

Freedom as Quality of Education: a Post-modern Perspective¹

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One American High School principal sent the following letter to his teachers on the First Day of school:

Dear teacher

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness: Gas Chambers built by engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot and burned by high school & college graduates. ***So I am suspicious of Education.*** My request is help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters; skilled psychopaths educated Mussolinis (my addition). Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human. (Tubbs, 2005:279)

Introduction

This paper is informed by Amartya Sen's idea of 'freedom as development' (Sen, 1999). I am contending that freedom is the means and the end of education, a type of human development. Any development effort that ignores the human agency as an autonomous being to decide its fate defeats its purpose. Education, therefore, should aim at expanding freedom through freedom. Expansion of freedom is viewed both as the primary end and as a principal means of development, the Indian economist and noble prizewinner, Amartya Sen, has argued (1999:xi): "Development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency", (Sen, 1999:xii), he added. Education in the context of student development, therefore, means extending the freedom of the student in learning. Learning is something that comes from within the student and cannot be imposed

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from without. Learning takes place in a context of enjoyment and play of the learner and cannot be imposed otherwise. "The joy of learning is indispensable in study as breathing is in running" (Tubbs, 2005:274). Learning is a search for meaning with one's own reflections and new experiences, which is based on freedom. Immanuel Kant had long argued that freedom could not be separated from the will of the person. "An action could be called free if it is solely your decision" (Kant, 1991:41), he added. It must be un-coerced by anything external, including a teacher, and must be grounded in your own reasoning and your own thinking (Tubbs, 2005:274). Modern freedom, as defined by Kant, demands a different kind of teacher, one that respects the freedom of all individuals to grow and develop into autonomous persons, able to think for themselves. This kind of teacher aims to be servant to the emancipation of students from all forms of tutelage, a self-incurred, or externally imposed and their free and un-coerced development (Tubbs, 2005:260).

It is no longer universally accepted that the job of the teacher is to teach facts about the world as if they were true or as if they were not themselves politically, historically and socially contingent. It falls to the critical teacher precisely to reveal to the students how and why the view of the world that they have grown up to believe in may only be one particular version of what is true. There may be other ways to understand the world, which they have not been taught. Even the idea of truth may be compromised by its contingency upon certain social and political preconditions (p.265)

Quality of Education

I am not sure what quality is all about; neither am I sure how quality can be brought about. There are as many theories of quality as there are writers. These different views of quality are often confusing and contradictory. Middlehurst (1997: 45-56) views quality as a spectrum between two polar ends, fitness for purpose, and academic excellence (p.46). Barrow (1999: 27-36) has listed four different perspectives of quality:

Quality as exceptional, something distinctive and elitist, often linked to the idea of excellence, of high quality-but often unattainable by most.

Quality as transformation, which deals with the empowerment and enhancement of the student, allows them to take control of themselves and the learning process.

Quality as value for money is where the outcome of the educative process is seen as at the lowest possible cost.

Quality as fitness for purpose is where the product of the institution meets the needs of the consumer. This is often seen as a measure of the extent to which an institution can fulfil its mission or educational program to meet its aims (p.30).

Whereas quality as excellence is often unattainable (Sanyal, 1992), all that imply quality-management have often been carried out in the form of academic surveillance by government and resulted in dramaturgical compliance to the system (Barrow, 1999:27). The latter is a type of game played by the actors to minimize risks of the impact of power on their livelihoods.

I will focus on reviewing and commenting on two of the four quality perspectives, **quality as transformational** and **quality as fitness for purpose**. The two remaining definitions of quality are subsumed somehow in both perspectives in this paper. In the substantial part of the paper I will expand the later into various types of pedagogies for critiquing the former.

Quality as Fitness for Purpose

Fitness for purpose equates quality with the fulfillment of specification or stated outcomes. Fitness for purpose has been a widely used approach by quality agencies. The notion derives from the manufacturing industry that purportedly assesses a product against its

stated purposes (Harvey, 1994:47:70). The purpose may be that as determined by the manufacturer, or according to marketing departments, a purpose determined by the needs of customers (Shumar, 1997).

In education fitness for purpose is usually based on the ability of an institution to fulfill its mission or program of study to fulfill its aims. This definition stresses the need to meet or conform to generally accepted standards, such as, those defined by an accreditation or quality assurance body, the focus being on efficiency of the processes at work in the institution or program in fulfilling the stated objectives and mission (Harvey, 1994:47-70). In this case, it boils down to (1) value for money approach, owing to its focus on how the inputs are efficiently used by the process and mechanisms involved and; (2) the value-added approach--when results are evaluated in terms of change obtained through teaching and learning.

This definition of quality of education is a derivative of the manufacturing process and is underpinned by the laws of the market and the interest of the owners, which is rooted in the enlightenment project. The latter is a western tradition of education that has held to a notion of education that sees teachers as justified in having domination over their students both in terms of what will be learned and how it will be taught. In large part, the teachers believed that their power over the students was ultimately for the students own good (Tubbs, 2005: 246). In the ensuing discussion, I will present a critique of the dominant paradigm of learning (the pedagogy of enlightenment) using five different critical perspectives, which are designated as pedagogy of nature, Marxist pedagogy, postmodernist pedagogy, pedagogy of cognitive interest and spiritual pedagogy. In the end, the paper concludes by attempting to set agenda for quality of education in Ethiopia.

Pedagogy of Enlightenment

In his famously book, **The Republic**, Plato described the process of education as one of enlightenment. He used a Cave allegory to articulate how education happens and what it is for. Plato describes the Cave in the following terms:

Men and women sit chained in a Cave with their backs to the entrance and to the light outside in the upper world. They are unable to turn around. A fire burns behind them, the light from which projects shadows of objects onto a wall in front of them. Knowing only what appears before them, the prisoners believe the shadows to be reality, to be real objects. The shadows are the only things they know and thus they believe them to be truth. Indeed, they measure each other's intellectual capacity by the degree to which they can memorise the sequence in which the shadows appear. In fact, the shadows are of objects carried by people between the fire and the prisoners, objects that are unknown to the prisoners.

(Tubbs, 2005:246)

Plato suggests that if one of the prisoners was released and 'forced suddenly to stand up and turn his head, and look towards the light' (Plato, 1992:204) at the back of the Cave, he would undoubtedly feel pain and not a little confusion. Contrary to the wishes of the prisoner, and despite the pain, Plato suggests that this prisoner might then be dragged up 'the steep and rugged ascent towards the entrance and held on to until he had been dragged up to the light of the sun' (p. 204) outside the Cave in the upper world. The person doing the dragging-the 'teaching'-is, it is assumed, a 'philosopher king', one of a small elite who governs the state. The upper world represents the realm of philosophical thinking and knowledge (Tubbs, 2005:247).

The light of the upper world will at first blind the released prisoner, who has been used only to the darkness of the Cave. In time, however, his eyes will grow accustomed to this new world and he will

gradually be able to see again. This prisoner is undergoing what, for Plato, constitutes **enlightenment**. At first this person sees only the shadows in the Cave. When he is turned round, however, his world is turned upside down as he is suddenly faced with things that he has never previously thought possible. He sees how the shadows are produced and realizes, of course, that he has never before questioned their appearance. This reveals to him that the truth of the Cave is only an **illusion**.

The nub of the discussion concerns the right of people to learn themselves and not to have self-appointed guardians protect them from unsettled, but it ensures that life is genuine and experienced by each of us freely, in our own ways. The philosophy of the teacher lies at the very heart of this dilemma. If education is enlightening, unsettling and potentially destructive, is it right to teach for this? Is it right to teach for the shadows or to prepare the path out of the Cave? If you leave people in the Cave, you deny them the freedom. If you force them out of the Cave, you imposed a model of truth upon them that they have not freely chosen, and that they may even reject. Many have interpreted Plato's model of enlightenment in the **Republic** as the first Western example of the power of the teacher as master of the will, the mind and the bodies of the students (Popper, 1962: 87).

Making a similar observation, Isaiah Berlin (1999: 62-63) sums up very clearly the problem with the enlightenment model of education. "Is there", he asks "higher self within me which I can attain to only by a process of education or understanding, a process that can be managed only by those who are wiser than myself, who make me aware of my true, 'real,' deepest self" (pp. 62-63)? If there is then one may experience these teachers as oppressors. In short, he said 'they are acting on my behalf, in the interests of my higher self' (ibid). But 'there is no despot in the world who cannot use this method of argument for the vilest oppression (p. 64). The conclusion that we can draw from this, then, is that this kind of argument for enlightenment rests on the assumption that

There is only one true answer to every question: if I know the true answer and you do not and you disagree with me, it is because you are ignorant, if you knew the truth, you would necessarily believe what I believe; if you seek to disobey me, this can be so only because you are wrong, because the truth has not been revealed to you as it has been to me. This justifies some of the most frightful forms of oppression and enslavement in human history.

(Berlin, 1999:64)

Here, is a dilemma of the enlightenment model for the teacher. You can teach for the shadows, but that denies freedom, or you can teach against the shadows, but that imposes freedom. "You are damned if you do and damned if you do not". "In either case, you assume the position of the master over the student, knowing what is best for them, on their behalf" (Tubbs, 2005:249). The teacher, in training and disciplining memory, displays many of the characteristics of pedagogy of a teacher who is master over the students through memory. It portrays the teacher as the master having complete control over the production of the student and the student as a blank slate on which knowledge must somehow must be impressed and then recalled through memory:

The art of printing involves certain materials and processes. The materials consist of the paper, the type, the ink, and the press. The processes consist of the preparation of the paper, the setting up and inking of the type, the correction of the proof, and the impression and drying of the copies. All this must be carried out in accordance with certain definite rules, the observance of which will ensure a successful result.

(Tubbs, 2005:251)

Instead of paper, we have pupils whose minds have to be impressed with the symbols of knowledge. Instead of type, we have the class-books and the rest of the apparatus devised to facilitate the operation of teaching. The ink is replaced by the voice of the master, since it is

this that conveys information from the books to the mind of the listener; while the press is school-discipline, which keeps the pupils up to their work and compels them to learn (Tubbs, 2005:251 quoting Comenius, 1910:289).

Given the responsibility of teaching students what is good for them, what is right and wrong, the teacher is acting as a master both in terms of controlling what students learn and how they ought to learn. The pedagogy of the teacher could not at all miss the methods of memorization, recalls and examinations. School disciplines are created to ensure accountability of the student to his teacher. Thus, classrooms were designed so that everyone could be seen; timetables were drawn up so that it could be known where everybody was at any time throughout the schooldays; testing took the form of examinations so that each could be watched, judged, measured and allotted his/her deserved place in the hierarchy (Amare, 1998:43-44).

In May 1990, in the First Conference of the Faculty of Education of the AAU, I wrote against the use of the word, **molding**, in education (Amare, 1998: 39-40). Molding treats the student not only as an object, but also as something you can make any kind of shapes from (p.45). In addition to dehumanization, the language used treats human beings as shapeless objects. In the present research, I have tried to explore how power was used in the educational culture to the detriment of the development of autonomous thinking and creativity. I have shown how the system encouraged compliance in learning dictated by interest groups to normalize a system that was defective and totalitarian. To justify my argument, I have tried to clarify how the enlightenment paradigm, as an industrial import, with its present emphasis on systems theory, management of inputs, processes and outputs, empowered the teacher as a master and treated the student as a servant.

The next discussion will focus on attempts at critiquing the dominant paradigm, the master-servant relationship of pedagogy, and review the alternative perspectives using the ideas of Nigel Tubbs (2005), in

his recent publication, *Philosophy of the Teacher*. It will present different paradigmatic pedagogies that aim at providing education which mainly serves the purpose of student emancipation, and thus, reversing the power relations, in favor of the student.

The Pedagogy of Nature

It is not strictly accurate, however, to suggest that the history of modern (western) education has been solely based on the idea of teacher as master and learning as memorization through discipline and punishment (Tubbs, 2005). The idea that a child could be likened to a young tree that, in order, to grow straight and true required a **gardener** who would intervene at all points to ensure rigid and foreseeable progress, came in for much criticism earlier on before the emergence of the ideology of critical pedagogy and the postmodernist view of de-construction role of the teacher. It is precisely, the intervention in the development of the student that stultified his growth, argued Rousseau (1993:4). There was innate (in everyone) path of individual development that, if left alone, would allow each child and each student to develop naturally (Rousseau, 1993:5). Trying to better nature came to be seen as a crime against nature (Rousseau, 1993:5). Rousseau was arguing for an education in which nature is the master and in which the teacher would only serve this master, never dominating or interfering with it. "Do nothing". The most important role of the teacher is to prevent anything being done", Rousseau argued (p.5).

Instead of keeping him mewed up in a stuffy room, take him out to a meadow everyday, let him run about, let him struggle and fall again and again, the oftener the better; he will learn all the sooner to pick himself up. The delights of liberty will make up for many bruises. (Rousseau, 1993:5)

The whole secret to natural education for Rousseau is not that the child will grow up to be wild, uncontrolled and unconstrained, on the

country, he will, through the hard natural lessons of pain and frustration learn to adapt his desires to his abilities. He will learn to curb his appetites to that which he can, through his own efforts meet for himself. "The man is truly free, says Rousseau, who desires what he is able to perform, and does what he desires and has put these two in mutual equilibrium through his own natural education" (Rousseau, 1973:49). These kinds of thoughts led to what is called child-centered pedagogy seductive in itself as it operates in concealed forms instead of direct appeals to the power of the teacher as master (Usher, 1997:99-112).

But there is still another paradox to the idea of natural pedagogy. The teacher still has roles to rearrange the learning process which can only do so as a master himself, again conflicting with the view of the teacher that seeks to replace the shadows of the Cave with autonomy of the students to learn for themselves (a contradiction for the teacher who only aspires to be a servant to God or nature).

We have seen how in the model of enlightenment, the teacher is caught in a dilemma of domination. If he teaches his students that the shadows are the truth, he is keeping them in dark, preserving their ignorance and their heteronomy. If he forces them out of the Cave, with the resulting pain and confusion, he is imposing freedom and enlightenment upon them. Either way his intervention contradicts the idea that the students must think and learn for themselves. But there is a way in which the teacher can be aware of this dilemma, yet still be a servant to the free development of the students. "Instead of teaching within the Cave, teachers may now teach about the Cave, introducing the notion of contingency.

Contingency is the experience of the dependence of individuals upon the society in which they live; it is the experience of being shaped and formed in and by the norms, values and customs of their society. Individuals are socialized into its language, its fashions and its ideas. When these factors are totally assimilated by individuals, they appear merely as things that are taken for granted and as constituting

common sense. In general terms, what we are and what we think, even our most critical thoughts are all contingent upon the social conditions and definitions that make them possible. Perhaps everything we believe ourselves to be is a social construction (Soper, 1997). What is a teacher to teach if even the critique of the shadow is another shadow? Second, some people in the Cave benefit from believing these illusions.

Praxis: Marxist Pedagogy

Marxists often ask: To what extent are teachers just lackeys of the state, educating students in ways that the state demands? Are teachers free to make their own decisions about the most appropriate education for their students, or are they merely passive conduits of the dictates of others? Marxists introduced the notion of Praxis as a true source of education. "Recognizing the importance of contingency, Marx argued that human thinking does not create its own social world, rather the social world creates, shapes and gives content to human thinking (Tubbs, 2005: 247). He also argued that our activity and the social world are separated or alienated from each other in the modern world. In other words, there is a gap between the world we work on and us. There are two aspects of this argument. The first is that the worker is separated from what he produces. Unalienated work would have no such separation. The worker would express himself through his work, creating a unity between human activity and the material world. This type of work would be called praxis. "Learning is fundamentally a social phenomena". The second aspect is that it is not only physical activity that alienates us from the external world; it is mental work as well.

We can think about the world, but we cannot immediately turn our thinking into practice, an objectification process. This means our activity, which ought to be praxis (a unity between our conscious and willed activity and reality) becomes divided. Work becomes split into my activity and an object out there that is not mine, even though it

contains my work. My work has taken the form of an object. It has become objectified and I have lost part of myself to it (Cox, 1998:3).

In the context of alienation, thoughts about what I ought to be, do not translate into my actions, because I cannot choose the conditions, which I act. It looks as if I am saying one thing but doing another, the very separation between theory and practice (Cox, 1998:4). According to Karl Marx, if the social world is characterized by alienation then our work and our thinking are already separated into worker and object. But when the social world is characterized by praxis, our own work and our thinking are united with the world.

The application of praxis to teaching and learning is however difficult. For instance, when a teacher asks (tells) the students to do a piece of work, an assignment, etc, the student experiences alienation to carryout the activity. When another forces the work upon students, it cannot be self-determination, or praxis. Often, students experience schoolwork totally alienated from them. What they are asked to do, when and why, are all out of their control. What they make or write is not their own, indeed most often it used to judge them. Thus their work is produced in an objectified form and is returned to them in an objectified form as marks sometimes as punishment. Even if the work is praised, the students still understand their work; their learning is not praxis (valuable and worthwhile as an end in itself) but rather as a means to an end, perhaps for praise or to avoid the embarrassment of failure or punishment. In this way, the students are alienated from their learning.

Critical Pedagogy

In his most influential book, **Pedagogy of the Oppressed** (1972), Paulo Freire saw the alienation of the student from his own learning and his lack of praxis in the world as grounded in the way the teacher-student relationship produces master servant relationship. It is one where the teacher is active and the student is passive, one where the teacher teaches about the world as if it is a fixed object, immutable

and external and the student simply has to collect information. The teacher aims to fill the students with contents that are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality of that engendered them, emptied of their correctness and become a hollow, alienated and alienating verbosity. He refers this kind of education as banking method. "Here education becomes an act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and the teachers a depositors" (p.45).

Here one observes that the teacher becomes an agent of learning who transmits to the students an ideological picture of how the world is which the students have learned. There is no praxis here, for learning is always separated from the reality of students' own experience and the curriculum never grants legitimacy to any knowledge that it has not sanctioned. This is not creative inquiry or independent learning; rather it is merely the receiving, filing and storing (p. 46) of deposits of knowledge that are placed in the containers called students. Paulo Freire advised for the use of dialogical pedagogy in order to emancipate the student from the illusions of the pedagogy of the oppressors.

Pedagogy of Postmodernism

More radical critical theorists have taken the argument of alienation and objectification further and argued that the value of human labor is transferred into the value of commodities. The work of the human species becomes objectified or exists in the world only in the form of objects, Marx calls this "commodity fetishism" meaning that the value of human work appears to fall not in the activity of the workers but in the objects they make (Perlman, 1968).

Postmodernists have taken the Marxists' observation one step further. They argued, "The worker himself is objectified". He has no value as a human being, only as an object in the market place, where his most powerful form of objectification is a consumer. This human being is viewed as a potential source of profit and is targeted by the media, by advertisers and by the pleasure industry—collectively the culture

industry—not to question this objectified version of itself, is indeed its rue self and, rather, to spend our lives in the pursuit of personal pleasures through the entertainment industries (Tubbs, 2005: 273). Consumerism is a kind of “I” which justifies its mere existence by its consumption of the other which is necessary in a consumer society and which is accentuated by the entertainment industry (Amare, 1994).

Postmodernists envisage that teachers seek to educate for an “I” that, through critical questioning, becomes an other to itself so that it might so then recognize the “otherness” of other people. Donald Barnett (1997) has identified three types of criticality when defining the scope of criticality. These are critical reflection (self-criticality), criticality on the world (others) and criticality on knowledge (preconceptions, misconceptions). Reflective thinking (Schon, 1991); action research (Schmuck, 1997); and autobiography (Creswell, 1998) became very popular methods of inquiry in contemporary pedagogy to address the issues of critical pedagogy. In his book, the **Structure of Scientific Revolutions**, Thomas Kuhn (1970), expounded none eternality of scientific truths, where the latter had often undergone a process of crises and change depending on consensus (or absence of it) of scientists. He made a distinction between the idea of ‘normal’ science and the irregularity of paradigm shift.

Pedagogy of Cognitive Interest

It is not however clear whether or not all types of knowledge ought to be doubted or considered oppressive and subjected to interrogation in the context of critical pedagogy. Postmodernists have eschewed all science as being Meta narratives, incredible because of its universal, and eternal nature and power-biases. They have advocated reconstruction of local knowledge by celebrating differences and diversity. Science is to be deconstructed because it was based on the enlightenment project, which in turn underpinned it to justify the misdistribution of power. In his book, **Knowledge and Human Interest**, Jurgen Habermas (1972) observed a relationship between

knowledge and cognitive interest. Habermas classified the modes of inquiry into three kinds of knowledge systems---empirical-analytic science, historical-hermeneutic science and critically oriented sciences. These three approaches incorporate cognitive interests or what Habermas called constitutive of cognitive interests. These interests are technical cognitive interest, practical cognitive interest and emancipator cognitive interests, respectively. Guided by such interests education is to liberate the child from all forms of dependencies.

Thus, in acquiring knowledge of empirical analytical sciences, the student needs to have a technical interest in acquiring objectified knowledge, knowledge whose source is the scientist and the expert. In acquiring this knowledge, power of technical control is a medium. That is, the technical cognitive interest takes form in the medium of technical control. This is true usually in the natural sciences: chemistry, biology and physics.

In acquiring knowledge of historical hermeneutic sciences, the students need to have practical interest; the interest of attaining shared meaning, and consensus. It is concerned with assisting historic understanding, both self-understanding and understanding of others (Lyytinen & Klein, 1985: 214). In acquiring this knowledge, readiness to act according to common tradition is required. Thus, power is the medium in which the practical cognitive interest takes form. Here power is shared between the learner and expert. These usually happen in, for example, political science, sociology, and history. They direct their attention at interpreting the meaning of texts and actions.

In acquiring knowledge of critically oriented sciences, the student needs to have emancipator interest, the interest of thinking freely and critically. Here the power of self-reflection is the medium. It unites the two other knowledge interests and provides a means for investigating how they relate to each other and their dynamics. Examples of sciences dealing with this kind of knowledge need are:

social science when it takes a critical view of social institutions; **psychoanalysis** when it is dealing with our inner compulsions and distortions; **philosophy** when it deals with the validity of our knowledge, etc., (Lyytinen & Klein, 214). That is the emancipator cognitive interest takes form in the medium of self-reflection. Here we see a conflict between Paulo Freire's notion of interest for liberation and Habermas' interest for control. Power in the latter is used as a medium and not as a means of oppression.

Pedagogy of Spirit

The idea of a spiritual teacher is grounded on what social science theorists advocate as the communicative approach in which the student-teacher relationship is governed by mutual love and commitment to the student. Martin Buber (1987), a Jewish philosopher, has written a great deal about how religious insights can inform the understanding of everyday human relationship. The "I-thou" relationship can be applied to the student-teacher relationships. What is offered here is not understanding of the teacher as pursuing either a project of enlightenment or its critique, not that the philosophy of the teacher as either master or servant, but a spiritual philosophy where both meet in a genuine encounter (Nasr, 2002).

Buber sees education as a struggle against forms of estrangement in a world where humanity becomes alienated from itself. For Buber, true human relations are to be found in "dialogue" or in what calls "**I-thou**" relations. But in opposition to **I-thou** relations the world finds itself in the "**I-it**" relations. In the modern world the I-it relations dominate the I-thou relations.

The I-It relation has a resemblance in some ways to the notion of objectification that was considered in previous discussions. For Marx, objectification succeeded in treating people as things and converted the objects of their labor into commodities. In consequence, the value of the work—in effect, the essence of the human species—becomes invested in commodities. What are lost in and to objectification are

genuine human relations among people, and between people and the natural world.

Marx's critique of alienation is similar to Buber's critique of the I-It relation. Buber says of the I-It relation that it enables accumulation of information' (Buber, 1987:5) between people whose relations to each other are thus characterized as between objects. Such people are, therefore, merely 'surrounded by a multitude of "contents" (p.12).

In the I-It relation a man 'rests satisfied with the things that he experiences and uses ... He has nothing but objects'. That this reduction of the living process to things or to facts is the overriding characteristic of modern life: this is the exalted melancholy of our fate, that every Thou in the world must become an It... Any communication between I-It (i.e. between the I and the object, or the information, or the person treated as the object) is prompted solely by the need of objective understanding. Against the I-It relation one sees the genuine human relation of I-Thou, where you and I experience ourselves in and as our relation to each other such that it is impossible for either of us to become fixed classified or objectified. The relation of I-Thou is mutual. 'My Thou affects me, as I affect it. All real living is therefore a meeting. (Buber 1947: 11-15).

In view of this, Buber argues, the I-Thou relation exists as dialogue in which here is a genuine change from communication to communion. Thus, in the I-Thou relation someone addresses us through 'inner speech' (Buber, 1947: 21).

The I-though relation is implicitly a critique of or re-education in regard to our taken-for-granted assumptions about others and ourselves. Closely related to the idea of Buber is a French Philosopher, Simone Weil (1977) who argued that studies in schools are not interesting for their particular content - - what they are about—but only to the extent

to which they really call upon the power of "**attention**" (Weil, 1977: 53).

According to Weil, in the relation between teacher and student, there is a third partner, the work and experience of relating. This work for Weil was *attention* and for Buber *influence*. These two encourage endless curiosity about everything, the ability to pay attention and an acceptance of pathlessness.

In the Ethiopian context, the imported paradigm, of the enlightenment project has displaced the traditional education values (Elleni, 1995: 164), such as, emphasis on *gebregebinet* (What is virtuous or moral), emphasis on *moya* (skills, ability, craft, profession, etc.) and mutuality of communal life. Zāra Yaeqob and his disciple, Wolde Heywot's questioning or interrogating stance of inquiry and trying to give reasonable justifications for any belief were instances of traditional Ethiopian education that closely resembled a philosophy of education that negates the enlightenment model (Bridges, Amare and Setargew, 2004: 531-544) and approximate the views of Buber and Weil. The former three authors have designated the questioning and interrogating type of education as "deep knowledge and the light of reason" (ibid).

Agenda for Ethiopian Education

- Examining existing paradigms of education and pedagogy
- What the present curriculum is doing in extending autonomy of the student
- Educational environment, educational context, autonomy of the teacher and freedom of students

It is clear at the outset, from my presentation, that I had no intention of making recommendations. Neither am I capable of doing it. It was, however, obvious that I had the following preconceptions, a priori thoughts:

- The educational paradigm that we are using in modern education is grounded in the post 16th century enlightenment project of the European manufacturing economics and rigid hierarchical human relations underpinned by **power**, Kingdom of man, which replaced the European medieval education system, which was founded on **wisdom**, the kingdom of God (Nasr, 2002:xii).
- The ideology of child-centered education, which was later introduced in the 20th century, ostensibly to confront memorization and cruelty of the teacher, is a distortion of student freedom and autonomy and a disguised form of the ideology of the enlightenment project, the marketization process.
- The ideology of outcome based educating is a derivative of the enlightenment project and employed in the philosophy of the Machiavellian ethics, "**the end justifies the means**", in contrast to the more human principle, "**the ethics of care**" (Gilligan, 1982).

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