum from time to time and carefully evaluate and revise it in the light of practical experience. The school's alternative methods of learning and

⁹¹ Hartmut von Hentig: ‘Cuernavaca ODER Alternativen zur Schule?’ [München, 1971] p.114-115

⁹² Mit Fünf ab in die Schule. Erfahrungen aus der Bielefelder Schule.

<http://www.3sat.de/3sat.php?http://www.3sat.de/nano/bstuecke/29452/>

teaching have been developed out of the principle of learning by experience rather than by instruction.

Hentig's idea of a school is: School as a society [community] on small scale. "Hentig definiert[e] sein Idealbild von Schule als Gesellschaft im Kleinen, in der jeder seinen Platz finden soll."⁹³ For this reason the laboratory school is open to all. It takes children from migratory background as well as children of professors. It is not restricted to talented, skilled, intelligent children. The school integrates talented children with the so called average children and also with children having some learning difficulties.

Before starting the laboratory school, Hentig had some specific ideas about the structure of the school and how the school should look like. He explains those ideas as follows:⁹⁴

- The school will take its decision unanimously based on the principle of democracy.
- The school will work according to the empirical method – it will design a plan, execute it, check its consequences and improvise it accordingly.
- It will not be the best school but it will be transparent in its ways of working and will be open to public criticism.
- The school will serve as an example to show how one can cope up with life with self determination.
- The school will be financed by public and private sources but it will not be a luxurious place.
- The school will belong to a big city and collaborate with the local primary school.
- The school will have a special section dedicated to scientific research for educational purpose.

⁹³ Spiwak, Martin: 'Das Lernen lernen', in: <http://www.zeit.de/2008/23/OdE32-Bildung>, p.3

⁹⁴ Hentig, Hartmut von: *Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus.* [München, 2007] p.277-78

Some of these prerequisites had to be given up already during the initial phase when the school was being set up. Along with these prerequisites Hentig had also in mind specific educational objectives that his school should achieve. These objectives are as follows:⁹⁵

- School as a place to grow up in: The laboratory school is a place where children and youngsters can enjoy learning and living where living and learning will go hand in hand. The teaching follows the principle of learning through experience and not primarily by instruction. The school will not focus on traditional, conventional subjects and syllabus but make pupils realise that they live in a world characterised by co-operation, communication and abstract.
- School as a polity [community]: The school perceives itself as a community and pupils are members of this community. The pupils have to respect the rules of a community, take responsibilities for their own task and also always remember that they learn, work and live in a group. Here, they learn their first lesson into civil life. The school will make pupils aware of the fact that the world they live in is a political world where they will experience power play, authoritative behaviour and their responsibilities will increase with the rights they get to enjoy. “Unsere Shule nimmt sich darum als seine Polis wahr, in der die Politik als bewegliche Regelung gemeinsamer Angelegenheiten taglich innerhalb und au erhalb des Unterrichts vorkommt.”⁹⁶
- Different dimensions: Apart from being political, the surrounding environment of a pupil also has natural, social-cultural, moral and technical dimensions and the pupils have to learn to get deal with all these kinds of dimensions.

⁹⁵Hentig, Hartmut von: Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus. [M nchen, 2007] p.279-80 and ‘Laborschule. Versuchsschule des Landes Nordrhein Westfalen an der Universit t Bielefeld’ in:

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/LS/laborschule_neu/dieschule_paedagogischeleitlinien_en.html

⁹⁶ Hentig, Hartmut von: Mein Leben – bedacht und bejaht. Schule, Polis, Gartenhaus. [M nchen, 2007] p. 280

- Living with differences: The school accepts that there are individual differences between children and all children can not possess same abilities. It tries to integrate children as far as possible but at the same time teaching is also highly individualised.
- Learning as an ongoing process: The most important thing pupils should always remember is that they are living in a world that changes very often. Therefore the knowledge the pupils acquire will never be complete, enough. They should note that even the teachers keep upgrading, updating their knowledge.

4.3.2.2 Working of the Laboratory School

The laboratory school is an integrated comprehensive school for children in the age group of five to sixteen. It is a full day school, which means it works also in the afternoons. The school offers learning opportunities at a variety of places – at the school zoo, in the library, at the adventure playground and during the workshops. Project based learning also takes the students into the outer world - to museums, theatres, to the employment office or to the market. In this way mostly the strict 45-minute lessons taking place in conventional schools are abolished. Another feature that distinguishes this school from conventional public schools is that classes are not arranged according to age.

The usual evaluation and grading system starts in the laboratory school only at a later stage; that too to enable students integrate further at public universities. Until 9th class no marks or grades are allotted to students. Instead report cards are prepared which set out the contents and aims of lessons and which record students' participation, activities and achievements in carrying out projects, field work and practical work etc. The report card also contains advice for future learning.

4.4.2.3 The different learning levels

The Laboratory School has the task of developing new forms of teaching and learning and living in school. For this purpose in laboratory school learning is divided in different levels:⁹⁷

- Level I – The characteristic of this level is that it is the integrated pre-school year. The children start the laboratory school at the age of five years. Here they learn to integrate and get acquainted to the school. As they are very young during this first phase, there is no timetable and no subjects for them. The children are given ample opportunity to play, to go out in the nature and learn while playing. Children between the age group of five to eight years learn and spend time together. The younger children observe the elder children and learn from them. Although the children with different age group are in the same level, each child can learn with his/her own pace without any pressure. In short, in the first level the children learn in a comprehensive manner in multi age groups.⁹⁸
- Level II – The second level introduces the children to projects. With the second level, children are encouraged to participate in various small scale projects in which they have to use their imagination and experience. Children are for example asked to narrate stories or they have to narrate their experience after having visited a circus. The second level also introduces the children for the first time a foreign language, in this case – English. The foreign language is taught mainly through songs, stories, dialogues, acting instead of just reading texts.
- Level III - At this level children are introduced to different subjects indirectly. They learn about human interaction [social science]; interaction of people with things and nature through observing, measuring,

⁹⁷ The description of all of the learning levels in the laboratory school is referred from the following source - ‘Laborschule. Versuchsschule des Landes Nordrhein Westfalen an der Universität Bielefeld’ in: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/LS/laborschule_neu/dieschule_stufen_en.html

⁹⁸ ‘Laborschule. Versuchsschule des Landes Nordrhein Westfalen an der Universität Bielefeld’ in: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/LS/laborschule_neu/dieschule_stufen_en.html

experimenting [natural sciences]; interaction with own body [sport].⁹⁹ In this phase children also get the chance to choose subjects according to their liking. For example they can learn another foreign language. The projects and excursions at this level give the children the opportunity to learn something outside the school campus.

- Level IV – In this last level, children can achieve individual qualifications by taking optional courses of their own interest. Each pupil also has to gather some work experience during this phase. The pupil spends two to three weeks in a factory or service industry and in the last year, he/she also can also visit a school, which he/she wishes to join later on. The yearly project in this phase involves practical as well as theoretical work and the pupil works independently and also under the supervision of the teacher. At the last level the pupils also get to travel abroad and get to know a foreign culture as part of the intercultural exchange.

The Laboratory School stresses on extensive use of the possibilities and opportunities to learn and experience outside the school. It promotes the concept of lifelong learning based on the following types of learning:¹⁰⁰

- Learning to acquire knowledge: learn how to observe, to refer, to relate and then to understand various things.
- Learning to act: learn to master skills and develop competencies in order to be able to work creatively.
- Learning to live together: learning to co-operate, work in groups and participate in various activities.
- Learning for life: to be aware that learning is a transitional process and to enjoy learning to live life fully.

⁹⁹ 'Laborschule. Versuchsschule des Landes Nordrhein Westfalen an der Universität Bielefeld' in: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/LS/laborschule_neu/dieschule_stufen_en.html

¹⁰⁰ Lenzen, Klaus-Dieter; Tillmann, Klaus-Jurgen; Weingart, Gail: 'Opening of School and Lifelong Learning. 25 years of experience', in: http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1a/54/28.pdf p.6

“The Laboratory School defines its philosophy of ‘opening of school’ as transcending a school’s traditional borders to forge closer links with the surrounding communities and using the opportunities there to learn and experience.”¹⁰¹ Two examples where the school puts its theory of learning through experience are as follows:

- The Labyrinth Project is a combined, cross-subject project including art, language and maths, prepared in a structure, which is similar to that of a labyrinth.¹⁰²
- The German-French Intercultural Encounter Project consists of a cultural exchange and foreign language program for primary school pupils. As part of this intercultural program the pupils get to spend ten to fourteen days at a partner school in Paris.¹⁰³ In this way they get first hand experience about the French culture and language.

4.4.2.4 Outcomes of the Laboratory School

After having seen the objectives and working methods of the laboratory school it could be interesting to know how far the school has been successful in achieving its goals. The laboratory school is being run for more than thirty years but has not been so popular yet and has neither followers nor imitators. This fact can be explained in two ways. First of all Hentig, its founder did not want his school to serve as a role model to other institutions because as he explains it, the laboratory school is based on the principle of experience and experiment and thus the school will change its curriculum, its ways of functioning according to the results based on its experience. The laboratory school thus can not have an everlasting characteristic structure. Another point is that the school is still not very popular in the society. It has not found strong consensus among people as its

¹⁰¹ Lenzen, Klaus-Dieter; Tillmann, Klaus-Jurgen; Weingart, Gail: ‘Opening of School and Lifelong Learning. 25 years of experience’, in:

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1a/54/28.pdf p.1

¹⁰² Lenzen, Klaus-Dieter; Tillmann, Klaus-Jurgen; Weingart, Gail: ‘Opening of School and Lifelong Learning. 25 years of experience’, in:

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1a/54/28.pdf p.4

¹⁰³ Lenzen, Klaus-Dieter; Tillmann, Klaus-Jurgen; Weingart, Gail: ‘Opening of School and Lifelong Learning. 25 years of experience’, in:

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1a/54/28.pdf p.4

philosophy, educational theory is too unusual and contradictory to the conventional schools.¹⁰⁴

But at the same time the laboratory school has caught at least some attention. The section I of the recent bill on schooling of the German state North Rhein-Westphalia is dedicated to the ‘individual enhancement’.¹⁰⁵ The best reward the school has received so far and its success is the satisfaction of its pupils, students who pass out from the school every year. One former student of the laboratory school Birgit Kottmeier expresses her gratitude towards the school by stating that the school has given her the courage and confidence to learn on her own. She says “[...] Laborschule habe [...] ein »Grundvertrauen ins eigene Lernen« geschenkt.”¹⁰⁶ The laboratory school has been to a certain degree successful in achieving its goals. More than half of the school’s students continue their studies at higher level. Another point to take note is, many past students want their own children to experience the world of ‘Lern- und Lebensgemeinschaft’ at Bielefeld and thus are sending them to the laboratory school. Apart from these positive responses, the survival of the laboratory school for last thirty-four years is itself an evidence that an alternative school can work and it can very well be part of the same society where public schools also exist.

¹⁰⁴ Spiwak, Martin: ‘Das Lernen lernen’, in: <http://www.zeit.de/2008/23/OdE32-Bildung> p.4

¹⁰⁵ Spiwak, Martin: ‘Das Lernen lernen’, in: <http://www.zeit.de/2008/23/OdE32-Bildung>, p.4

¹⁰⁶ Spiwak, Martin: ‘Das Lernen lernen’, in: <http://www.zeit.de/2008/23/OdE32-Bildung>, p.4

5 Conclusion

5.1 Illich and Hentig's approaches: some similarities, some differences

Ivan Illich and Hartmut von Hentig both personally got acquainted with the North American as well as European education system and know therefore the negative and positive sides of both these systems. They both went to normal, conventional schools and still criticize it extensively. In fact Hentig thanks to the experience and the life in a conventional school, he was forced to think for an alternative.

Hentig went to Cuernavaca, Mexico to meet Illich at CIDOC and was impressed with Illich's courageous efforts to go against the main stream. Hentig found that the atmosphere at CIDOC was indeed very different and unimaginable otherwise. He agreed with Illich that school was having a very strong counter productive character. Instead of creating equality in society it was increasing the disparity between poor and rich, between schooled and non-schooled. They both also agreed upon the fact that school has been institutionalized to such an extent that schooling has become indispensable and life without schools unimaginable. People have stopped questioning the functions and objectives of school when in fact school has been failing to achieve them. The fixed curriculum, compulsory attendance and the marketing of education have been hindering an individual's growth extensively. Illich and Hentig were both convinced that the school therefore needed to be 'deschooled'.

For Illich, a social thinker deschooling meant giving up on the school as an institution and creating learning communities instead where an individual will learn in full freedom. In contrast to that Hentig, an educator realized that the society can not exist without the institution – school. Thus for him deschooling meant re-forming and re-structuring school, to start over again with the school.

Both Illich and Hentig are foremost concerned with the personal growth of an individual. They both want that an individual learns in a free atmosphere on his own. Illich concentrates more on the adult whereas Hentig focuses on the development of child. Thus Illich also deals with the society at large, about consequences of industrialization and modernization. For Hentig a child and his personal, psychological and physical growth in a balanced manner are more important

5.2 Analysis of the alternatives

Is deschooling just a provocative idea with no potentials? Does it need to be taken seriously if it has no concrete solutions to offer? After considering arguments of Illich and his theory of deschooling and on the other hand the criticism on deschooling it is clear that the critics too are not denying the fact that there is a need to reform the education. They also agree that the current education system has some measure drawbacks. But backing off or abolishing an existing institute which is already part of the society or in fact a society itself but on a small scale, can not bring about transformation. Therefore a practical option for 'real' learning would be making use of other existing institution around us. For example value education could be learnt in the family itself or a visit to museum, archives will definitely give individuals ample information about historical facts. This alternative is suggested by John Goodlad. He says: "Hope for the future rests with our ability to use and relate effectively all those educative and potentially educative institutions in our community-home, school, church, media, museums, workplace and more."¹⁰⁷ It will be then possible to learn through experience. This is what Illich also suggests.

As seen in the examples of CIDOC or CIDECI and UniTierra, these institutions have worked with varied degrees of success. But one has to keep in mind that these institutes are meant not for children but rather for youngsters or adults. The individuals do not spend their entire time to learn there. In case of CIDOC for example most learners came there for a short period and went back to their home countries to pursue their careers or studies. At CIDECI some adults come only on the weekends to acquire certain

¹⁰⁷ Latta Ruth: 'The Critics of Schooling', Canadian Journal of Education, Vol.14, No. 4, p.493

skills. Although both CIDECI and UniTierra stress upon the fact that the people coming to their institutes are often without any educational background, we have to consider that these are adults, who have already gained some knowledge through experience, observation and through living in a community. These institutes therefore can not take place of schools and the society can not do without schools.

What I personally find difficult and here I agree with Illich that to change any institution other institutions also need to be transformed. A society consists of various institutions which are closely linked up. Thus abolishing a single institute from this chain would only cause disaster. Logically speaking the whole society should be deinstitutionalised. But whether it is feasible and desirable is the important question. If children are not sent to the school [as they exist today] how will the parents engage them? Will the parents have time, money and energy to spend with their children? Can the five or six year's old children profit from the learning networks?

Let us imagine that all the conventional schools are disestablished and all children go to alternative schools only. This according to Illich will again be a norm and soon the alternative schools will gain characteristics of the current conventional schools.

Although Illich could not come forward with powerful arguments and evidence to support them, at least he has been to a great extent successful in making people think about the institutions in their societies and also questioning their affectivity, viability and efficiency thanks to his provocative style.

Hartmut von Hentig's implementation of his theory into practice in the form of the laboratory school seems quite practical and logical. Hentig's laboratory school is not fully private and secluded from the public. Hentig has experimented a lot while designing his school. But at the end of the day, the laboratory school is still a school. Although it has some very distinct characteristics, is based on the principle of learning through experience and by doing, the school still follows a certain curriculum. The children are taught, instructed and from 9th class onwards their competencies are also graded so that they can pursue further studies or career without much hassle. This shows that Hentig has accepted the fact that it is practically impossible to change the entire system and he in fact also does not oppose the system strongly. If the pupils from laboratory school are

going to study later at the public university, they must possess all those skills and knowledge 'required' by the University. Hentig's aim seems to show people that change or reform is possible and that one can start with the reform step by step.

The above analysis shows that a total restructuring of education system or replacing the school with some other institution is not feasible as the common man all over the world still strongly believes in the institutions, in the concept of schooling. For a middle class person schooling means education and thus schooling opens the door to professional career. Conventional, mainstream, traditional schools will remain an essential part of the society unless the majority of the people see the disparity between the objectives of the school and their results and then re-plan the school and the education system in general.

5.3 Scope for further research

Like the indigenous people in Latin America, the tribes in India are also facing similar problems. They are forced to schooling which in fact dissociates them from their daily reality and their own community. Western concepts like modernity and development are disturbing the lives of these tribes and they are finding their own values, traditions, viewpoints suddenly strange and inferior. It would be interesting to see whether these tribes could learn otherwise, without having to go to school as seen in the cases of the indigenous people of Mexico and whether opposing the idea of schooling can save the under-privileged communities from losing their identity in long run. I definitely think that comparing the situation of the indigenous community with those of the different tribal communities in India, taking into consideration the factors like economy, political structure and social order; will prove to be an interesting study.

The first known Indian alternative institution to gain education remains until today, the 'Shantiniketan', structured by the Nobel Prize winner writer and philosopher Ravindranath Tagore in the early 20th century in Kolkata. Even today Shantiniketan which now serves as a university especially for Fine Arts enjoys respect and popularity in the society. Since then there have been a number of non-conventional schools started in India. For my personal interest I would like to analyse the working principle of these

schools to find out how far they resemble or are similar to the alternatives suggested by Illich or Hentig.

The research topic focuses on the school system but it is not restricted to schools only. Illich's perspectives as well as the examples of alternatives bring into discussion the imbalance in the world order, the discrepancies and the hierarchical relationship between different communities and how the conventional schools implicitly foster this imbalance and inequality. Further research in this direction could focus on how the politically and economically ruling nations, international organisations like UNESCO and projects like creating the European Higher Education Area [EHEA] directly and indirectly influence and control lives of people in the developing nations. The objectives and aims of such projects and involvement of international organisations need to be discussed critically and on a wider scale.

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