

Next Insights: Critical Inquiry into Narratives of Lived Experiences and Literature

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This qualitative critically reflexive paper explores the transformative potential of Literature and gives expression to lived experience as context, and advances interpretation to a new performative level when challenging existing dehumanizing systems in a compassionate teaching ethos. Approaching teaching as an interpretative narrative inquiry from a phenomenological perspective, this author's narration about her experience of teaching literature brings the literary text as one provoking curriculum right in the middle of the contemporary world context (Sohaila Javed, 2004), and raises specific critical issues about the problem of meaning in con/text: What kinds of meanings, what kind of truths does an interpretation of a poetic text claim? Whose views are not being acknowledged in that interpretation? How do texts have their own effects and how the wider social context shapes its production and reception? And with what effects?

Inviting critical reflection and action on humanistic issues, this paper calls all readers to challenge their monological epistemologies and work together for a "transdisciplinary" learning experience which, according to Giri (2002, p. xxi), requires a "dialogue between different – mutually competing – perspectives." It is time for intellectuals, scholars, and teachers worldwide to return to the phenomenological world, where life experiences its meaning, and understand "the shared, cultural, and historical horizon" that in-forms

and presupposes “the ontological priority of belonging whereby we are always already practically involved in the world” (Kaplan, 2003, in Qualitative Research, 2009, p. 27), and as a consequence, coalesces with a revitalization of the humanistic ethos that has been taken over by self-aggrandizing individualists the world over.

With its theoretical frames running throughout the paper, it adopts the qualitative methodology with focus on phenomenology and narrative inquiry, has Endnotes (words with superscript), Basic Glossary (words in bold), author’s creation (words in italics) and Bibliography sections.

The new critics are critically aware.... They are beginning to adapt themselves to the new fact that literature is not a special pursuit and this cannot be cultivated away from life, that it is very much a part of life and society. And what is more, it has not only to interpret life and society as they are, it has to probe deeper to find out why they are what they are and upon that context, to suggest new directions and impetuses. This new criticism will not simply destroy; it will fulfill and provide us with the next insights!

Chittaranjan Das (1982a), *A Glimpse into Oriya Literature*, p. 35

Introduction: Waiting in the dark

It was late September 11, 2001: dark, somber, tearful. I sat abridged in darkness, and looked intently into the dark mosaic that had taken form in uncreative hands, and had stunned thought and numbed feeling. I was grieving at the collapse of humanity once again, and gazed strangely at Ricoeur's phenomenological space of our experiential living world. I found myself on the hermeneutical¹ Circle of Time² wondering on the human question: what it means to be a human subject, and meditating on the meaning of human existence. Orpheically³ in the realm of the dead, and, like Orpheus, I was experiencing the fullness of death that overwhelms living beings with its sterling truth and passion for life. To me, it was about understanding curriculum as lived (Aoki, 1986), that is about understanding the complementarity of body and mind and body-subject in a new key.

These are stirring moments when "the fragility of human understanding" comes, and enlightens existence (van Manen, 2002). I was grieving again, reliving my significant pain as it was originally lived in moments of the dead, my parents' death in 1992, experiencing body presence in the perceptual experience of the loss (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). I was no more "purely bodily" "purely psychic" but "body-subject" pre-reflectively reflecting upon the "unbreakable bond between the human person and the human life-world." And realizing that it is only at this phenomenological reduced space of nothingness, we bare our attention inwards, and then, with a heightened sense of the pathic and passive receptivity, we forget who we think we are, and remember the beings We Really Are. Here

configurations shift, meanings resound with insightful perception and sensation, calling us forth to the praxis of reflexive thought and action.

This is no mere philosophy nor non-philosophical reflection, but an ever deepening experience of human phenomenon with a strong sense of human relationship between self and all others that puts one's entire existence into question. We become a pathic text then, and in the passion of human affection and suffering that the experience of grieving recalls, we attend a healing ceremony, where as Ricoeur's feelingly reflective subjects (1982, p. 18), we rise by means of "a corrective critique from misunderstanding to understanding". This is a way for human understanding to arrive at the heart of phenomenological reduction, and then, move forth manifesting the spirit of generative productivity and of life (Jardine, 1992).

It is not a mere shift in thinking, but a foundational qualitative shift in the process of how we see ourselves when re/membering our grief and pain. Here is the possibility of renewing ourselves from what Jurgen Kraemer (2000) proposes as the creative source of our origins. And remembering Merleau-Ponty: "[The] haunting of the present by a particular past experience is possible because we all carry our past with us in so far as its structures have become 'sedimented' in our habitual body" (1989, p. 33). As our body-subject responds to the pristine moment of pain, and captures the gazed at object- grieving human being, relationship to things, people, events and situations begin to be understood in the context of the subjective and personal expression of grief. One such grieving event

expands the existing limit of grief into circular and collective mourning, as one sweeping surge of pain overtakes the body and frequently, one realizes that the same surge is back, and then, it never goes.

The whole way of life changes with this lingering phenomenon ... brings a phenomenological perspective to authentic experiences and their respective unified sensibility in the general drama of pain. According to Dilthey (1985), “the aim of phenomenology is to describe experience as it is lived by people.” And from the same phenomenological perspective, “consciousness of one’s experience is to know it as lived in the world,” and its reliving capacity and inherent ability makes it respond to the other lived, and life experiences that silently embody our relationship to things, people, events, and situations. Moreover, Husserl points to the reality of experience and therefore, to relate to experience is unquestionable (Lock & Strong, in *New Approaches to Qualitative Research*, 2010, p. 31) as well as focusing attention to the manner itself in which we meet the situation and live it (p. 52). Perceiving thus, our understanding of the world changes perception itself and it then includes the mind and body as the sacred enclosure. Such a change of perception could effectively transform “societal patterns of representation, interpretation and communication in ways that would change everybody’s sense of self and the intelligence of the other”. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty (1989) has referred to the body as the natural self, which, I perceive, contains a natural passive receptivity and responsiveness to actual experiences. One’s body intends and forms one’s point of view on the world, and it

expresses itself as an existential-practical attitude to the world. According to Boyd, one experiences the world concretely through one's body (1986, p. 82). As soon as the body senses the experience, it simultaneously allows perception and knowing to occur as well as actively co-responds to similar phenomenon and experiences. Phenomenology therefore, as a way of perceiving, responding and understanding the lived experience, guides one to:

relearn perception, to set aside the prejudices of science and common sense and let ourselves be carried along by the current of existence, attending carefully to what reveals ourselves when we remain open to the richness and variety of sensory perception. (Macann, 1993, p. 182)

For Boyd as well for all human subjects, the concept of embodiment “informs us that consciousness is diffused throughout the body and finds expression through it. We are our bodies” (1986, p. 82).

The literature (around this topic) presents a world of grief and mourning as empirically understood, with theory and research that depict observation by distanced self. Although cognitive and affective representation is evident in theory and research, it is lacking in the exploration and understanding of the transformative capacities within the individual. What still prevails is the world's revolutionary tryst in creating highly advanced technologies, and its inadvertent refusal to open itself to the conditions of self-preparedness and “technologies of self” (Habermas 1990; Giri 1994c). It still takes a narrow view of human beings as rational agents, and despite Enlightenment proclamations, restricts its vision regarding “Beyond⁴” to what is different and not to “higher” (Heller, 1987), and also to moral

consciousness and communicative action, as something that can be put to instrumental use, pointed at by Habermas (1990).

Looking at the human in a highly innovative and hermeneutic way will open a whole new chapter in the relational domain that explores the spiritual sources of the Self, especially of the rationally argumentative actors on the world stage, and all those engaged in public service. We require a spiritual enlightenment here, an enlightenment which reiterates the unconditional ethical obligation of the intelligent self to the intelligent other as Giri advocates (1996a) as does Taylor (1989), and supports caring for the well-being of all individuals and all institutions. The challenge of human concern today requires such a qualitative shift in our life, orientation, and commitment by which well-being and goodness become a matter of character, habit, and action. It returns us significantly to the wisdom of the body as the natural self that is firstly always present and experiences the world, “for it is through the body that one gains access to the world” (Boyd, 1986).

What else lacking in phenomenology of perception is the inward cognition of a reflective subject, phenomenology of heart perception that aims at a much deeper understanding of the nature and meaning of our everyday experiences, and relations to the living world. It is this study of the real world that for van Manen (1997) means “the world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it” (p. 9). The pre-reflective receptor to all experiences is the HEART, which with its inhabiting capacity and its humanistic culture opens its therapeutic gates to the suffering humanity, and can, with its warm

presence in the body, become a genuine guide to humanity. Its wide wakefulness and unselfconscious functioning makes it a welcoming home to all. The in-sight of the perceptive heart brings understanding of what it means to be human, “to fulfill human nature, to actualize more fully who we are” (Boyd, 1993, p. 127). Only then, we get self-knowledge and self-realization of what we are as “a human person” (Riceour, 1981).

This is essential knowledge and wants integrating all otherness into self-identity for completing Knowledge, knowing Truth, and thus embracing Wisdom. However, this is not an easy process amid social forces that aim at minimizing cultural togetherness. Limited phenomenological perception has contributed to alienation and indifference, and now, phenomenological perception of the heart asks for a new self-understanding, a perceptive awareness of, and aliveness to deep experiences that make the relational world without ever separating from the Self or the need to separate from others. Others come in here as Intimates, to someone who has surrendered one’s constricted ego-identity, and thus moving beyond dualism that enables one to become the Compassion (Buddha) or Care (Noddings) or Love (Rumi) and thus, relate with the world as its embodied consciousness. Only narcissistic egocentrism constricts Self, bringing estrangement from true self and others, and consequently, ignorance of its luminous spiritual fundament that is significant of all living creative beings. Awakening comes as intuitive light or “luminous openness” (Wilber, 1990) from direct In-Sight into the interrelatedness of beings. It is insight that the heart perceives, and creates desire for eager expansion in mutual otherness that is the

way of holistic existence. Constant illumination from the inner temple takes people beyond thinking to living pre-reflectively on the current of existence (Heidegger, 1968).

This luminous existence has Meister Eckhart's *gelazenheit* as "an attitude of man refers to thought only secondarily. Primarily it is a matter of a way of life--a life without representation of ends and purposes" (Reiner Schurmann⁵). It is self-awakening to human life spontaneously, and living it unselfconsciously in the passion for affection and suffering, that renders "our mortal world enough" (Auden, in Davison, 1970).

Affection and **emotional intelligence** as light of knowledge and wisdom of heart decenters humankind as human individuals of innate worth: active, immaculate, innocent with love of humanity. This calls for the "transformation of intimacy" that looks for the democratization of intimate relations (Giddens, 1992, p. 196), and looks at family as the *media res* of social transformation, and asks all to participate vigorously in this project. Taking *Text* as a springboard of action, it asks each to be the actualizing, dynamic principle of Compassion, Care or Love in the spontaneous moment that restricts the possibility of disbelief, and allows self to remain open and true to the original principle of Being (Heidegger, 1968). This is putting one's self into continuous performance (praxis as practice), a display of spiritual energy that is resourceful like nature, every now, every then. This *now* is on a circular momentum, and never dies, only waits for an anxious *beqarari* for our trust in its capability and inner capacity to run its curriculum. This is one hermeneutic teacher's silent code of conscience about teaching as a

way of happening. It wins through our spirit's expansion in the outer circles of hermeneutics, as we work creatively for a vast human solidarity and sustainability.

Narration within a humanistic narrative: a living Inquiry

Divine Wisdom is destiny and decree made us lovers of one another.
-Rumi

*Wisdom of loving every other is endless, and destination sure:
Beloved.*
-Sohaila

Entering teaching like *Socrates in the street* (Das, 1992) concerns the whole of humanity and begins with an inquiry into the foundations of our life, and awareness about its multidimensional origin and numinous dynamics, that includes “the material and the spiritual, the collective and the individual; to evaluate its provident being that can contribute to equity and human dignity” (Giri, 2002). Life is a co-extensive web of relationships, and involves a normative criticism of the quality of these relationships, and the desire to provide a horizon of normative direction to this fundamental architecture. Its fascinating mystique invites a new description of Relationship in life; observes and describes the dialectic of coherence and incoherence, harmonies and continuous contradictions in life; and creates beings with an infinite ingress, moving with the desire for a creative reconciliation in the Between of life itself.

MacIntyre sees Life's architecture of Relationships joined by the narrative unities of our lives (in Clandinin and Connelly, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), and I understand, because of their conjoint engagement, how these modes of togetherness cause our happy being or otherwise. So sad, eventful eleven of September 01, refreshed

Death's enormous obsession for my parents, and carrying "vexations of the negative" (Jardine, 1992, p.118), made all times become agonizingly thinkable, and moments, a living impossibility. Here life is stilled in the discontinuity of living narrative, and with life tumbling down to ever-penchant Death, it joins me to another human tragedy, and loses me to impermanence and human suffering the world over. This is the stuff all humans are made of, and through Death, have the real sense about mortal finitude. These paradoxes harangue existence between these two facts that situate thinking between life and Life, or between life and non-life, where this narration matters to hearts, and puts them in a permanent relational space that points "a way that does not foreclose on the future" (Jardine, 1992, p.118). Without constraints, this place also has "the reality of our internal relations" (Griffin, 1990), and intimate relationship that connects us perennially to Wordsworth's *still, sad music of humanity*. So our lives blend as we learn well as we teach on compassionate sites, where all humans are destined to understand the nature of human life from intimate beings that join "the narrative unities of our lives" (MacIntyre) to literature as a pertinent living pedagogy.

These meaningful texts are an invitation to enter the flow of conversations, and challenge teachers to widen their "universe of discourse" (Giri, 2002, p. xxii). Their generative correspondence and pervasive moral sense can then, be contrasted with perspectives on lived experiences captured in texts as readings of life. Each text is a storied life on storied landscape that is lived experience, and when "interpreted and/or re-interpreted" (Smith, 1991) by a class that has

60 souls or more, there will be several perspectives on one life that we share as humans. Things then, are liable to change conspicuously and become “more complicated and ambiguous.” There is still *room* for possibilities for a new educational pedagogy and practice to be born out of a love of ambiguity which is at once a love of the generativity of new life as a gift bestowed upon the Earth (Jardine, 1992, p. 123). The interest that texts arouse for they “have more than one meaning with no single true interpretation” (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 56), make con/text an exploration site for knowing human life-as lived in a deep way (Jardine, 1992, p. 124). This text, like innumerable others, is a narrative of experience that unfolds our connection in walking along a way that is mortal, personal, and really human at the very core. September 11 is thus, heavy with memory and thought as we cruise in strange progression into each other’s lives, and in full reciprocity, respond to the “whole story not just fragments from what is most obvious in action” (Turner, in Roemer, 1995, p. 145). We evince such thought from literature and our lives that are also “fragments of theoretical traces and live(d) experiences through (ex)citations” (Turner, in Roemer, 1995, p. 145) that originated in the predilection of my parents, and now flow spontaneously in this narration about lived narratives.

The authentic teaching site is the most obvious, where learners and teachers come together as *educational co-beings* (Sohaila Javed, 2004) over their texts: readings of life mimetically captured as snapshots for interpretation, and interpenetrating spheres of existence and non-being in personal lives with impersonal generalizations. It brings an astonishing range of students’ response

to how the teacher's imagination and intellectual seriousness engages with the text. It is a prelude, naturally to the students' engagement, and how their engaged presence in the textualized context is a starting point for the students' prelude to a lasting relationship that is partial to all humans. "Their story, yours, mine --it's what we all carry with us on this trip we take round our texts, and we owe it to each other for respecting our stories, and learning from them," says James (1981).

So these texts of literature arouse our imagination that is alive to Perception and Creativity, and make us live in harmony with Relationships that are partial and impartially related in the space of intimacy. These inmates of narration have the impetus for much changing possibility when narratives pulse the heart of humanity, and along with the Beloved amidst these multi-polar contextual pieces, become the third authentic teacher, Beloved's beloved, working for transformative learning in educational circles.

Methodological Enterprise

This phenomenological interpretative inquiry illuminates the interaction of subject and object, and using the Experiential method, enquires into "real subjects knowing real objects in real situations, reflected upon in such a way that it is difficult to ignore or downplay any dimension of subjectivity, objectivity or setting." Langan (in *Experiential Method*, 1990, p. ix) describes this undertaking as "the true style of human knowing and activity," which comes to the beloveds in Education from their love of the world and from their communication with things and people. These interpretive events call for investigation of humanness and human experience that cannot be understood by scientific methods that use "ready-made frames

imposed on the retrospective facts of human consciousness discretely and unidirectionally.” Such frames are rigid and inflexible and therefore, not appropriate for understanding the dynamic flow of human experience that integrates various experiential elements into one at every moment in the flow, constituting the meaning of experience, on the one hand and envisaging the meaning-in-the-making, on the other. Every moment has meaning, as it accommodates each and allows things to exist in the myriadness of human existence and consciousness. It is important to see this understanding as undergoing as each subject experiences self, the other, the world, and whose expression reveals the lived experience in act; an experience which is possible only through the subjectivity of consciousness that is receptive to meaning, and open to the real, experienced as personal.

According to this Experiential Method, the researcher as teacher:

participates in the constitution of self-meaning, ... To locate as appropriate access to meaning as it is being constituted through personal action, one turns to experience. For it is in experience that the irreducible nature of personal meaning is disclosed and can be described.” (Sunnie & Jim Kidd, 1990, p. xv)

The researcher as teacher reaches the students’ expressions of lived existence, and these expressions are likely to evoke in the reader a vivid image and a sense of reality, and a faithful reporting of the classroom discourse may also awaken in the reader the same feelings experienced by the teacher and her students as subjects (Ellis and Bochner, 2003). Such narratives of lived experience contribute to the literature on human experience and also disclose

the moral dimensions, values, the social meaning of persons in relation with objects and other subjects in the wealth of human experience. This is the objectivity of which Merleau-Ponty speaks, when he points out that “subjectivity is built on the intersubjective relation, which, in turn, brings about true objectivity” (in Sunnie & Kidd, 1990, p. xviii). These connections between the pedagogical and the personal, the world community at large, ask for a focus on interpretive inquiry as a way to interpreting lives in the educational setting, inviting, challenging, moving texts around and beyond epistemological ruptures toward an embodied pedagogy, where the question of exploring “the ways in which mind and body can be made to cooperate,” discovering “what new combinations make good wholes in human life” (Woolf, 1938, p. 62). These new ways and combinations remind us that we are in the world, and as Ricoeur maintains, “because we are affected by situations, and because we orient ourselves comprehensively in those situations, we have something to say, we have experience to bring to language” (in Erika Hasebe-Ludt, *Qualitative Research*, 2009, p. 218). The complex interpretive events of researching, teaching and writing ask us to make sense of the lived realities in the specific settings we live and teach and also re-define our work with texts that weave texts and contexts together to create new meanings, making us reflect on the hermeneutic question of ‘What is going on in these con/texts?’ that therefore, becomes a necessary part of research, and con/textual connections and lived experience of an embodied pedagogy, a relational inter(con)textual act.

These are new heartfull ways of researching, of writing and relating as Leggo (2003) reminds us, so that pushing beyond the usual, we may move in new words and worlds, with a commitment to hearing others and understanding other points of view, so that we respond to each other in heart-felt ways that are in Virginia Woolf's words (1937), "whole, bright, deep with understanding"- that deepen our sense of community and responsibility to transform the civilizational malaise and misery in the contemporary world as its central curriculum, and because we love the world enough, take responsibility for it, as leaders of the young, to reconsider the possibilities in Education for our collective survival and renewal.

How Narrative Inquiry

Using the personal autobiographical story as a form of expression for the autobiographical study of my own teaching practice, and narrative as "the representation of an event or a series of events" (Abbott, 2002, in *New Approaches to Qualitative Research*, 2010), I intend to compose a life that, according to Bateson (in *Qualitative Research*, 2009), involves "a continual reimagining of the future and reinterpretation of the past to give meaning to the present," remembering events that seemed to have meaning within the narrative of life as a whole. While remembering my classroom praxial experiences and interaction with students, I reflect on my pedagogy and explore the interrelationship between the kinds of narratives we use to understand our contemporary world in different domains, and the impact that these narratives have on our lives. On a first reading, this can be perceived as a challenge to my part of the world, but, in truth, it returns me to the intention of my research, that

is to bring the world's attention to certain discourses that claim absolute truth about the world. These claims are, in fact, constructions saturated with power, and because these powerful discourses come from what Foucault called a "regime of truth," created by the discursive networks of macro-sociological forces and formations that work invisibly in the context of discourses that are equally not obvious, working so effectively that involves both the communicative behavior and the text-artefact. Foucault (2002) sees the operation of these events and documents for creating and imposing "boundaries of what can be meaningfully (functionally) expressed within the scope of the archive" (in Blommaert, 2007, p. 102). He further contends that these discursive events and communicative behaviors make us speak from "within a particular regime of language", and I may extend, from within a particular regime of archive that has been historically formed over the centuries, and since it is from within these deeply embedded rules that we speak, we cannot describe that archive of colonial practice. These archives have social effects, making it all the more necessary to see, with Foucault, how power works in con/texts and then, why it becomes a necessity for reflective practitioners to grapple with such essentials and add voice to the literature by teaching in a season of great untruth (Kupenda, 2003; Smith, 2006), while being teachers within the academy.

With autobiographical narrative inquiry as my means of analysis, it became possible for me to bring in the memory of teaching experience and depending upon "Personal experience" methods that join experience and story as referred to by Clandinin

and Connelly (2000), I could move inward, outward, backward and forward while reflecting on my teaching discourse and context as data that I could use to reflect on my identity as an academic for my own edification, while also opening the “regime of truth” for analysis and taking it as transformative space for positive change. Opening a “three-dimensional narrative inquiry space” for the “personal and social (interaction); past, present, and future (continuity); combined with the notion of place (situation)”, I inquired into mystories of experiences in a narrative way that turned me inward “toward the internal conditions, such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 50), and outward “toward the existential conditions, and simultaneously moving backward and forward” that made me attend to the “specific concrete physical and topological boundaries of inquiry landscapes.” As teachers and students co-meet in the deeply relational, temporal, contextual, and experience this as something “textured and knotted by difference” and multiple identities that are emergent in stories we live by in academic settings, that shape and reshape our thoughts and words, feelings and interpretation of ourselves, alas awakening an awareness of the profound interconnection between ourselves and all others as our lives etch indelibly into the future and reclaim our relationship across time and place.

It is all about simultaneous be(com)ing of teachers and students as educational co-beings as well as the poetic text in the classroom context (Sohaila Javed, 2004). Also Roth (in Qualitative Research, 2009, pp. 234-243) posits attention to the state of being of this collective agency,

so absorbed in the activity that nothing seems to exist. There is a sense of flow, but there is no longer an “I” standing against the world out there ... no more distinction between myself as a living being and a social or material world that contains me, but is distinct from me.

Therefore, as co-creators of their learning environments, both teachers and students as *educational co-beings* cannot abstract themselves from their intuitive relations with the world (Bourdieu, 1992) as well as socio-cultural and political relations with the outside world that contains them. While immersed into the collective reading practices, students are provided with the opportunity to “tune” intuitively into their **educare’s** (Sohaila Javed, 2004) internalized, non-evident knowing, whose “silent pedagogy and intuitive alertness and sensitivity provides optimal conditions for absorption and participation in learning as well opens up transformational processes in learners” (Roth, 2002, in Qualitative Research, 2009).

Educational spaces that advocate transmission of experts’ skills in their students, condition the learning, self-organization and transformation within “conventional clustered spaces of learning in the form of memorized facts, teacher-centered instruction, prescribed outcomes, standardized tests, individual achievements, isolated subjects, and classrooms dissected from the rest of the world” (Roth, 2003). On the other hand, fluid educational space extends transformational experiences beyond class, into society, into life itself. Here students’ perception of themselves as citizens of the world resituates them within a wider and larger world context, where they are more open to exploring interconnections and experience interrelations between students and all other (f)actors coming into play when learning occurs. Such an interdisciplinary and

constructivist approach to learning, as Roth posits, happens in environments created to cross the boundaries between the teacher and the learner, between different disciplines, and between the individual and the collective, bringing about reciprocal enrichment of the individual and the collective through participation in an ever-changing world and developing relations with the real world outside.

Rememory of context and participants

Thus undertaking doctoral study and research at the University of British Columbia (September 2000 – September 2004), was a relational journey that was open to bringing in teacher knowledge and professional contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988), with a focus on “stories we live by”, that is a narrative way to understand the connections among teachers’ knowledge, contexts, identity (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998), to which I would add, teachers’ performances with texts in contexts of mutual learning.

Here enters my story of a South-Asian, Muslim teacher working with a predominately Muslim student population in a Pakistani institution. The texts under study are dominantly western. The immediate context of my pedagogical story is the academy. The specific educational setting is the class of 1992 with 60 young female learners in the Federal College for Women, G-10/4, Islamabad. And the focus of phenomenological, interpretive inquiry is “Say this city has ten million souls” (Auden, 1939).

Re-membering Co-participants

This personal pedagogical philosophy is a new condition of knowledge that is anchored in our collective internal relation, and puts me at once in compassionate spaces of self-insertion, self-forgetfulness and other-membering, and respond to such questions as ‘What do you make of it for your teaching situation?’

Such questions are invitational pulls that ask for “connected knowing in which the knower is personally attached to the known” (Buber, 1967d), and characterize compassionate teaching as Beloved. This is some-being in the service of that deeper etymological sense of what it means to be fundamental, namely, showing a connection to the *fundus* (land) where each human is grounded in a believing humanistic tradition, where humans are so centrally related to each other that “we may say our faith has our humanity as its foundation and our humanity has our faith as its foundation” (Buber, 1967d/1969, p. 117). This has its own sacred seriousness that invites us all from mere being unto becoming human.

This is doing humanistic hermeneutics by a person who is conscious of the historical moment within a narrative background (joined by you and I relation). S/he is urged by the historical moment “to take his or her own uniqueness to a given situation, without ignoring the larger text under study”. “A great character,” Buber says, (1947/1965a, p. 116) is a unit of contraries, and s/he “knows the story of a people well enough to violate it when necessary to meet the demands of the historical moment” (in Arnette and Arneson, 1999, p. 143). The trust and “unity of contraries”, as Buber claims, allows the

story to grow as a way of happening. This is nourishment to teaching people, and transforms pedagogy into a vocation that is to live and act within the kind of difference between what we know and what we do not know. This is the most common center: The celebrated Between, the middle of things where something poetic happens between persons, and when real living with poetic patience begins.

One such infinitely infinitesimal moment of 1992, in classroom 12, taught me about the “unity of contraries” in a multi-polar world, and pluralities that urged me to go beyond cultural determinations and rehearsed responses to the Holocaust, and confront contextualized holocaust in the contemporary now.

W. H. Auden’s poem “Say this city has ten million souls” (1939) is a live epistemological context that stirs the whole human, inspires human sentiment, and created a pedagogical event with a class of 60 young female Muslim learners, well-versed in their historical, cultural tradition. Standing in their midst, I was immediately transported deep into the spiritual reality of the primary words--ten million souls of this world wiped out in the World War II human tragedy. This pageant of Death plays upon natural compassion and compunction, and points to some-being in reality that is beyond “a priori understandings and uses of techniques” (Buber, 1967). It also warrants genuine connection to a given situated moment in the text under study, and wants us to live together in the general perspective of human *ethnos* that leads us away from narcissism to the window. Opening it and pointing to what was outside, was my pedagogic responsibility, and inviting them to this vast extermination

site of 10 million beings, and their offering a genuine response, my intense desire.

An intensive recourse to the centuries' old understanding of the Jewish problem brought poetic ambiguity that revealed "a positive third alternative to either individualism or collectivism" (Buber, 1967d, p. 118). My insensitivity to a technique mentality, and innate desire to open conversations for a young citizenry unduly focused upon rules and methods could bring 'real communicative living' and an all-inclusive meaningful significance to others as human. This inclusion is a coming-in response to the spiritual reality that then, asks of all to commit to the wisdom of communicative action, not just introspection. This is teaching in-deed with sensitive texts as pointers directing us toward responsibility without dictating.

Such tell-tale stories as meaningful significant invite the world of I and you for a "historically sensitive implementation" (Buber, 1967d). Students' Beloved teacher, as compassionate teaching, will attend to the other in the text and respond, permitting the reality of the between to be visible and heard in this discourse. A sensitive steeping forth of an athletic imagination and sensitive being calls for courage from this warrior pedagogue to point them to basic truths in reality, that "living in the detached spirit is evil" (Buber, 1967d), and worse when the evil is left unattended. Attention to basic moral constructs is focussing attention to 'self and others' combine as life constructs, and our combined responsibility and promise to put into deed a behavior that is sensitive to the unique context. Here sensitivity to human suffering is evocative of compassionate

teaching. Such a view of story and mode of interpretive courage, as Buber says, empowers us to hope and has the power of turn.

This power begins to function when one, gripped by despair, instead of allowing herself to be submerged, calls forth her primal powers and accomplishes with them the turning of her very existence. (1966b, p. 124)

The sensitive teacher's poetic sense of guidance does not dictate or force, but simply and silently calls for their courage to listen and respond, and offer not their obedience but themselves as responsive and responsible people. With much said and still unsaid without the 'false' sureness of vision presented by a demagogue, life can be listened to in this divine moment, and much can be learned from life's vicarious experience. Here the praxis of *compassionate communication* is grounded in intellect and faith that sees a genuine meta-relationship of cross-cultural intimates and strangers in one huge transcultural combine. Here Erasmus, Martin Buber, and I open hearts to both individual and the large humanity because as Buber affirms "our humanity has our faith as its foundation," and our faith as Enlightenment supports us as the interpenetrating and interconnected realm of humanity is opened and widened by literature.

The intentional impulse here awakens us to see the way we are centrally related to each other, and find Socrates and other gifted beings, and literary constructs like Shakespeare and Hamlet, Lear and Keats, Rumi and Iqbal rushing to our aid with a "sense of reciprocal connection" (Sharansky, 1988). At times the survivor in us attains a feeling of participation with this extraordinary creation, and feels one with Natan Sharansky⁷ in the description of his survivor mission:

Back in Leforortovo [prison], I felt a spiritual bond with these figures; their struggles reverberated with my own, their laughter with mine. They accompanied me through prisons and camps, through cells and transports. At some point I began to feel a curious reverse connection: not only was it important to me how these characters behaved in various circumstances, but it was important to them, who had been created many centuries ago, to know how I was acting today. It is this mystical feeling of the interconnection of human souls that affects our decisions and choices, and empowers us to inspire or disenchant those who had existed in the past or those who will come in the future. (Judith Herman, 1992, p. 208)

This is one way we can challenge the foundationalism of so many pedagogic metanarratives underwritten with “a priori understandings and uses of technique” (Buber). Techniques and much programmed learning are intentional moves dedicated to the maintenance of status quo. Statistical domains define life as formula, ordering meaning seekers to search for firm and/or predetermined answers, and the meaningful significant to step forward and speak with much scientific clarity and such mastery so that confusion is no longer an option and a consequence, so Buber contends. It is an outright refusal of the hermeneutic notion of understanding that occurs somewhere between ambiguity and illumination (Gadamer, 1983), and is an affront to the “contours and textures of the life we are already living ...” (Gadamer, 1975, p. xii).

Here hints and suggestions, even half-guesses as poetic strokes can break the technique mentality and settled notions that ask for neat and clean answers according to planned outcomes, and lessen the possibility of our living in the between with poetic ambiguity and patience. It is in the more real world of human *ethnos*, we can understand knowledge in the sense of thought that penetrates darkness and unreality to what is “really real” (Buber), comprehend

and visualize some-being which can be called universally human, and discover that we can be really human. It is only then that we can reason “to promote the art of life” (Buber), and simultaneously transform the meaning of our personal existence by making it the basis for social action, and also enhance its transformative significance, by turning that intention into a reciprocal and rich outcome.

The sacred serious self that respects human diversity is always seeking human meaning. Now in the denial of life to those ‘ten million souls’ of W. H. Auden’s poem, I take full responsibility as human to take 61 souls including myself, repeatedly to a larger context beyond the frontiers of our own social and cultural existence, and see them become a kind of witness to the terror of extermination in all contexts. In making dialogue with Jerry Samet (1990) on this context, he argued, “Can we literally feel that everyone must remember the Holocaust? That there is something of import achieved in recounting the whole story to, say, primitive tribesmen in New Guinea? (p. 418). The imperative is to remember this Holocaust and think the unthinkable holocaust that we, in our unthinking ways, without intermission, regularly inflict upon others and asunder our mortal world apart. We find “ominous resemblances” (Mario Benedetti⁸) in discussions of “comparative” holocausts we have occasion to witness to date since the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis. There is also the parallel “horrible and systematic human massacre” (Benedetti, 1992) being inflicted blindly on all the continents by the Imperial Cannibal in every culture through the centuries. And now more than ever, the persistent and dexterously

planned extinction of a part of human race that has less power or is powerless in the domain of the powerful. Auden's single poem occasions this singular event, and becomes an objective standard by which 'literature' can be judged for its universal importance. Such conservative critics like George F. Will (*Literary Politics*, 1992) claim that its "aesthetic" measure, which has no political location, enables transcendence over particular time and place, and relates to human problems in every century, and is "not just germane to current twentieth-century problems" (p. 24).

It is in this sense that 'literature' extends its borders beyond multiculturalism, and inspires border crossing for relational meetings in its great culture. It asks for "reading over and over, and has many meanings" (Mortimer J. Adler, editor-in-chief of the 1990 edition of the Great Books of the Western World, in *Beyond PC*, p. 60). In this "sense of reciprocal connection", we fill the void of human uniqueness by becoming dreamers of One humanity, being aware of our humanity with the understanding that Terence had: *Homo sum, nil human, a me alienum puto* (I am a man and nothing human is alien to me). Here we come to terms with the very conditions of human existence from which all the possibilities of *human Becoming* arise as possible alternatives. These conditions arise if we understand and believe in what Eugene Ionesco urges us to resist ideologies for they separate us, and follow our dreams/ideals and anguish as these bring us together. With all of humanity within heart, and with a commonsense understanding of the spiritual reality that says 'I don't know,' I invite my *educational co-beings* to be with "an idealist, a

dreamer, a genuinely spiritual person who, they say, is not modern enough” (Auden, in Davison, 1970).

Interpretative Narratives of Experience

Living in classrooms as intimate, this “not modern enough” hermeneutic teacher, passionate about literature and its living practice, follows instinct, and practices it by letting the “narratives of experience” (Dilthey, 1985) in the text under study, enliven and nourish her students as well as herself. The first silent reading of W. H. Auden’s ‘Say this City has Ten Million Souls’ acts as a resistance to knowledge, and brings anticipated silence. This silence is provocative, and allows the poetic soul to take it as ‘another love’ for a creative thought in silence, and astonish it with a sensitive reading of the poem. Its emotional expressiveness engages them at once to listen deeply to the words their beloved breathes life into:

Say this city has ten million souls,
Some are living in mansions, some are living in holes:
Yet there's no place for us, my dear, yet there's no place for us.

Once we had a country and we thought it fair,
Look in the atlas and you'll find it there:
We cannot go there now, my dear, we cannot go there now.

In the village churchyard there grows an old yew,
Every spring it blossoms anew:
Old passports can't do that, my dear, old passports can't do that.

The consul banged the table and said;
'If you've got no passport you're officially dead.'
But we are still alive, my dear, but we are still alive.

Went to a committee; they offered me a chair;
Asked me politely to return next year;
But where shall we go to-day, my dear, but where shall we go to-day?

Came to a public meeting; the speaker got up and said;
'If we let them in, they will steal our daily bread':
He was talking of you and me, my dear he was talking of you and me.

Thought I heard the thunder rumbling in the sky;
It was Hitler over Europe, saying: 'They must die':
O we were in his mind, my dear, O we were in his mind.

Saw a poodle in a jacket fastened with a pin,
Saw a door opened and a cat let in:
But they weren't German Jews, my dear, but they weren't German Jews.

Dreamed I saw a building with a thousand floors,
A thousand windows and a thousand doors:
Not one of them was ours, my dear, not one of them was ours.

Stood on a great plain in the falling snow,
Ten thousand soldiers marched to and fro;
Looking for you and me, my dear, looking for you and me.

This purposive, coherent and soulful reading intended to create a welcoming context for Auden, for students to recognize the poet's ethos, and let nothing go without saying. Historian and literary critic Jonathan Morse (1990) notes, "On the page, history is present in every text, 'historical' or not" (p. 5). It endorses us to seek complexity, rather than avoid it. Such a reading manifests itself physically in words, and presents a coherent rendering of the relationships between individual trauma and cultural interpretation. It

offers a rich, meaningful context for each trauma and its continuous representation.

Words that come out of history are complicated; they are cluttered with etymology and connotation. And that slows us down when we try to understand them.... But words that make up their histories as they come into existence leap at us unchaperoned.

First they are in the leader's mouth [poet's], then they are in ours. It is a wonderful gift. We can hum along with the words passing through us; ... And as we respond to the music we make [along with the poet's rhythms], we will feel ourselves coming into our being. We will be wrong, but we will believe that we know at last who we are. (p. 5)

This music, played from heart to heart, awakens sensibilities and imaginative perception, and provokes thought that pushes against itself, and creates new space for another reading. It encourages this person to work for a genuine response--no matter whether spoken or silent, where each of the participants really has in mind the others in their present and particular being, and turns to them for establishing a mutual relation with them. The second intent glance at those ten million souls as the passionate reading ends, brings each to speak with herself and her student group, in strangely circuitous ways of this happening with 'strangers,' that places them all in the heart of human crises and interaction. They listen to Auden's deep hurt on the plight of the German Jews expressed in a lyric form, and the unexpected way it links the suffering of this group to the vast human group, and thus universalizes the sense of man's inhumanity to man [sic].

Walked through the wood, saw the birds in the trees;
They had no politicians and sang at their ease:
They weren't the human race, my dear, they weren't the human race.

A lingering uneasiness in the lines catches us as we get immediately connected with different social groups and their milieu in the mention of "human race." The words embody a real human situation--a situation that has become ever so widespread and universal that the entire human race lingers in the rhythms from doubt and worry, to resignation, to fear and a sense of cataclysmic doom and finally, extinction. It stuns all listeners, here and now, with a drastic clarity and pathos, "Looking for you and me, my dear," and brings to mind the humanitarian unreality of human beings who do not care, bringing home the thought that the problem is immediate and the question is "where shall we go today, my dear?"

These emotionally strong words (actually spoken by a refugee in the poem) bring students face to face with the real of life. They are made to feel with others their anguish and their pain, to suffer with others their being traumatized, to 'feel' one with people who feel utterly abandoned, utterly alone, being cast out of the human systems of care and protection that sustain life. This is having a sense and feel of terror, of alienation, of disconnection, and the "vexations of the negative" (Jardine, 1992) that are signs of loathing, hatred, despair as will's negative inversion, and consequential ills of humanity that enter life to despoil life. They begin to imagine those traumatized, despairing and disappearing people belonging more to the dead than to the living, without the attachments of family, friendship, and community. They see with awakened eyes two historical moments

conjoined by compassion and empathy, and the othered cast as victim into a state of existential crisis. Through the threat of annihilation to others, they can sense their own vulnerability to dehumanizing experiences, the work of an inverted negativity, turning order into chaos, love into hate, beauty into ugliness, law into anarchy, balance into messiness, civility into savagery, life into death.

Shuddering to the last with this despicable picture of hate and savagery, I glimpse at the “hidden chapter” of my pedagogic text that silently conveys Alice Miller⁹’s (1983) conviction and reaffirms my own belief:

The fact that a situation is ubiquitous does not absolve us from examining it. On the contrary, we must examine it for the very reason that it is or can be the fate of each and every one of us. (p. 197)

Such an understanding invites from these 60 young female persons insurance in a humanistic promise, of humanness in them, by passing to them the secret signal of inner devastation that Virginia Woolf (1925) captured in her portrait of the shell-shocked combat veteran Septimus Smith:

One cannot bring children into a world like this. One cannot perpetuate suffering, or increase the breed of these lustful animals, who have no lasting emotions, but only whims and vanities, eddying them now this way, now that ... For the truth is... that human beings have neither kindness, nor faith, nor charity beyond what serves to increase the pleasure of the moment. They hunt in packs. Their packs scour the desert and vanish screaming into the wilderness. (cited in Herman, 1992, p. 52)

These humanistic texts evoke moral values that have moral implications for these young readers, as it ensures for them, and for future generations through them, a world hospitable to human life and

living, restoring their belief in the order of nature and natural ways of being, and the transcendent order of the Divine that gives faith and foundation to oneself in relation to others. It is also a reminder that being narcissus to human problems does not help. What helps is walking through a crisis or even imagining oneself in a state of existential crisis as those vulnerable ten millions souls in Auden's poem or millions of others who daily face The Reality of Utter Helplessness (H.B. Lewis¹⁰, 1971).

Such a realistic re-presentation of a traumatic historical event certainly challenges their basic human relationships, bringing them knowledge that basic human existence requires a relational domain to exist, and needs 'relations and relationships' as nourishment for daily living and survival. For safe continuity in the world, defining one's subjectivity and understanding the positive value of the self, and the meaningful intention of creation from this crucial centre, and responding to the needs of the communicative human moment makes the sort of "good sense" that political scientist Joan Cocks¹¹ (1989) describes:

Good sense is thought that is self-knowing... It is self-critical.... It is finally ...self-active, fashioning its own independent world-view, and working to make that view systematic, unified, and rigorous.... The cultivation of such self-knowing, self-critical, self-active thought is ... a preliminary condition for people giving a conscious direction to their own activities and taking an active part in the creation of world history. (p. 87)

Like Cocks, I believe that there is a coherent relationship between literature and consciously lived life, and that such a relationship "makes its major moves back and forth between some individual train of thought or action or sensibility and the larger, collective political

and cultural world” (Cocks, 1989, p. 87). Texts offer literary possibilities for such deeper exploration, for knowing like Henry James (in Roemer, 1995, p. 347) that “Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, ...”, and then, extending this knowing as an act of cultural criticism gives meaning to this choice of subject. As Des Pres observed, “There are always, for any subject under the sun, worldly conditions to be met--social, political, cultural-- when asking: Why this event? At some point, also, one must ask: Why me? (1991, p. 3).

And I have attempted to make this question: why me? an integer in my approach to teaching. Such critical inquiries keep us alert and our teaching an experience *sui generis* that appeals to people’s “good sense” (Cocks, 1989), creates good sense by generating conversations and interpersonal communication that helps us find reality in relation with other selves. This situates all humans in an interrelational communicative space which, according to Rogers, depends on “a sensitive ability to hear,” confers “a deep satisfaction of being heard: an ability to be more real, which in turn brings more realness from others” (1980, p. 83). It has the potential for bringing understanding and the possibility of transforming one’s way of life, and identifying ourselves with the good that is beyond our sense of self. This draws us to the reality of the Good that is also about seeing our own beauty and truth, and taking “enriching and enhancing” of Self as reality. It is about a rebuttal of crises from such ingots in narratives, when public figures with artistic sensibilities read poetic texts aloud, find meaning between text and person, and call their person to make meaning between different people together, and then argue for or against the ideas their subject raises.

Pedagogically, I understand that the highest priority is in having children and young people gain a human sense of the world as being a narrative construction that can be entered and engaged creatively; to have a sense that received understanding can be interpreted or re-interpreted and that human responsibility is fulfilled in precisely a taking up of this task. (Smith, 1988, p. 201)

Next Insights: Revisiting (con)Texts

David Smith's pedagogical calling (2006) brings us close to Ecclesiastes 9:4: For to him that is joined to all the living is hope, and to Shakespeare, hope is the first step to love. For a recovery of hope, we must visit such self-inspired and inspirational ex(citations) for continual relational meetings with men and women and our children in the depth of that human reality in which we are all nothing but human. These deep spaces of meaningful significance must be revisited for receiving compassionate and empathetic knowledge that relates my 'I' to your 'thou,' which with its uninterrupted intimate relatedness, has the tendency to become: I am you (*Tat Twam Asi*). Such central relatedness calls forth discernment and passion from the hearer depending on (Simon Weil¹², 1952) "the depth of the man's being from which they proceed. They reach the same in him who hears them. Thus the hearer can discern, if he has any power of discernment, what the value of words is." Such compassion implies the element of knowledge and identification.

Providing humane experience that is grounded in the simplicity of pure humanity requires an instinctive natural urge to conduct human relationships in an "effective ethos" (Langbaum, 1985). This is the poetry of Experience by people beyond greed and selfish purpose. Their abiding tenet is a desirable moral response that includes the emotional attitude of being attentive to others' needs.

as we really are--nothing. This nothingness (egolessness) is one fine attribute that frees us from the narrowness of being partial to impartiality, and extends our intimacy to all intimates and strangers alike, bringing them within one affectionate bonding. It elicits from them the humanistic promise that there is nothing in you that I cannot feel as part of myself, that I am you, and thus, am related to the whole creation, and in this relation, both can become quiescent loving beings, of the unique kind, living the new science way that is **Quiescence** with renewed humanity (Sohaila Javed, 2004).

With this kind of interested relatedness, we can visit literary texts in the *Between* for poetic interpretation that ultimately asks the two hermes, that is loving students and beloved teacher for a play of their flexible and profound intelligence and inner humanity to become understanding, that is undergoing believing and doing human beings. The particular 'horizon' of Auden provides them the opportunity to make sense of the world in a very large sense. Their humanistic conscience, and readiness to listen to the voice of their own humanity independent of 'pre-judgement' (Gadamer, 1977), allows both to experience 'I' as an organizing active center existing in a state of spontaneous activity. Here, their inmost center (where their unconscious self has not been transformed completely into some-thing by the social process) has been charged into dynamic activity, and is ready to come into relation with the 'I' of so many lives that were at stake in that particular 'horizon.'

Here two particular beings, remote from "the alienation and reification of man" (Franck, 1973), were fundamentally being transformed into living beings, opening themselves to reality in

significant ways. They were not ‘having’ an experience, rather were coming to life again, becoming active again. They were motivated to shed off their culturally determined “pre-judgement” that cast out Jews from their concept of humanity, and in the ‘now’ by virtue of “tradition as the received life-stream” (Buber, 1967d), they initiated a conversation with themselves, between themselves to say something at all, even if it is silence. Their collected historical consciousness spoke out in the ‘now,’ collided with some outspoken excerpts of humanity, and what emerged was a dramatic collision/ interplay/ fusion of their different horizons into a new understanding of “effective historical consciousness” (Buber, 1967d). This was a way of making collective human consciousness as a self-conscious act, and allowing the birthing of a new humanistic conscience.

The purpose was to give them a sense of their own “malleability and evolution” (Smith, 1988), an upward move that enlists from them a humanistic promise to attend consciously and respectfully to human subjects as living beings, and not things. This conscious resolution is to break away from what Franck (1973) calls “the alienation and reification of man” [sic], and to engage creatively in responsive humane acts, have a “greater freedom to give and receive love” (Rogers, 1980) in their experience of “human commonality” (Judith Herman). With *pure transparent humanness*, they will then be like Mme. Merle (in Roemer, 1995, p. 348), who “existed only in her relations, direct or indirect, with her fellow-mortals.”

This “common, shared reality” (Smith, 1988) is bliss for beloved teacher, and can bring feelingly humane experiences for

students now and everywhen, taking us to the hermeneutic circle as Gadamer's disciples--the hermes of human understanding, making *now* the fertile ground for repeated creative presentations of Self. It is also to countenance the "science of man [sic]" as "counter to the objective thrust of the natural sciences, and its claim that knowledge could be free from human interest." Continuing this talk, Homi Bhaba (1994) argues:

to dwell in the beyond is also ... to be part of a revisionary time, a return to the present to redescribe our cultural contemporaneity; to redescribe our human, historic commonality, to touch the future on its hither-side. (cited in Giri, 2002, p. 13)

Teachers with this kind of soulistic desire and human knowledge can play the transformative role as scholar-activists just as any other soulful artist or conscientious scientist would go to the "beyond" (Bhaskar, in Giri, 2002) dimension of experience for sources of creativity. They will have to return to themselves for Self-realization as an urge of creativity, and endorse what Indian philosopher G. C. Pande urges us to realize that the "**dialectic** of self-transformation is possible through the interaction of vision and praxis. *It implies not merely progress within a plane of consciousness but a change in the plane of consciousness.*" (Pande, 1982, in Giri, 2002; emphasis added)

Wearing the crown of wild olive, such human beings the world over, must step forward 'now' in the knowledge that time is always ripe for becoming 'extremists of love' in education at large, and strive ever against miseducation for life's end: the bliss of joy. This decree is destiny for educators as much as parents, and is expressive of a personal simple hermeneutic understanding:

*Wisdom of loving every other is endless and
destination sure: Beloved.*

Such transformative significance means much to Gadamer (1994) in a meaningful way:

Education is not a question of procedure of behavior, but of Being having become---to observe more closely and to study a given tradition more comprehensively does not constitute education if one does not remain open for the other in the work of art or the past.

[Education] thus contains a general sense for the measure and distance in terms of oneself and insofar a surpassing of oneself toward the general. (in Zimmermann and Klassen, 2000, p. 8)

These critical practices require something ‘more’ of readers and educative practitioners: the promise of creative presentations as an activity promising proximal development (Lois Holzman, 2000), and the impulse to bring the speaker and the listeners in a critical space. It carries traces of **educare**, and concerns the kind of people education can make while constructing knowledge as interested subjects with the third authentic presence in the midst, the compassionate pedagogue as unifying, protecting providence. This hermeneutic of humanistic culture concerns reconstruction after deconstruction, and answers urgent questions raised by Shoshana Felman (in Felman and Laub, 1992) in her opening chapter, “Education and Crisis, Or the vicissitudes of Teaching”:

Is there a relation between crisis and the very enterprise of education? To put the question more audaciously and sharply: Is there a relation between trauma and pedagogy? In a post-traumatic century, a century that has survived unthinkable historical catastrophes, is there anything that we have learned or that we should learn about education that we did not know before? (p. 1)

It immediately becomes a resistant to looking at the world “through imperial eyes”, and like Smith (1999, in Kouritzin, S., Nathalie, A. C., & Piquemal, Norman, R. 2009, p. 155), stops believing that “the Western ideas about the most fundamental things are the only ideas possible to hold, certainly the only ideas, and the only ideas which can make sense of the world, of reality, of social life and of human beings”. This again becomes an urgent provocative for a different way of thinking for all thinking beings in all kinds of circles everywhere about worlding the wor(l)d in a new and different key; an aesthetic ethics for educares in this new terror-stricken and terror-driven world with a worry for that is not yet and that can still be worse, and a promise, through reflexive thought and action, for the very best that is yet to be.

Endnotes

1. Hermeneutical: Hermeneutical phenomenology of Heidegger, where understanding, a fundamental concept of ontology, is the basic character of human existence, and all meaning arrives with its effective use.

2. Circle of Time: Refer to Patricia Hentz's research on grief work where the hidden processes were found to be cyclical and nonrational. *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 12 No. 2, Feb. 2002, pp. 161-172.

3. Orpheically: Refers to the story of Orpheus and the death of his love-wife Eurydice, and his desperate attempt to regain her from the realm of the dead on the condition that he will not turn around to look at her. Yet in his Orpheic desire, he turned and instantly lost her to the underworld. With the same desire, I move into the space as Orpheus, where the invisibility of the Real exists in abstraction, but may be abstracted from that realer than real by my moment-to-moment, intent gazing for meaningful content.

4. Beyond: It is to be noted that "Beyond" here does not refer only to being different but to something "higher," some supranormal, super Spiritual Being that in its 'open totality' is truly Beyond human power and comprehension, but not in Derrida's way "wholly other." Such a perspective as Derrida's heightens the difference between God and Self, self and other, rather than help us realize that God is also part of the Self. Here Derrida's "deferral" of differences will not help. While remaining cautious of the universal because of the violence of universal categories and processes, the experiential relationship

between God and self and the all “brings to consciousness the person’s own self-formative process” and the understanding to which it leads is that one reflects the other. This is a hermeneutic engagement that keeps self busy in its critique and transformation, and is a creative step to realizing “a secret unity between self and the self of others and therefore between us and the lives of others” (Sri Aurobindo, 1962, *The Human Cycles*). Such an understanding of interconnectedness is the foundational premise of true, lasting relationship, in fact of existence itself.

5. Schurman, *Meister Eckhart*, (1978), Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

6. Zizek, S. (1993) *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology*. Duke University Press.

7. N. Sharansky. (1988) *Fear No Evil*, trans. Stefani Hoffman; quoted in *Trauma and Recovery* (1992, p. 209).

8. Mario Beneditti (1992) finds “ominous resemblances between Bush’s ‘New World Order’ and the ‘Neue Ordnung’ and ‘Ordine Nuovo’ of Hitler and Mussolini” (The Middle East in the New World Order in *Collateral Damage: The New World Order At Home and Abroad*, Cynthia Peters, ed. Boston: South End Press, p. 51. Personally, there arises much resemblance in the pattern of killings done in the name of cultural politics the world over, an obvious result of the love-hate conspiracy as worldwide colonial practice. It also calls to question the worst affect our cold indifference has when we refuse to commit ‘strangers’ and even intimates to visibility and memory, and carry on small holocausts perennially and personally.

9. Miller, Alice. (1983, p. 197). *For Your own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*.
10. Lewis, H. B. (1971). *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis*. New York: International Universities Press.
11. Cocks, Joan. (1989). The Oppositional Imagination: Feminism, Critique, and Political Theory; quoted in *Worlds of Hurt, Reading the Literature of Trauma*, pp. 4-5.
12. Weil, Simon. (1952). *Gravity and Grace*. Taylor and Francis books Ltd.
13. For Heidegger, “co-being” means “not a social juxtaposition but rather a constitutive juncture or corelation” (Dallmayr 1993, p. 182).
14. Bhaskar, Roy. (1993). *From East to West: The Odyssey of a Soul*.
15. Soja, Edward. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*.
16. Brodkey, L. (1987). *Academic Writing as Social Practice*. Temple University Press.

Basic Glossary

Beqarari. Word in the Urdu language expressing anxious spiritual tension and excitement, and an insisting desire for *qurb* (nearness) and *qarar* (peace and calm).

Dialectic. Taking dialectic as a (w)holistic method characterized by both positive and negative totalities, the dialectical process enters a

new dynamics of self-reflection that leads to a fundamental transformation of the phenomena and persons engaged in the process of dialectical interpenetration. It is a process, which enables one to observe different categories or forms of consciousness arise out of each other to form ever more inclusive totalities. Love is one such flow and dialectical engagement that realizes “open totality” (Bhaskar, 1993, in Giri, 2002) until the system of categories or forms as a whole is completed, implying a life-long loving commitment and *tapashya* of transformation in the process of human Becoming.

Educare. Inspired by my commitment to ReEducation, I see Education as about educating ourselves to become the educative subject who reaches life’s meaning in educational experiences, and then, lives these in real life-situations. This is the heart of Education and affords “a direct seeing into what I am in reality. It is the healing of the alienation (in French “*aliene*” means “mad”) that hides my true identity--which happens on its deepest level to be my identity that is born and will die with all. This insight into my real condition is the wisdom that is inseparable from compassion” (Franck, 1973). Because education in the present is about “the alienation and reification of man [sic],” it asks for ReEducation that gives a positive, perceptive, and physician’s approach to life, and sees educators as ‘educares’ (Sohaila Javed, 2004).

Emotional intelligence. It attributes to qualities like understanding one’s own feelings, empathy for the feelings of others, and the “regulation of emotion in a way that enhances living.” Author Goleman (1995–9), in his book, *Emotional Intelligence*, sees it as knowledge that may be the true measure of human intelligence, and

therefore needs to be taken care of. Its implicit potential for the 'educare' of humans points to the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence into the curriculum. This is where emotional intelligence and literature can have a safe interplay, mainly for understanding human feelings and behaviors and also using that knowledge to make good, wise decisions.

Quiescence. Word in the English language means inner peace, and a wise passiveness, quietism that is interrelated with consciousness and conscience. It is a state of inner being, a contemplative state that comes through God-realization and self-realization. And those in blissful moments, in more sensitive being to the living breeze of Divine Grace, creatively unfold their internal relations with the whole creation, are quiescent loving beings, of the unique kind, living the new science way that is Quiescence with renewed humanity. It is the way we discover the learning and experience of faith and science, matter and spirit in mutual harmony (Sohaila Javed, 2004).

Soulistic. Springs naturally from soul, and soulistic therefore (my own creation), carries the content of soul activism, expansive receptive feeling and responsive understanding, and contains intense and innate endless desire.

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