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SELF-RELIANCE AS AN AIM IN EDUCATION

BY

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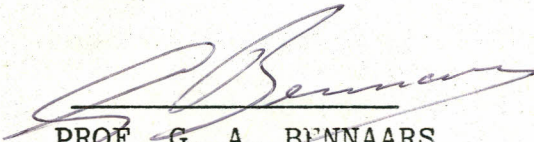
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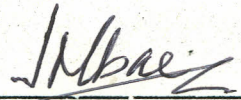


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ABSTRACT

This study has as its express purpose the bringing to light, a phenomenon of educational concern. That phenomenon is self-reliance. Our interest is primarily drawn in the direction of looking at self-reliance as an aim in education.

Because our focus is directed at 'self-reliance as an aim in education', an initial question of primary concern arises. What conception of education do we adopt? In this study, we adopt Freire's concept of education. Education is construed as 'the intersubjective process of becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it'. This conception allows us to assert that education should be seen, primarily, as a humanizing enterprise in which both student and teacher occur as subjects. Granted such a view, we are able to reject the teacher-centred perspective of education in which the student is reduced to the status of an object. We are also able to reject the student-centred perspective of education which denies the intersubjective nature of education by affirming the student's encounter with nature as primordial to his encounter with the teacher. It is in the context of our view of education that we argue the case for 'self-reliance'.

In attempting to execute the central task at our hands, this study answers two inter-related questions. (i) what is self-reliance? (ii) how is self-reliance to be achieved through the process of education? The first question presupposes a particular conception of the 'self', which further raises the problem of methodology. In this study, we desire to capture the self as pointing to man in his totality, a desire that leads us to adopt the existential phenomenological approach. With this approach, we are able to capture the self as a contingent being as reflected in its being, viz; a being-of-transcendence, a being of concreteness and particularity and a being-of-relations. This exposition is carried out in the second chapter of this study.

The third chapter attempts to look at the phenomenon of self-reliance. First, 'reliance' is posited as a mode of human involvement in the world, justified by our claim in chapter two that the self is a being-of-relations. As a human phenomenon, 'reliance' is pointed to as the self's reposing of trust in somebody or something. From this it follows that when one talks of self-reliance, one views oneself as a being-of-worth, as a being to trust. This view of oneself emanates from the dialogical encounter which 'speaks' to him in a critical way about reality. In understanding reality in dynamic terms as transformable, one comes to the realization of personal

responsibility in the shaping and defining of his destiny.

Chapter four deals with self-reliance as an aim in education. Here, education is further emphasized as a humanizing enterprise and self-reliance is pointed to as the primary aim of such an education. Comparing this with the 8-4-4 educational system in Kenya, we see that in the context of our findings, the 8-4-4 system need not emphasize vocational and technical subjects if the desire is to produce authentically self-reliant individuals. Rather, what should be emphasized is dialogue. For out of dialogue arises critical consciousness which is the fundamental hallmark of a self-reliant person; a person who is self-motivated and makes authentically personal choices. He takes the full responsibility for shaping his destiny in history.

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DEDICATION

To those who work hard to make the world a
better and more humane place.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge with a deeply felt gratitude the guidance I have received from my two supervisors, Prof. G.A. Bennaars and Dr. J.G. Mbae. In spite of great pressure from their other university obligations, they still managed to set aside time to pay attention to my study. For this, I am extremely grateful and say, may God bless them mightily.

A work of this magnitude is in a way, the product of many minds. While the imperfections and errors herein are my own responsibility, I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Prof. R.J. Njoroge and Dr. J.N. Mburu who initiated me into the world of philosophy during my first year course work. Special thanks also go to G. Ogeno, S.O. Gunga and G.K. Njoroge for the fruitful philosophical discussions that enabled my shaky philosophical foundation to stabilize.

I cannot forget to mention my beloved wife Rahab, whose constant interest in this work and her tireless proof-reading efforts, have made this study what it is. Special acknowledgements also go to Lucy Munge for sitting down for long hours typing this work.

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Finally, my acknowledgements are to God who has granted me the strength and resources to work consistently in these past two years. Glory and honour be His.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.00 Background to the Study

Contained in our topic, are three principle terms viz, 'self-reliance', 'aim' and 'education'. To develop a common platform from which fruitful discussion may ensue, we need to point to the conception this study takes in regard to these terms. This is in a way important because "... our concepts in any area of life profoundly influence the way we think out and plan; they can limit and thereby impoverish our experience or they can expand and enrich it".¹ To talk of a concept then, is to point to a particular understanding. Such an understanding presupposes a given experience born out of one's interaction - with and involvement - in the world.

Although we have pointed out three terms, our concern in this section will be with the last two. This is because, as shall become clear in the sections that follow, the task of this study will centre on the first term, 'self-reliance'. This task could be made doubly difficult were we to ignore

1. F.W. Garforth, Aims Values and Education, Hull-Britain, Christgate Press, 1985, p.9.

the terms 'aim' and 'education'. By developing a conception for these two, we would in effect be laying a firmer foundation upon which our central task will be easily executed.

The terms 'education' and 'aim', possess an inevitable conceptual inter-relatedness. To talk of education, for example, as a deliberate and intentional activity is to imply an aim or aims. On the other hand, to talk of an aim of education, is to provide education with a direction towards some perceived end normally deemed desirable. So, an attempt at an isolated treatment of these two terms, though leading to a plausible conception of each, could fail to grasp this significant conceptual inter-relatedness. Hence, our search that follows must not be seen as alluding to a dichotomy between these terms, but rather in the background of their conceptual inter-relatedness.

Education may be viewed from two broad perspectives, that is, a descriptive perspective and a normative perspective. To provide a descriptive picture of education is to point to 'what is', that is, to present a factual picture of exactly how education is being practised without passing any value judgements. Such treatment is to be found, for example, in the

social sciences such as sociology of education and psychology of education. A sociologist of education may, for example, observe that Kenyan schools lay greatest emphasis on producing skilled manpower. He would therefore note as a fact, that in this context, education serves a predominantly economic function. In contrast to a descriptive account, a normative account of education points to 'what ought to be'. This implies passing value judgements upon present practices in education by using a certain ideal standard as a criterion of what education ultimately should be.

In practice, the distinction is not as neat as implied above. Very often, statements on education purporting to be descriptive have, underlying them, a normative stamp. We have laboured on the above distinction because, this study intends to view education from a normative angle.

Education has been variously defined by different authorities. It is therefore not surprising to come across all-encompassing conceptions on the one hand and very restricted conceptions on the other hand of this phenomenon, we have called education. In between the extremes, are conceptions of varying degrees of comprehensiveness. A good example of a very general

conception of education comes to us from Rousseau. He views education as "that which comes to us from nature, from men and from things"². An inevitable consequence of such a conception is to let children 'grow freely' in nature as every encounter constitutes education. The formal educative process is viewed as too restrictive of the natural growth of the child. A very narrow concept would have us view education as the transmission of a people's cultural heritage. This is only partly true because education consists in more than just transmission.

How are we then, to avoid the rather too general and less useful conceptions of education and the extremely narrow views? This is possible if we first observe that, primarily, education is an intentional and purposive activity. To so speak, is to point to education as a human phenomenon, thus placing out of our boundary the Rousseauan 'things and nature' as fundamental aspects of education. By this, we also point to education as a deliberately organized activity with given goals. Yet, it may not be surprising to observe that what is here asserted is still too general and does not point to the actual nature of this phenomenon we have called education. This is because, under the given assertion of education as an intentional and purposive activity, still

2. R.S. Peters, Education as Initiation, London, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1963. p.21.

lie specific conceptions of education with different orientations. It is our task, then, to identify these various orientations which are to furnish a background for the position we shall eventually adopt.

Van Cleve Morris³ identifies four notions of education in contemporary thought. He maintains that the first notion, which is the oldest and most popular, considers education as the drawing out of our common human nature. Adherents to this view work from an etymological root of the word education in Latin educere (to lead out) from which it is envisaged that education entails summoning forth the desired from a child's nature. He identifies a second view associated with essentialists as considering education as the 'taking in' of accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the human race. Here, a child is construed as passive in the process of receiving, absorbing and assimilating the sciences and arts of civilization. A third notion is influenced by behavioural sciences. Education is taken as the shaping of individuals in terms of the culture in which they live. In this context, the value of what is taught is a function of society. A final notion originates

3. Van Cleve Morris, Existentialism in Education, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1966, pp.105-111.

from John Dewey. Dewey is quoted as conceiving education "as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional towards nature and fellow men".⁴

Morris brings the following criticisms to bear on all the four conceptions thus;

- (i) All these definitions take the process of education to have its aim outside the learner.
- (ii) The child, by what is to be done for him or with him, is seen as an object rather than a subject.
- (iii) The public criterion overrides private learner concerns in the judgement of the worth of education.

The four notions so far considered may be reduced to two major perspectives on education. Allied on one side are the first three notions within which the teacher and content play predominant roles, while on the other side, we have the Deweyian perspective. In this perspective the child and

4. John Dewey, Democracy and Education, New York, The MacMillan Company, 1961, p.383.

method assume predominant roles. Let us label the first perspective teacher-centred and the second perspective student-centred. We at once see that these two perspectives stand in opposition to each other. It therefore, becomes debatable whether an identical lump of criticisms can be thrown at both. Our position is that the three criticisms developed by Morris do apply neatly to what we have called the teacher-centred perspective of education. These criticisms do not in total apply to the student-centred perspective. Moderate advocates of the student-centred perspective advocate the public criterion as the final judge in matters of education, so that it is easy to see how criticisms (i) and (iii) apply here. But all advocates of this perspective are so busy reinstating the learner as an active subject in the educative process, that criticism (ii) bears no strength whatsoever upon this approach. The kind of criticism that bears some plausibility would emanate from the observation that this approach posits itself as the antithesis of the first. The learner usurps the teachers authority thus marginalizing the latter's task. We shall have more to say about these two perspectives in chapter four.

Having identified and raised criticisms against the four notions of education, what does Morris

himself say about education? He writes;

"If education is to be truly human, it must somehow awaken awareness in the learner - an existential awareness of himself as a single subjectivity present in the world".⁵
(emphasis author's).

Whereas we concur with Morris that a truly human education dwells on awakening awareness, we find it hard to accept his view that such an awareness constitutes an existential awareness of one as a single subjectivity present in the world. Our disagreement stems from the observation that Morris seems to place undue emphasis on the individual as to imply individualism. In our view, education by its very nature is an encounter of persons. This encounter is what Freire has called dialogue.⁶ If we grant this point, then the learner's existence can be conceived as co-existence and education as an intersubjective process. Hence to view the learner as an isolated subjectivity present in the world seems to distort what we here consider to be a truly human education. Looking further afield, we come across a

5. Ibid., p.110.

6. Dialogue can be conceived as a horizontal relationship between two persons characterized by a trusting and critical spirit and motivated by a joint search. We shall have more to say about 'dialogue' in chapter three.

rather captivating definition of education provided by Njoroge and Bennaars. They view education as "the intersubjective process of learning to be a self-reliant person in society".⁷

This definition does fulfil our view of education as an encounter between persons as subjects. It however, brings in the term 'self-reliant' which as was stated earlier, constitutes the task of our study. So, to adopt this definition at this stage, would be counter productive since we have not yet developed a conception of the term 'self-reliance'. Instead, we adopt Freire's definition which we consider to be adequate for the purposes of this study. He defines education as;

"the intersubjective process of becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it".⁸

When one talks of education as an intersubjective process, one elevates the humanizing aspect of education above essentially utilitarian ends (which could be social or economic). Infact humanization

7. R.J. Njoroge and G.A. Bennaars, Philosophy and Education in Afirca, Nairobi, Transafrica Press, 1986, p.244.

8. Ibid., p.243 (original source not available to us).

needs to be the fundamental concern of education because although "... both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for man as an uncompleted being conscious of his incompleteness ... only the first is man's vocation".⁹

We may further note that this intersubjective process we have called education points to the teacher and the learner as subjects engaged in dialogue. Such dialogue is the tool of awakening awareness. The learner is led to a critical awareness of his existential (human) reality. In making an important distinction elsewhere where he equates awareness with consciousness, Freire writes;

"Critical consciousness is integrated with reality, naive consciousness superimposes itself upon reality and fanatical consciousness whose pathological naivety leads to the irrational, adopts to reality".¹⁰

What Freire is attempting to draw our attention to, is that critical consciousness by being integrated with reality, perceives that reality as dynamic and transformable. This is especially so with cultural and historical reality. Continuing in the same vein,

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9. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, Penguin Group, 1985, p.20.
10. Paulo Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, London, Sheed and Ward, 1985, p.44.

he notes;

"It so happens that to every understanding sooner or later, an action corresponds. Once man perceives a challenge, understands it and recognizes the possibilities of response, he acts. The nature of the action corresponds to the nature of his understanding. Critical understanding leads to critical action, magic understanding leads to magic response".¹¹

We agree with Freire here, that, man should be seen as a whole. We cannot dichotomize his understanding from his actions. Man is a being of praxis.¹² Education then, should be seen to promote understanding (by creating critical awareness through dialogue) and the appropriate action commensurate with the understanding attained will follow. The qualification is that the nature of action will depend on the nature of understanding generated.

Upto this point, we have dwelt on education from a normative perspective. By so doing, we have inevitably made certain value judgements; that is, we have attempted to provide a standard upon which a truly human education could be based. So, to enter

11. Ibid., p.44.

12. To speak of man as a being of praxis is to point to his activities as consisting of both action and reflection or practice and theory. It is to state that, unlike animals which are beings of pure activity, man can emerge from the world, objectify it and in so doing understand and transform it.

into the domain of value judgements is to make assertions about what is proper and hence desirable. Statements about such desirables in education is what constitutes the aims of education. So, when one speaks of 'self-reliance as an aim in education, one takes 'self-reliance' as the end-in-view to motivate and provide direction for the process of education. The analysis so far tendered, we hope, provides the reader with our own conception of the notions 'education' and 'aim'.

1.1.0 Self-Reliance : A Brief Descriptive Survey

In this section, we desire to present a brief descriptive survey on why and how 'self-reliance' has come to be talked of as an aim in the Kenyan educational context.

At the dawn of independence, the Kenyan Government and the private sector were critically short of manpower. Since education was seen as the only conduit through which such manpower could be trained, the over-riding aim of the entire educational system came to be an economic one. Writing at the time, the Ominde Report put the issue quite clearly, thus;

"Of all these reflections, perhaps the most urgent in our minds was the need to see education in the context of our national economic development, for upon the adequate fulfilment of this objective, our ability to reach all other national goals including these in education, depend."¹³

The rapid educational expansion that followed this economic concern had by the mid-seventies precipitated the serious problem of unemployment. Writing in 1976, the Gachathi Commission observed;

"It was clear to us that one of the largest problems confronting the country was that of unemployment. The number of unemployed school leavers was growing rapidly as their numbers continued to swell following the rapid expansion of the education system in recent years".¹⁴

The observation continued;

"They (school leavers) still come out of school oriented to white collar jobs and more poorly equipped towards playing an effective role in social and economic development of Kenya".¹⁵
(brackets and contents therein are mine)...

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13. Republic of Kenya: Kenya Education Commission Report Part I and II, Nairobi, Government Printers, 1964, p.24.
14. Republic of Kenya: Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies, Nairobi, Government Printers, 1976, p.(ix).
15. Ibid., p.(x).

Granted these observations, the Gachathi Report (NCEOP) then recommended a modification of the education system so as to cater for the majority of students who terminate their studies at any one level. This recommendation was taken over by the Mackay Report¹⁶ in a more concrete way when it recommended the removal of the 'A' level segment and suggested the present 8-4-4¹⁷ system.

In 1982, the Working Party on Government Expenditure not only pointed to the problem in general (that is, heavy dependence of the populace on the Government - provision of employment being only one) but also pointed to 'self-reliance' as a solution. The party expressed itself in the following words;

"The Working Party is also concerned that Kenyans are becoming too dependent on Government and turning to Government for assistance on matters which they themselves can and should manage. Self-reliance through both individual and collective efforts should be encouraged as one of the great African strengths and traditions. The Government must stimulate by both direct and indirect means all Kenyans to rely more extensively

16. Republic of Kenya: Report of the Presidential Working Party : Second University in Kenya, Nairobi, Government Printers, 1981, p.9.

17. 8-4-4 depicts the current educational system in Kenya where 8 refers to eight years of primary education, 4 refers to four years in secondary education and the final 4 refers to a minimum of four years of university education.

on their own resources, abilities and energies. This principle applies to efforts by individuals to better themselves and their families to the promotion of private enterprise activities and the mobilization of community, health care, water supplies and rural access roads".¹⁸

Following this observation, the Kamunge Report also noted the importance of 'self-reliance' by recommending that;

"Education and training should develop skills which promote self-reliance and self-employment".¹⁹ (emphasis mine).

What these reflections point to is the Government's inability to provide the essential services it used to, especially that of employment. So, the feeling here, is that this situation could be alleviated through encouraging 'self-reliance'. We can then see why and how 'self-reliance' has emerged as an aim in the Kenyan educational context, granted such a background. Yet, this is not to imply that self-reliance is an aim (like, say, national unity), which is clearly written down in educational documents, rather, it is an aim implied by the recent educational restructuring in the country.

18. Republic of Kenya: Working Party on Governemnt Expenditures: Reports and Recommendations. Nairobi, Government Printers, 1982, p.21.

19. Republic of Kenya: Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond, Nairobi, Government Printers, 1988, p.15.

1.2.0 Literature Review

It is essential that a literature review be carried out before the statement of the problem because, this together with information in section 1.1.0 will provide a stronger foundation upon which our problem can be stated and defined.

Our concern here, shall be with literature that takes on a philosophical orientation in an explicit manner regarding the notion 'self-reliance'. We identify, in this connection, Nyerere's ideas as presented in various articles and those ideas obtainable from the last two chapters of a book written by Njoroge and Bennaars.

Regarding Nyerere, our concern shall focus on the following articles.²⁰

- (i) Education for Self-Reliance, a 1967 document.
- (ii) Education Never Ends, New Year's Eve Address to the nation 1969/70.

20. All the articles listed here are to be found in Education for Liberation and Development : The Tanzanian Experience eds.' H. Hinzen and V.H. Hundsdorfer, London, Evans Bros. Publishers. 1979.

(iii) Our Education Must Be For Liberation

Opening Speech for a Two Week Seminar on 'Education and Training Alternative in Education in African Countries', May 20, 1974.

(iv) Adult Education and Development,

Address to Participants of the International Conference on 'Adult Education and Development', 21st-25th June, 1976.

One may raise an objection as to why we should concern ourselves with all these articles when, apparently, the first article would suffice. There is a strong reason for this. Nyerere's educational ideas underwent a change from the 1967 document onwards. To take this 1967 document as a standard, would be unfair to Nyerere since certain ideas presented here, are 'abandoned' later on. Abandoning, here, does not mean Nyerere makes explicit statements disavowing his 1967 position. What we mean is that he attempted to reflect on his original thesis in the light of its antithesis and thereby arrived at a new position - being the synthesis of his ideas.

Bennaars writing on Nyerere's philosophy of education,²¹ has been very explicit in indicating

21. See G.A. Bennaars, Nyerere's Philosophy of Education : An Abstract, Unpublished Staff Seminar Paper, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, 1985.

this gradual evolution of thought. He writes:

"We argue infact that one must distinguish three distinct stages in Nyerere's educational thinking, as expressed in various writings. There are, first of all, the writings before 1967, then there is the Education for Self-Reliance, (1967), document and related texts and lastly are writings after 1967".²² (emphasis author's).

He continues;

"The last stage is the most significant in philosophical terms as it shows a gradual trend towards existential phenomenological thinking ...".²³

In our case, we shall not concern ourselves with the distinction of thought at each stage, but rather, our concern shall be with the evolution of his educational thought (with respect to the notion of self-reliance), from 1967 to 1976.

In 1967, Nyerere viewed education as a highly social transaction. Writing on the purpose of education in human societies, he observed.

22. Ibid., p.7.

23. Ibid., p.7.

"That purpose is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of society and to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and their active participation in its maintenance or development".²⁴

At this time, The Society formed Nyerere's apex of concern and anything that promoted the 'common good', was regarded as of ultimate value. Nyerere placed a high premium on man's co-operative instincts and constantly downgraded an education that promoted man's individualistic instincts such as competition. What emerges from this is a highly social conception of the notion of self-reliance. When he talks of self-reliance, Nyerere has in mind the larger Tanzanian Society. He views that Society becoming economically and culturally independent from foreign nations. The 'self' depicted here is that of the 'mass society' rather than representative of any concrete individual. It is an impersonal rather than personal self.

The 1969/70 article did not show much departure from his 1967 position. Here, the society was still accorded paramount recognition and the individual person existed in as far as he was a member of the society.

24. Hinzen and Hundsdofer (Eds.), Op.Cit., p.17.

The 1974 article marks a radical departure from the 1967 position. This radical departure, was pronounced by his normative educational concern. He came to view education as 'education for liberation'. At this stage, he came to acknowledge that education had to go beyond the transmission of culture and fitting individuals into society. No longer was society given absolute value, the individual also came into prominence. Nyerere recognized that he had to argue dialectically between the society-individual polarities or else he would drown into a myopic state of mystifying the human condition. To assert the absolute value of society, would engender a vision of man as an object whereas to posit the individual person as the ultimate reality would result in a highly indefensible position with respect to existential reality. So to capture a more realistic human condition, Nyerere had to assert the importance of society and also that of man as subject. A few quotations substantiate this point more clearly.

"A truly liberated nation is a self-reliant nation, one which has freed itself from economic and cultural dependence on other nations and is therefore, able to develop itself in free and equal co-operation with other members of the world community".²⁵

25. Ibid., p.43.

"Similarly for man. The First essential of a liberated man is awareness of two things: his own manhood and the power to use circumstances rather than be used by them".²⁶

"The purpose of education is therefore liberation through the development of man as a member of society".²⁷

"These things are difficult to express in positive terms simply because each individual is unique as well as being part of mankind".²⁸

The first quotation reveals Nyerere's 1967 position where the notion of self-reliance was understood only at the societal level. The second quotation posits itself as the antithesis of the first, man is regarded as a subject and unique. The third quotation resolves the conflict between man as subject and the society by positing man as a member-of-society. The final quotation reveals Nyerere's acknowledgement of the difficulties inherent in the individual-society polarity. So the understanding that emerges from these assertions concerning the notion of self-reliance is that this notion needs to be understood at both the societal and individual level. According to Nyerere, the

26. Ibid., p.43.

27. Ibid., p.44.

28. Ibid., p.45.

individual who is self-reliant is the liberated individual. Such an individual is aware of his own manhood (a notion that requires further analysis) and the capacity to 'use circumstances rather than be used by them'. In 1976, Nyerere further clarifies his position by noting that;

"Development is for Man by Man and of Man. The same is true of education. Its purpose is the liberation of Man from the restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependence".²⁹⁾

"For Man does not develop himself in a vacuum, in isolation from his society and his environment, and he certainly cannot be developed by others".³⁰

Notice that Nyerere is here using the word man with a capital letter. His intentions are technical. He intends that man designate the concrete existent subject. This is in opposition to the way we use 'man' to designate people in general. Nyerere makes a crucial distinction by pointing that man does not develop in vacuum (thus denying a subjectivist stand) neither is he developed by others. But the question that arises at this point is just how far is man not developed by others? This is a question that Nyerere does not address himself to and we shall give it due consideration later on. Nyerere also does not point

29. Ibid., p.49.

30. Ibid., p.49.

out how self-reliance as a phenomenon of human concern could be achieved through education. For this last comment, we turn to Njoroge and Bennaars.

In their book, Philosophy and Education in Africa,³¹ they point to the learner as one who is 'not yet' a self and hence not self-reliant. This means they envision as a point of departure the concrete individual existent in their analysis of the notion of self-reliance. This is what Nyerere fails to do. He reaches a point where he recognizes that he can neither sacrifice the concrete existent nor the society without distorting man's existential picture. But inspite of this recognition, he fails to provide a link between the individual and society.

Let us return to the Njoroge-Bennaars analysis. To construe the learner as a 'not yet', implies taking a dynamic view of the self and to link becoming a self with realizing self-reliance implies becoming the latter presupposes being in the former state. These are views we agree with. They continue to observe that it is the teacher who should help the learner to become something he is not-yet; that is, to become a self and hence self-reliant. This is done

31. See chapters 10 and 11.

by making the learner aware³² of his possibilities as well as limitations in a given context. Earlier on, we quoted their definition of education. Recall that this definition contained 'self-reliant' as a central notion. In explicating this particular notion in their definition, they point out that a self-reliant person is one who can realize himself physically, mentally, morally, socially and emotionally.³³ Dialogue is brought in as a method and spirit through which self-reliance could be achieved as an aim in education.

This treatment goes further than Nyerere's in pointing to a concern of fundamental proportions. Self-reliance is located in the education process concretely by asserting its achievement through dialogue and by pointing to the subject self as primordial in the analysis of the concept of self-reliance. However, the treatment remains inadequate in the light of certain fundamental questions which it leaves unanswered.

32. 'Aware' as used here is to be understood in the context of attaining critical consciousness which engenders critical intervention in reality.

33. Njoroge and Bennaars, Op.Cit., p.245.

- (1) If we grant that becoming self-reliant presupposes becoming a self, what kind of self does the teacher hope to see revealed?
- (2) Assuming the teacher does have such a conception of the self, how may he justify it?
- (3) How is self-reliance to be located in the individual-society polarity?

With the positing of such questions, we now turn to the 'statement of the problem'.

1.3.0 Statement of the Problem

In section 1.00, we hinted that our task will be centred on the notion 'self-reliance' as an aim in education. In section 1.1.0, we attempted to trace the emergence of self-reliance as an aim in Kenyan education. Section 1.2.0 was an attempt to review literature dealing explicitly with 'self-reliance' from a philosophical perspective. Now, we are ready to crystallize our problem.

When we reflect back on documents quoted in section 1.1.0, we note considerable concern from the

Government regarding the problem of unemployment. We also note 'self-reliance' suggested as a panacea. The problem is, there seems to be no concerted effort to tell us what being self-reliant entails.

In a report previously quoted, we read that "the Government must stimulate by both direct and indirect means, all Kenyans to rely more extensively on their own resources, abilities and energies". Two questions arise from this assertion, (i) How is this stimulation to occur? (ii) What is exactly meant by resources, abilities and energies?

The Kamunge Report, focusing on education, mentioned that "education should develop skills which promote self-reliance and self-employment". Implied here is that self-reliance presupposes certain skills. Which are these skills? One may retort that it is clear from the 8-4-4 system that the skills implied are vocational and technical ones. We could still ask, does the acquisition of these skills in themselves really lead to self-reliance? The question brings us back to the more central question, what is self-reliance?

Towards the end of our literature review, we noted that certain fundamental questions remained

unanswered. These questions centred upon a particular point of concern. If we granted that becoming self-reliant presupposed becoming a self, a fundamental problem on the perception of this self straightaway emerged. In effect then, to provide an understanding of the notion of self-reliance, implies first solving the fundamental problem of the self. It is from this consideration that this study will intend, first, to develop an understanding of the notion 'self' and take this as the basis for understanding self-reliance in the context of education.

In a nutshell, the problem will involve launching a philosophical search for a perception of the self that a truly human education would want to see revealed. This then would be used to point to how self-reliance could be understood and how it could be achieved through the process of educating.

1.4.0 Theoretical Framework

Our choice of a theoretical framework must, here, not be construed as arbitrary. It is a logical consequence of our view of education as a humanizing enterprise. Recall our adoption of the view of education as an 'intersubjective process' which pointed to the teacher and the learner

interacting as subjects. This interaction which has its aim in raising the learner's awareness of his potentialities and limitations is what we called dialogue. In effect, education was being viewed as a dynamic process. This then invites us to adopt a dynamic view of the self. But this is not the only reason as shall become clear below.

To ask what a self is, is to ask a difficult and evasive question. Philosophical literature which concerns itself with this notion presents many rather opposed view-points. But one could roughly group philosophical theories on self into two classes. Those which take a static view and those which take a dynamic view. Prior to Hume's criticism of the principle of causality, many philosophers had taken it for granted that man was endowed with a static 'human nature', a static essence that properly defined him³⁴ as man. In consequence, his being human in a way that set him apart from everything else in the cosmos, was viewed the result of such a static nature. Descartes considered both body and ego (consciousness or self) as two kinds of substances, but nevertheless as substances. Leibniz with his theory of monads can be similarly classified.

34. In this study 'he' and associated pronouns (e.g. him) will be used in a general sense to refer to both men and women. No other motive is intended in this usage except for simplicity.

After Hume's criticism, many philosophers began to doubt whether man's humanness (a state that pointed to him being more than just an object for scientific study) and uniqueness in the cosmos could be located in some static nature he possessed. These doubts expressed themselves in the consideration of man as dynamic. By this view, they were able to locate man, not just as creator of meaning (values) in the world, but also as creator of his being. If man dwelt on his facticity, he could not be differentiated from objects in the world. So, man as subject, as a self, would be properly located in a transcendental view of his nature.

In developing a plausible and concrete perspective of the self, we will utilize ideas presented by certain notable existential philosophers among whom will be Sartre, Marcel, Buber, Strasser and Luijpen.

According to Sartre, the self is not something given, rather, it is what one creates daily through choices put to action. In effect, he views the self as a goal rather than a point of departure. But in his transcendental view of the self, he does not disregard human facticity. Infact, he considers this to be the very state which provides the picture of

what one has not become and could therefore strive to become. Because the self does not develop in isolation but in relationship with others, this treatment is inadequate. This leads us to look at theories of intersubjectivity.

To highlight this issue, we will make use of Marcel's and Buber's theories. Marcel argues that the opposite of objectivity is not subjectivity but intersubjectivity. To Marcel, intersubjectivity is a phenomenon that involves us all in such a way that we cannot consider it abstractly and objectively. It is not a problem but a 'mystery'. Intersubjectivity is a question of communication where man meets man. To Marcel, a community does not presuppose the identity or equality of all men but the difference between man and man. The problem then becomes one of showing how two irreducible human beings can meet and relate freely and lovingly. Here, Buber provides the clue. The true meeting is where the 'I' encounters a 'Thou'. The relationship is an 'I-Thou' relationship - a relationship defined by dialogue. This 'I-Thou' encounter is the very core of a truly human community.

In order to concretize the self, some philosophers have gone further to consider the notion of embodiment. Embodiment provides the primary datum

with which one is inserted in existence. It is a point-of-view with which one projects himself upon the world. Thus to speak of the self, is not to speak of an entity dangling in a mechanical body ready to fly off at the disintegration of the body, but it is to point to the body as a primordial facet of that self.

This entire treatment provides us with a dynamic view of the self which could be construed as embodied-Subjectivity-in-the-world. So to be self-reliant implies first an awareness geared towards transcending the circumstances of 'now'. This is a very brief outlay of the orientation this study intends to take. A detailed exposition of the ideas presented here will be provided in the chapters that follow.

1.5.0 Methodology

The previous sections, especially section 1.4.0, have implicitly pointed to the kind of method we intend should predominate in this study. By concerning ourselves with the self as embodied-subjectivity-in-the-world, we point to man as existence.³⁵ This

35. This notion of 'existence' is tackled in chapter two.

locates our approach not in the Cartesian rationalistic tradition or in the analytic tradition but in phenomenology. For want of a better term, we may call our approach existential phenomenology³⁶ to forestall misunderstandings arising from other uses to which phenomenology is put.

An explanation is hereby required. Phenomenology as a mode of philosophizing was founded by Husserl,³⁷ (1913). At present, two major strands of phenomenology are identifiable;

- (a) descriptive phenomenology
- (b) transcendental phenomenology.

The descriptive branch finds its home in the social sciences. The method is utilized here in an attempt to describe psycho-social phenomena as accurately as possible. Transcendental phenomenology is philosophical in orientation. It has three distinct stages, viz, pure phenomenology, dialectical phenomenology, and hermeneutic phenomenology.

36. The phrase 'existential phenomenology' is used by W.A. Luijpen and H.J. Koren in their book, A First Introduction to Existential Phenomenology. See pp.18-20.

37. For the distinctions within the phenomenological movement, we are hence indebted to the work of G.A.Bennaars, The Education of Man: Nyerere's Contribution Towards an Existential Philosophy of Education in Africa. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Nairobi, Kenyatta University, 1984, pp.42-51.

Hermeneutic phenomenology was originally proposed by Heidegger. It tries to interpret phenomena through the method of phenomenological reduction (a return to our most original experience). It is out of hermeneutic phenomenology that existential phenomenology emerged which explains phenomena in terms of human existence.

The explanation so far tendered explains only one strand of our approach - phenomenology. What about existentialism? Kierkegaard (normally considered the founder of existentialism), was the first notable philosopher to protest against system-building philosophies with a great degree of consistency. His point of reference was the Hegelian construction which simply swallowed the individual and concrete human being into anonymity. According to Kierkegaard, such grand systems served only to dehumanize man by treating him as an object among many objects. His concern was with re-asserting the primacy of the individual as subject in the world. In the course of his work, he developed various themes that have become the foundation of existentialism today. The first merger of Kierkegaardian existentialism and Husserlian phenomenology occurred in Heidegger. Kierkegaard provided the themes and Husserl the spirit or method. This merger has continued in such

notable thinkers as Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel, Merleau-Ponty and Karl Jaspers.

Existential phenomenology then, is an approach that seeks to strike a balance between the views of two traditional philosophies. (i) The materialistic philosophies which construe man as a result of cosmic processes and forces - that is, man as an object. (ii) The spiritualistic philosophies which assert the ontological primacy of the pure subject regarded in isolation to the material world. Existential phenomenology as an approach, takes note of these two valuable insights by insisting that man is embodied - subjectivity-in-the-world. This is concretely summarized in the principle of existence.

Speaking of the self, then, is to point to man. The consequences of this view is that neither will we be allowed to construe the self as pure object or pure subject. But the self will be located in a dialectical way between the subject-object polarity as embodied-subjectivity-in-the-world. This, in effect, will be an attempt to concretize the self in the world of reality. We shall also point to self-reliance as a human phenomenon through which man becomes human through an awareness of himself as a creator of culture and values in the world

and one who takes charge of his destiny in history. Practically, this is how the phenomenological approach will operate in this study.

A brief word concerning other approaches. The analytic approach which seeks to clarify the meaning of words and statements is indispensable to any serious philosophical work. This means that the study will utilize the services of this approach whenever it shall become necessary in the course of the entire study. But its predominance here is rejected because of its serious inability to synthesize whatever it has dissected. The notion 'self' which points to man cannot be understood by a dissection devoid of synthesis. So is also self-reliance taken as a human phenomenon.

The other useful philosophical method is the critical approach. Its usefulness is pointed out in a compact and illuminating manner by Njoroge and Bennaars, thus;

"The critical function of philosophy tends to encourage honesty of thought, it seeks to protect man from fanaticism and hypocrisy, from intolerance and dogmatism, from slogans and ideologies. In short, it aims at liberating man from narrow-mindedness".³⁸

38. Njoroge and Bennaars, Op.Cit., p.23.

This study, as we have indicated, will adopt the existential phenomenological approach. We may be tempted to feel that views that do not subscribe to our chosen approach are 'wrong'. But the critical approach stands on our way to remind us that no perspective on man is absolutely wrong. That each perspective contains a 'germ' of truth and that even our chosen perspective is a blend of many other perspectives. This will lead us to view the existential phenomenological approach as not the only 'right' approach but as a more plausible approach to the viewing of man in more humane terms.

1.6.0 Purpose and Significance

This study has as its purpose; the building of a new and coherent understanding of self-reliance based on certain themes developed by existential philosophers and utilizing a phenomenological approach. This new understanding shall consist primarily in one's awareness of his facticity and transcendence born out of integration with reality. The awakening of such an awareness (or critical consciousness), shall constitute the primary task of education. The overhauling of the entire educational system (as happened in Kenya from 7-4-2-3 to 8-4-4) shall be construed as secondary to creating such an awareness in an authentic strategy

of achieving self-reliance as an aim in education. As opposed to the unclear understanding of self-reliance pointed out earlier, this study hopes to provide an understanding based on a firm philosophical position.

The significance of this study can be seen in the context of what it hopes to contribute to education. In stating how self-reliance could be achieved as an aim in education, this study will emphasize the primacy of dialogue between learner and teacher as subjects. By pointing to dialogue, it will emphasize the importance and primacy of this as a method in all educational interaction. The spirit that goes with dialogue shall also be seen to emphasize education as a humanizing enterprise.³⁹

1.7.0 Structure of the Study

This study consists of four chapters. In the first chapter, we have the background to the study, a brief descriptive survey on self-reliance, literature review, statement of the problem, theoretical framework, methodology, structure of the study, purpose

39. To speak of education as a humanizing enterprise, is to point to the teacher-student encounter as intersubjective. In a dehumanizing education, either the teacher or the student turns the other into an object in the encounter to consider reality.

and significance and the scope of the study.

Chapter two concerns itself with various philosophical theories of the self. We start our considerations with materialistic theories, move on to spiritualistic theories and finally end with existential phenomenological theories.

In chapter three, we attempt to tackle the phenomenon of self-reliance. The first part dwells on the notion 'reliance' and then utilizing data from chapter two, the second part tackles the phenomenon of self-reliance.

Chapter four, which is the final chapter, starts with an exposition on education as a humanizing enterprise, then moves to the consideration of self-reliance as an aim in education, then briefly considers the 8-4-4 education system and ends with a recapitulation and recommendations for further research.

1.8.0 Scope of the Study

As was mentioned earlier, this study hopes to develop an understanding of self-reliance based on a well formulated conception of the self. Now, the self is a notion studied by many disciplines, for

example, psychology, biology and philosophy. We can roughly subdivide such studies into two categories, viz, philosophical and scientific. The scientific studies on self treat the self as an object defined in a deterministic framework of causes and effects. Philosophical studies, while granting that certain aspects of the self can be looked at scientifically, are quick to assert that there is a certain dimension of the self that cannot be so treated or understood. For example, one feature that defines the uniqueness of man is his capacity to transcend his facticity. This points to a possession of freedom that elevates man above a deterministic treatment. It is this second approach that this study adopts. But even in philosophy, the treatment of self is done from several standpoints. By the very choice of our approach-existential phenomenology - we have chosen to view the self from an existential point.

CHAPTER TWO

PHILOSOPHICAL THEORIES OF THE SELF

2.00 Introduction

In section 1.3.0, we asserted that our task lay in developing a coherent conception of self-reliance conceived as an aim in the educating process. Yet, we observed further on that, this task could not be adequately achieved if one ignored the more fundamental question of the self. If it is granted that the self being considered here, refers to the learner, (and this is the way we would like to view the matter in this study) then, one is forced, first, to address himself to this issue of the self before tackling the task of self-reliance. This, in effect, is our concern in this chapter.

To be concerned with the issue of self as a notion that points to man in his totality of existence is to attempt to answer "a difficult and evasive question".¹ This is because, we shall be desiring to develop a perspective of man who in the course of his

1. Alburey Castel, The Self in Philosophy, New York, MacMillan, 1965, p.59.

existing reveals himself as a contingent being. To speak of the being of man as contingent is to attempt to reveal a feature that Kierkegaard has termed 'paradox' and Marcel called 'mystery'. It is to acknowledge that, in man, are combined the opposites of transcendence and facticity or open-endedness and givenness.

Nevertheless, difficult as the task may seem, it is not altogether impossible. We assert, not impossible, because we find ourselves inserted in a privileged historical epoch behind which stretches two thousand five hundred years of philosophical thought, the insights of many a great philosopher. Honesty then impels us to start by acknowledging the insights of traditional philosophy on man, placed at our disposal.

It will be recalled from section 1.5.0, that, following Luijpen's categorization,² we designated two traditional approaches that have claimed to say something about man as materialism and spiritualism. This, as we shall see, is indeed a very rough categorization - for within each movement exists subtle

2. W.A. Luijpen and H.J. Koren, A First Introduction to Existential Phenomenology, Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press, 1965, p.21.

differences. Yet, our designation can be justified on two major counts; one, the 'world view' espoused by adherents within each movement is the same and two, the simplicity obtained measures to the scope of this study.

So in a sequential manner, we shall look at the perspective of man in materialism, spiritualism and in the light of their limitations, existential phenomenology. Ofcourse our main thrust, as was stated in section 1.8.0, is existential. But the review of the former two lays a better understanding for adopting the existential-phenomenological approach.

2.1.0 Materialism

If to talk of materialism as a philosophy of man is to imply an outlook agreed upon in every detail, then this is not correct. This is not correct because, many materialistic philosophies contain within them, subtle differences. There are also ancient materialistic philosophies and modern ones. But the reason we chose to lump such outlooks together under the name materialism is that they all have a unifying tenet. They regard man as an object, as a thing in the world. The modern views may prefer

Luijpen's terminology and consider man as "the result of cosmic processes and forces",³ but this is no more than another way of stating that man is a thing.

A brief historical excursion would bring to the fore what we are trying to state here. Recall the theory of Empedocles in pre-Socratic Greece. He conceived all bodies to consist of four basic elements, viz; earth, air, fire and water. According to this view, the differences between bodies could be explained by the differences in proportion of the four basic elements contained in each body. This view could easily be applied to man. A plodding and slow going man would be considered to have more earth in him than all the other elements put together. Similarly, an ambitious man would have more fire, a sanguine (easy going) character, more of air and a melancholic person more water.⁴

Next in line was the theory of atomism which flourished under Democritus in the fifth century B.C. This theory had a basic assumption that there existed

3. Ibid., p.22.

4. For the above analysis, see E.F. Byrne and Moziarz: Human Being and Being Human, New York, Meredith Corp, 1969, p.35.

entities called atoms which were so small that they were irreducible to anything much smaller. Furthermore, it was assumed that these atoms had different shapes. The difference between objects was conceived to be a result of differing arrangements of the differently shaped atoms. Man was differentiated from other objects in that he had a soul and that this soul was formed of spherical atoms considered the most special.

In the seventeenth century, the French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650), developed the following view about man. That man consisted of two basic substances,⁵ namely; mind and body. He construed the essential feature of the mind as thinking and that of the body as extension. Descartes' views are of particular importance because many authorities acknowledge that it is from his philosophy and the problems it created that two approaches on man emerged - the materialistic and spiritualistic view. We shall have occasion to say something about the latter in section 2.2.0. Here, we concentrate on the body.

5. The notion 'substance' was used by Descartes in a scholastic fashion. It represented, in a static sense, that which constituted the essence of something.

Descartes had argued that the body could be regarded as simply extension and that it operated on the principle of a machine (automata). Since in his philosophy, he failed to reconcile in a consistent and logical manner, the views about body and mind, certain post-cartesian thinkers simply dismissed the notion of mind and extended the idea of body into a whole perspective of man. This was the beginning of the modern materialistic view of man.

In the eighteenth century, we come across David Hume (1711-1776) espousing a maturer and modern perspective of materialism. Hume was critical of the Cartesian substantialist view of the self. In rebuking this view, he argued thus;

"There are some philosophers who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of demonstration both of its perfect identity and simplicity But self or person is not any one given impression but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have reference".⁶

Still denying a unifying core that defined one as a self, he wrote on;

6. David Hume, Treatise of Human Nature, London, Oxford University Press, 2nd Edition, 1978 P.251.

"For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch myself at any time without a perception and can never observe anything but a perception".⁷ (author's emphasis).

Having asserted that in search for his innermost core, he only stumbled upon one or another perception, he went on to affirm the same for all men;

"... I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity and are in a perpetual flux or movement".⁸

And so in the same vein that he had criticized the principle of causation, that it was only habit that led us to conjoin causes and effects, he viewed the self similarly. To Hume, the self was an imagined notion that we use to unify various perceptions that we encounter within us. In his own words, he observed,

"Thus we feign the continual existence of the perceptions of our senses to remove the interruption and run into the notion of soul and self and substance to disguise the variation".⁹

7. Ibid., p.252.

8. Ibid., p.254.

9. Ibid., p.254.

"... understanding never observes any real connection among objects and that even the union of cause and effect, when strictly examined, resolves into a customary association of ideas".¹⁰

Thus, with this, Hume dealt a deathblow to the substantialist view of the self that had run from the Greeks to Descartes. His treatment paved the way for viewing the self in dynamical terms but his empiricist orientation made him assert with the modern adherents to scientism that all that could be known about man are empirical facts.

One cannot, however, deny that a materialistic perspective of man has had far-reaching positive implications. By treating man as matter,¹¹ by pointing to man's immanence with nature, the sciences of sociology, psychology, medicine have made tremendous progress. Diseases that once plagued mankind have been conquered, behavioural patterns of growing children have been documented, just to mention a few of the scientific achievements. To deny a materialistic view of man is to write off the usefulness of these achievements to mankind.

10. Ibid., p.260.

11. Think of matter in a dynamical modern sense as energy and not as an underlying static stuff that constitutes objects.

However, criticism normally comes from the observation that, propelled by such great scientific achievements, some have absolutized materialism into the ultimate perspective revelatory of reality. This is what has been called scientism. Materialists have failed to see that man's being cannot be captured wholly by a perspective that regards him as a mere thing. The dimension of man (and this is more important to his ontological vocation of being more human) which is variously called transcendence, spirituality or open-endedness, is left unaccounted for.

There is another serious criticism. If man is a mere thing, an object, a result of cosmic forces and process, how is it that he develops a theory let alone a materialistic one and asserts that this or that is the right way to view things? Judgement and valuation are strictly human phenomena and do not belong to objects. Such phenomena, as we have seen, are not accounted for in a materialistic perspective of man.

2.2.0 Spiritualism

We have asserted above that materialism treats man as a mere object. Even if man is conceived as a special kind of object, such a conception is located

only in degree. We have further observed that were this granted as a partial insight into man, there would be no problem with materialism. Criticism arises out of its reductionist tendency, that is, man is nothing but an object.

Another view which portrays the same spirit as materialism is spiritualism. This view attempts to correct the imbalance within materialism by asserting the Ontological primacy of the pure subject regarded in isolation from the world.

The modern version of spiritualism is traceable to Descartes. In his Meditations, he attempted to arrive at one thing that could not be doubted and hence could form the basis of all certain knowledge. In the Second Meditation, he argued thus,

"In the first place, then, I considered myself as having hands, arms and all that system of members composed of bones and flesh as seen in a corpse, which I designated by the name, body. In addition to this, I considered that I was nourished, that I walked, that I felt and that I thought and referred all these actions to the soul, but I did not stop to consider what the soul was ...".¹²

12. Rene Descartes, "Meditation II", contained in Self and World, ed. James A. Ogilvy, New York, 1973, p.66.

After positing the question, what is the soul?, he continued to determine its nature;

"I find here that thought is an attribute that belongs to me. I am, I exist and that is certain ... I am however, a real thing and I really exist. But what thing? I have answered, a thing that thinks".¹³

So according to Descartes, the real thing that existed was the soul which had the essential feature of thinking. He could doubt everything else but he could not doubt that he was thinking. From the observation that he was thinking, he concluded that he was a thinking thing and further on that this proved his existence. Hence, the famous Cogito ergo Sum (I think therefore I exist).

We need to note that Descartes never believed (in a genuine sense) in the non-existence of the body and the world. For having proved the existence of himself as a thinking thing, he went on to assert the existence of a good non-deceiving God who ensured the existence of all things that he perceived in life. Here, Descartes betrayed a 'leap' from reason, for he could not logically account for this position.

From this, we are not surprised about the emergence of philosophers who in trying to avoid the

13. Ibid., p.67.

mind-body problem, asserted man as pure subjectivity, pure ego or pure consciousness.

The subjectivists contributed an important insight that was lacking in a materialistic philosophy of man. That is, man was recognized as the source of meanings, values and culture in the world. Values were not mere existent realities that man was to adjust to, rather they mirrored man's judgement and interpretation of experience.

The spiritualist view portrayed a lack of balance by portraying the same reductionist tendency observed in materialism. Man was nothing but pure subject. This quickly led one into the solipsist trap. The external (to the subject) reality simply became mere contents in one's consciousness. It was argued that since what one could only know was the contents or ideas in his own consciousness, one could not be sure that the external world and other subjects existed in their own right apart from the subject. This, in effect, eliminated the existence of others and posited the subject as an isolatee. To deny the existence of others and an objective world is to paint a rather distorted picture of reality. This is what the spiritualists had done.

We shall now look at an approach, that we will argue, does more justice to a view of man than the two already considered.

2.3.0 Existential Phenomenology

In section 2.0.0, we pointed to the being of man as contingent. In section 2.1.0 and 2.2.0, we have looked at theories that attempt to explicate the being of man in essentialist terms. Reasoning in a dispassionate manner, they attempt to look for attributes or characteristics that should define man. The materialist construes that essence to be matter whereas the spiritualist construes such an essence to be consciousness. But it is exactly this essentialist view of man that is their undoing; for to look for the essence of something, one needs take the posture of a spectator and look for universal and necessary attributes. If it is granted that man in his particular and concrete existence is a contingent being, then methodologically, the above approach is fruitless. Indeed, we end up capturing certain essential attributes of 'man' but such do not distinguish him as a Dasein (Heidegger), the man of flesh and bone (Miguel de Unamuno) or as a quest (Marcel). The man we would be talking of is the man-object and not the man-human.

At this point, Gabriel Marcel becomes of immense help in providing a crucial distinction.¹⁴ To the reflection which takes me or things as objects, he gives the name 'first reflection'. To that reflection which apprehends me as the unitary me-myself, he gives the name 'second reflection'.

It is clear from this that first reflection refers to the approaches discussed in sections 2.1.0 and 2.2.0. Within this reflection, one adopts a spectator stance and seeks to understand phenomena without getting involved, as it were. This is the natural scientific attitude and Marcel has no quarrel with it if properly applied. He maintains that it is only appropriate for 'problem' situations. A problem according to Marcel, is an issue whose complete solution exists either by an appeal to empirical facts or logic.

But when one's concern becomes himself in his innermost being, the being we are designating the self, then such concern requires the spirit of second reflection. This is because, to deal with man in his human dimension requires grappling with what Marcel calls a metaproblem or a mystery. To

14. See R.M. Zaner's useful study The Problem of Embodiment. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1971, pp.6-7.

view the desire to understand man in his concrete and particular existence then points to his being as contingent - as was stated earlier. In the context of being human, second reflection takes us beyond the subject-object split plus the detachment so prevalent in first reflection. It recasts man into a mould of a unitary whole.

We want to assert that what Marcel calls second reflection, is exemplified by the approach we have chosen here, existential phenomenology. What justification do we have for so asserting? This justification is readily available by pointing to the approach's seminal concept 'existence'. By declaring that man as a self is existence, we immediately evade the pitfalls of materialism and spiritualism and grasp at once his contingency.

Among existential philosophers, the term 'existence' is reserved for the mode of being exemplified in man.¹⁵ To bring out clearly what we mean by 'man is existence', we shall begin with the unity of man as a being-in-the-world.

15. John Macquarrie, Existentialism, New York, Penguin Books, 1986, p.69.

2.3.1 Man as a Being

To speak of man as a being is to point to man as embodied-subjectivity. It is to acknowledge that he is both body and consciousness not in a dichotomy but in unity. But for the sake of discussion, we shall look at each facet of being separately and thereafter in unity. We begin with subjectivity.

To reflect on man as subjectivity is to deny that man is a mere object. It is to point to what has been called transcendence. Transcendence designates two important things about man: One, that man stands as an uncompleted being and two, that in such uncompletedness, he strives to become more than he is. Earlier on, we captured this dimension by referring to man as a 'quest'. We could also say that man is a possibility or a project. It is not easy to capture this dimension of man, but Sartre provides a useful point of departure. He captures the transcendence of man in terms of freedom, choice and responsibility.

In the preliminary passages of Existentialism is a Humanism.¹⁶ Sartre point out that what existential

16. Reprinted in The Fabric of Existentialism, eds. Richard Gill and Ernest Sherman, New York, Meredith Co-operation, 1973, pp.519-533.

philosophers have in common is that they all think that 'existence precedes essence'. What does it mean to speak in this fashion? He provides the answer.

"It means that, first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene and only afterwards defines himself".¹⁷

What Sartre is trying to draw our attention to is that we should abandon the tendency inherent in traditional philosophy of imputing an essence or created human nature to man. An essence which we straightaway point to as the cause of what one was, is and will be. This, Sartre contends, is lowering the dignity of man to that of objects. It makes men lazy and they refuse to rise up to the lofty challenge of becoming more than they are. Infact Sartre contends;

"Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism".¹⁸

This is a rather strong statement to make. Strong, because it reveals a tendency to reduce man to the choices he makes of himself. Recall that we voiced our opposition to any mode of

17. Ibid., p.521.

18. Ibid., p.521.

reductionism when we dealt with materialism and spiritualism. If we make a reductionist reading out of the above assertion, then we part company with Sartre on this point. But we can reject Sartre's radicalism here and make a more moderate reading. That is, in the course of existing, one of man's fundamental vocation is his ability to transcend circumstances by choosing what he shall become.

Let us pose here and seek some assistance from etymology. 'Existence' is formed from the verb 'to exist' which in turn is derived from the Latin word ex-sistere which means 'to stand out' or 'to emerge'. Existential philosophers have taken this root meaning seriously by considering man as the being who emerges beyond the circumstances of the now. He 'goes beyond' what he was and by this identifies himself as always a project or a transcendent being. This is what Sartre argues out in the context of freedom. He observes;

"In other words, there is no determinism, man is free, man is freedom".¹⁹

19. Ibid., p.523.

In outline, we may capture Sartre's argument for the transcendence of man as follows: There is no fixed human nature. We postulate such an essence simply because it is psychologically attractive, for when we make blunders, we have this essence as a ready scapegoat. However, the truth of the matter is that we are free. In freedom, we choose what we become for there is no pre-ordained human nature. By so choosing, we are also responsible for what we become. Yet what we become today does not put a limit to our choosing differently in future. This then, is a fundamental task in becoming human -- to choose ourselves.

So transcendence points to man as a dynamic being, as one who is striving to become what he is not. But to talk of man as transcendence, as subjectivity is not to imply that therefore man can become whatever he so wishes to become. His manhood is also defined by the circumstances of his facticity. If we left our analysis at this point, we would rush headlong into the spiritualist perspective of man. But this need not be the case as we have already posited man as embodied-subjectivity. This leads us to the consideration of man as body or as embodiment.

To reflect on man as embodiment is to register a desire to understand the bodily existence of man. Here, we may talk of the human body.²⁰

We need to note that we are not concerned about the 'human body' as understood in the Cartesian or scientific senses. The body that Descartes envisaged was neither concrete nor particular. Concerned, as he was, with universal knowledge, he viewed the human body in terms of a machine (automata). Needless to say, what the scientist studies is neither my body nor your body but 'a body'. When I consider my body as a point of view of the world - as a perspective from which I apprehend the environment around me, I do not find this feature recognized in 'a body'. But to talk of the human body and 'a body' does not help us to grasp the distinction we are trying to work towards. A better point of departure is Marcel's illustration.

Let us recall the point we made in section 2.3.0 about Marcel's distinction between first and second reflection. According to Marcel, the second reflection was the proper mode of approach to the issue of the human body - what he called my body qua mine.

20. W.A. Luijpen, Op.Cit., pp.35-36.

My body qua mine is not to be construed as a 'problem' but as a metaproblem. This means it cannot be fruitfully investigated by first reflection. Marcel does not dispute the usefulness of viewing the body from a scientific point. But his contention, which happens to be also our contention, is that what is revealed is of a body and not of my body qua mine.

Then what does it mean to speak of the human body or my body qua mine? It is to assert at once that my body is me. I am my body. (Notice that this is not the same as saying that I am nothing but my body). This is quite a revolutionary utterance given that in Cartesian thought, the body was considered to be a rather unimportant appendage to the cogito which was considered to be the real me.

To speak of 'I am my body', is to point to my body as embodiment or as the body-subject. Embodiment locates me in space-time and hence defines my finitude. Through my body, I feel and experience other bodies and objects around me. My body, in effect, is a point-of-view of the world. I cease to be man, to be human, if my body disintegrates. So we cannot speak of pure consciousness and then the body as Descartes had done. Such a dualism is

unwarranted. From a phenomenology of my body qua mine, I straightaway see that when I talk of my body, I capture the unity that is me. For my body is the body-subject. This brings us to the unity we started off with; of man as embodied-subjectivity. In this unity, we see that man is a transcendent being who is also characterized by concreteness and particularity. Apart from this, man is also a being-of-relationships, another fundamental aspect that is discussed in the section that follows.

2.3.2 Man as an in-the-World

Actually, to speak of man as an in-the-world, is to point to what we have already indicated above. That is, man is a being-of-relationships. Man relates to the world²¹ in a two fold way, first, in an intersubjective way and second, in an objective way.

We begin by considering man's relationship to the world in an intersubjective way. Here, the 'world'

21. Given that 'world' is a notion imbued with many meanings, we need to state our conception. World is derived from the old English compound weor-old in which weor = man and old = age, so that etymologically, 'world' is the era of man. So then, world is not a given brute reality that stands apart from passive man. Rather, it designates the totality of reality in which man is present as a light. The world 'is' because of man and man 'is' as an existent because of the world.

reveals itself as that reality of the existence of other human beings. So that an intersubjective encounter points to a relationship between at least two existents on a human level. Someone could arrest us at this point by positing the following question; Aren't transcendence and intersubjectivity irreconcilable conditions for man as an existent? If so, how come we lump them together? This is only a valid objection if we operate from the premise that the being of man is necessary. If it is necessary, then the laws of logic must automatically apply. But this is a view we have rejected time and again. By stressing the being of man as contingent, we at once see that the 'problem' here envisaged disappears and a way is open before us of capturing man in his wholeness. In a graphic illustration of man's existential tension, Macquarrie observes;

"It is impossible to say very much about existence without stumbling into its polarities and paradoxes. Whatever assertion is made must be made in the context of a dialectic that allows also for the assertion of the other pole".²²

This clearly shows us that the understanding of man as an existent is not achieved by the utilization of neat logical principles, but rather such an

22. J. Macquarrie, Op. Cit., p.103.

understanding is infested with a tension of apparently irreconcilable polarities. This is what we mean when we talk of the being of man as contingent.

Having addressed ourselves to this objection, we now turn back to intersubjectivity. In Martin Buber's I and Thou²³ we find a concrete point of departure. He formulated two words which he designated primary and asserted that these words intimated relations. The words are 'I-Thou' and 'I-it'. According to Buber, the I-Thou relation is entered into with one's whole being whereas the I-it relation is entered into with just apart of one's being.

By stressing that I-Thou and I-It are primary words, Buber was pointing to the existential fact that man is fundamentally a being-of-relations. Man is not an isolated 'I' who gets added to the society. He is not an isolated 'I' who gets added to the things in the world. He is man because he relates. Thus, what is primary is not the 'I', but the I-Thou or I-It. The 'I', 'Thou' and 'It' are simply derivatives of I-Thou and I-It.

The I-Thou relation points to a situation where one human being encounters another as he is. This

23. R.Gill and E.Sherman,(Eds), Op.Cit., pp.591-598.

is a case where both persons do not take each other as mere things or instruments but as real concrete persons. This type of relationship, far from being instrumental, is a truly personal one. Buber uses another dynamical word to characterize such a relationship-dialogue.²⁴ It is this I-Thou relationship that constitutes what we called an intersubjective encounter. Later on, we shall have more to say about dialogue in chapter three in reference to Paulo Freire and S. Strasser.

The I-It relationship is instrumental. Where it concerns persons, I take the other not as a person in his innermost being but as a thing - as an object for my various purposes. There are situations when this is necessary. But what Buber is concerned about and cautions us against, is the totalizing tendency in modern life to treat man instrumentally.

The I-Thou and the I-It relations are not strictly separate. An I-Thou relation can degenerate into an I-It relation. Also an I-It relation can rise to an I-Thou relation. These mutations are true aspects of our human condition. But the vocation of being human (as opposed to being mere

24. Ibid., p.602.

instruments) requires that we never lose track of striving towards the I-Thou relation.

In another article, Between Man and Man,²⁵ Buber brings to the fore his view of man by offering a critique of two modern views of man. He writes;

"Criticism of the individualistic method starts from the standpoint of the collectivist tendency. But if individualism understands only part of man, collectivism understands man only as part; neither advances to the wholeness of man, to man as a whole. Individualism sees man only in relation to himself but collectivism does not see man at all, it sees only 'society'. With the former, man's face is distorted, with the latter it is masked".²⁶

This observation reminds us of two approaches to man we rejected. In a rough estimate, individualism may be deemed the result of a spiritualistic perspective of man whereas collectivism the result of a materialistic perspective. Recall also that we affirmed the inadequacy of these approaches in grasping man as a whole.

25. Ibid., pp.599-603.

Buber is then suggesting that there is a third alternative. This third alternative he calls the community alternative. In a community the existential tensions of the human condition are not minimized. Here, each person is an irreducible concrete existent who is also a relation. The relationship between existents becomes what Marcel calls dyadic. This means a meeting of persons at the very human level without the roadblocks of objectification. Where I encounter the other as a thing, as an object, Marcel calls a triadic relationship. The third element of objectification now stands in the way. So a community implies a meeting of beings as persons in their wholeness whereas a collectivity implies the meeting of men as instruments for each other. Community is the notion that locates transcendence in relation.

The above analysis has concerned itself purely with person to person encounters. Although we indicated that such encounters could be objectified, we did not deal with the issue of objective encounters at any length. We pointed to it only as it related to human encounters. But man also relates to the external world (non-human world) in an objective way. Here, we can mention the natural (scientific) world, the cultural world and the historical world. These

realities posit themselves as challenges for man. By understanding them objectively, man comes to terms with these various worlds. He can transform them for the better or he can modify them. This critical intervention in reality, in an objective world, is what further defines man as a quest. His relationship to the world is such that he does not seek to leave things as they are but rather to transform them for the better according to his experiences and opinion.

But the capacity to objectivity comes to man at the crucial transition stage between childhood and adulthood. Such a stage has been called adolescence by psychologists, an 'existential moment' by existentialists. It is a time of awakening. This is the moment when one recognizes himself as an 'I' apart from the world in a general sense. An 'I' as apart from other selves and an 'I' apart from the natural world around him. As we shall see at length in chapter three, the phenomenologist Strasser, has dwelt on this issue for some length. What we need to note is that whereas intersubjective consciousness posits man as an openness to reality, objective consciousness posits him as 'a standing apart'. Both forms of consciousness are essential for an authentic relationship of man to the world in its varied forms.

2.3.3 A Synthesis of Ideas

We began with the unity of man as a being-in-the-world. In the sections that have followed, we have attempted to analyse what it means to speak of man in this fashion. First, we have found out that man as a being refers neither to his material body nor his consciousness in isolation. Rather it refers to both understood in a special way. This is what we have called embodied-subjectivity. Further on, we have seen that man as an in-the-world points fundamentally to him 'as a being-of-relations'. Such relations could be with other persons or with the natural, cultural or historical worlds. Putting these ideas in another way, we realize that we could speak of man as embodied-subjectivity-in-the-world. But our aim all along was to understand the notion of self with reference to man. The materialists posited the self as a thing, as an object. The spiritualists posited the self as pure subjectivity. We rejected these accounts because they captured only part of man. Now the existential phenomenological approach, posits man as existence, as a being-in-the-world or an embodied-subjectivity-in-the-world. This in our view, and following the analysis we have carried out, grasps man in his totality.

It is this total view of man as embodied-transcendence-in-relationship to the world that we adopt for the notion of self. Thus to speak of man as self is to speak of man in existence. Hence, our speaking of the self in the chapters that follow, will be understood to refer to man in this context. Self will refer to man as a transcendent being who nevertheless is grounded in facticity, man as a being-of-relations who nevertheless keeps 'distance'. This is the existential tension that stands at the very heart of man. That is why Sartre talks of man as 'project' and Marcel as 'quest'.

CHAPTER THREE

SELF - RELIANCE

3.00 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, we set out on a task of finding out what one could mean by talking of the 'self' as pointing to man. In our long journey, we brought to light various conceptions that have dominated the philosophical tradition. The materialistic conception sought to understand the self via universal categories that failed to take account of the contingent and dynamic nature of the existent. Instead, what was affirmed were observable universal attributes and these were asserted to constitute the selfhood of individual existents. This, we rejected.

The second stage took us into the territory of subjective idealism or spiritualism. Here, we noted that the self conceived was divorced from the world; an isolated subjectivity. Recall that Berkeley championed this view with the intention of seeking to avoid the dualism of Cartesian philosophy. He maintained that all we can ever know about objects is just the ideas we have of them. Pushed to the extreme, the Berkelian view degenerated into solipsism which

holds that the universe as far as we can tell, is nothing but myself, my mind and its ideas. Such a view eliminates the existence of other human beings and the world of objects excepting the sequence of thoughts within me. We also rejected this view.

This, then, led us to an approach that we claimed acknowledged the contingency of the existent, asserted the self as dynamic and maintained that the self was as a result of its being, a being-of-relations. This was the existential phenomenological approach.

Now we set out on another task. A task of bringing together knowledge of 'self' with what we shall discuss on 'reliance', to come up with a conception of 'self-reliance'. But first, we look at the notion 'reliance'.

3 1.0 Reliance

To surmount the partial grasp of reality observed in materialistic and spiritualistic accounts with respect to being human, we need to start with the unity of reality implied in the existent as a being-in-the-world. In chapter two, we attempted an exposition of what is entailed in pointing to man as a being-in-the-world. Heidegger in Being and Time,

observes that the existent as a being-in-the-world or Dasein (as he prefers to put it) is characterized by 'care' (Sorge). He infact states that "... care is the basic state of Dasein".¹ When Heidegger uses the word 'care' he does not imply usages in ordinary parlance. Rather, he goes beyond such usages by observing that 'care' points to Dasein's involvement in the world² as a particular and contingent being. This involvement, as it were, points further to the existent's 'Openness' to the world seen in terms of the existent as a being-of-relations and as a transcendent being.

The above reflections cast the phenomenon of reliance in a sharply human mould. That is, to talk of 'reliance' is to point to a mode of human involvement in the world. This provides for us a point of departure from which 'reliance' is construed as a human phenomenon. Since language represents a fundamental dimension of being human, we start our phenomenological account of 'reliance' at the linguistic level.

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1. R. Gill and E. Sherman (Eds.), The Fabric of Existentialism, New York, Meredith Co-operation, 1973, p.420.
 2. Unless otherwise indicated or implied, the word 'world' will refer to the concept indicated in chapter two footnote 20.

Reliance is a noun formed from the verb 'to rely'. This verb is in turn derived from the Latin word re-ligare, which means to tie fast or to bind. This root meaning implies an act of clinging to or holding onto something tightly. It implies some strong bond between two things. Extrapolating this into the human context, we see that to speak of 'to rely' is to point to the self as involved in some kind of relationship with the world. Granted that the notion 'world' refers to a variety of realities, then, the self's involvement also takes on many forms. In the previous chapter, we noted that the self's involvement with the world took on an intersubjective dimension as well as an objective dimension. By so doing, we indicated the self as an orientation to the world. But we failed to explicitly bring out one aspect, that the self posits himself also as an orientation to himself. This third dimension of engagement, we shall call the subjective encounter. It is in this mode of involvement that we shall finally locate the phenomenon of self-reliance. But first, we shall investigate the notion of 'reliance' as it occurs in the self's involvement in the world in an intersubjective way and in an objective way.

3.1.1 Reliance in Intersubjective Encounters

To speak of intersubjective encounters is to point to man as a being-of-relations, as we have constantly stressed. Such encounters occur at authentically human levels and should be characterized by openness. In ordinary discourse you may hear someone say, "Kamau is one person I can rely on", or "Makau is a very reliable fellow". Intuitively, we may at once grasp what this person is affirming but it becomes a difficult issue to provide a phenomenological account of what is here affirmed. Be it as it may, this is the task we are poised to grapple with.

To speak of 'to rely' in an intersubjective encounter, is to repose trust or confidence in someone. To trust someone presupposes a kind of knowing of that person. So to provide an account of reliance in this context, demands a phenomenology of the type of knowing implied and an account of trust as it arises out of this knowing.

We begin with the knowing. Macquarrie observes that "when we talk of knowing, we imply that understanding has reached a level of adequacy that entitles

us to be reasonably certain about its findings".³ This kind of general definition does not mean that, therefore, knowledge is one given entity possessing an unchanging essence. We have already pointed out that the self's involvement in the world takes on three forms. These three forms also imply three modes of knowing. There is the objective encounter to which is associated knowledge of natural phenomena, there is the intersubjective encounter to which is associated knowledge of persons and finally there is the subjective encounter to which is associated self-knowledge.⁴ In this section, we shall look briefly at knowledge of natural phenomena and in some considerable detail, knowledge of persons. We shall defer knowledge of self to the section on self-reliance.

Knowledge of natural phenomena is a form of understanding that arises out of the existent's involvement with things as objects. It has also been called knowledge by observation thus indicating the method by which one arrives at such knowledge. Observation implies detachment from what is known so that the object of interest is examined in an external

3. J. Macquarrie; Existentialism, New York, Penguin Books, 1986, p.132.

4. Ibid., pp.132-133.

way. In this way of knowing, one aims at objectivity. Thus what we call empirical facts are arrived at in this way. The idea is to eliminate subjective perceptions and hence imbue such knowledge with universal validity. The natural sciences make great use of this approach to knowing.

But, there has been a tendency in psychology, sociology and other 'sciences of man' to apply this approach to intimately human affairs. At this point, existential philosophers protest. They argue that man as an existent, as a self, reveals himself as an open-ended being in such a way that the scientific approach cannot hope to grasp him adequately. They assert that we come to know what is distinctively human about man by participation in existence and not by the aloofness characteristic of scientific approaches. This, then, brings us to the second way of knowing, knowledge of persons.

As we have stated, knowledge of persons is characterized by participation. Participation implies total involvement or immersion of a person in the phenomenon of concern. Toulmin describes this state of affairs even more accurately when he says:

"Human beings normally deal with one another in ways that engage their entire personalities without regard to abstract distinctions between 'cognition', 'affect' and the rest".⁵

This is interesting given that such a statement originates from a psychologist but it is not surprising given that even among psychologists, there is a growing realization that man presents a reality beyond that encountered when dealing with natural phenomena. Human encounters reveal themselves as active, mutual and reciprocative. To know the other person as a self requires a two way openness that allows me to enter and participate in his being and allows him to enter and participate in my being. Thus the designation, knowledge by participation.⁶

Concretely speaking, I encounter the other as self through communication. By communication, we do not mean mere verbalism but we point to the encounter between selves whose beings 'speak' to each other in a variety of ways, the use of symbolic language being only one. This 'speaking' is what we call dialogue. Dialogue is the existential communication among selves that facilitates the knowing-in-openness that we have

5. T. Mischel (ed.), The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1977, p.293.

6. J. Macquarrie, Op.Cit., p.134.

called knowledge by participation.

In chapters one and two, we made mention of this phenomenon called dialogue. In this chapter, dialogue assumes crucial importance because not only will it point to a plausible understanding of the phenomenon of self-reliance, but it will emerge as a central pillar in our conception of a humanizing education in chapter four. Granted these reasons, it deserves our attention at length.

So, what is dialogue? Dialogue, first and foremost, is a mode of communication that takes place in an intersubjective relationship. Recall that an intersubjective relationship involves, fundamentally, two subjects. When these two subjects engage in what Strasser calls "reciprocal communication",⁷ then, a dialogical encounter is realized. This communication actually need not be only by means of symbolic sounds, as we have indicated earlier on. From our experiences, we know people to be capable of 'speaking' to each other in a variety of ways. What is important is that two persons encounter each other as subjects.

7. S. Strasser, The Idea of Dialogical Phenomenology, Pittsburg, 1969, p.65.

The following observation will throw even greater light on what we are trying to say;

"... dialogue as an active-receptive interplay makes its appearance when my way of 'dealing' with a 'you' is attuned to the way the 'you' 'deals' with me. This dealing-with can exhibit a pre-rational character; it can take place in a wordless way; it can rest upon one body-subject's understanding of another body-subject."⁸

This observation points to a 'you' attuned to a 'me'. That is, it points to what Buber has called an I-Thou relationship. But it must be noted that to be attuned-to does not imply either the 'I' conforming to the 'you' or the 'you' conforming to the 'I'. No blind conformity is here implied. A true dialogical encounter preserves all the risks of an existential life. Without tensions and differences of opinions, dialogue would die. Both harmony and conflict are fundamental ways in which the 'I' speaks to a 'you' and vice versa.

Freire⁹ captures the dialogical picture in an even more illuminating way by positing it as a horizontal encounter. His speaking of a horizontal

8. Ibid., p.65.

9. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, Pelican Books, 1985, pp.60-65.

encounter points to the meeting of an 'I' and a 'you' as subjects. It does not imply symmetry in matters of knowledge, age, intelligence or other empirical matters. What is only implied is the meeting of persons as human beings, not as objects.

Freire goes further to affirm that the dialogical encounter is a non-starter without faith in man. According to Freire, "faith in man is an a priori requirement for dialogue ..." ¹⁰ But what is faith?

Faith is a fundamental human attitude. When we talk of faith here, we should not be understood to be referring to faith as primarily a function of religious consciousness, neither should our understanding be seen to refer to the totality of philosophical convictions. What we are concerned here with, is the conception of faith as a general human attitude applicable to both theists and atheists. Faith is the affirmation of reality emanating from an ontological insight of man as human, as a being-of-worth. We are talking of 'an ontological insight' because faith in essence "is independent of objectifying knowledge". ¹¹

10. Ibid., p.63.

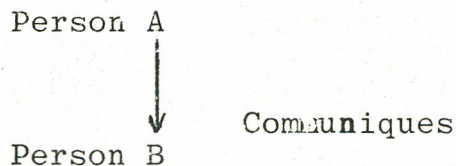
11. S. Strasser, Op. Cit., p.125.

In the intersubjective encounter, we see that faith is that attitude that believes in a 'you' even before concrete contact is established. The man endowed with faith in men is the dialogical man. Such faith is such that in its absence, no effort could establish a dialogical encounter between men.

When faith exists in an encounter between persons, dialogue is born. It is by virtue of this faith that dialogue is a horizontal and reciprocative relationship. Dialogue in its turn engenders trust which further strengthens dialogue. Trust, unlike faith, is the affirmation of reality as evidenced by existential situations. When a 'you' approaches me in a manner that reveals he has faith in me, that he treats me as a being-of-worth, I 'open' up to that 'other'. This opening-up is a sign of my trust in that 'other'. This trusting is a revelation of that other being as one in whom I can rely. So reliance becomes the attitude I adopt towards that other as one whom I take to be trustworthy. Reliance does not mean in a negative sense, the surrender of my humanness to that other so that I become an object-for-him. Indeed, one who has faith in me cannot take me as an object-for-him.

We have spoken of dialogue as a reciprocative phenomenon. If out of dialogue results trust upon which reliance is based, then reliance posits itself also as a reciprocal phenomenon. My reliance on a 'you' implies a reciprocal reliance of him on me.¹² So, genuine reliance arises out of a dialogical encounter where two selves view each other as simultaneously trustworthy and dependable in their mutual task of becoming more human.

Because dialogue posits itself as a humanizing phenomenon towards which men strive, it implies the existence of its antithesis - anti-dialogue. Unlike dialogue, anti-dialogue thrives in an absence of faith in men. It is a refusal to regard each other as beings-of-worth. It thrives in those situations where some men desire to dominate and oppress others. If we consider two persons engaged in such an encounter, then the situation would look as shown below.



12. Our concept of 'reliance' is restricted to conditions where two persons encounter dynamically as subjects and not potentially as subjects. Our conception therefore excludes usages such as 'a baby relies on its mother'.

The domineering person is A and the oppressed person is B. Instead of communication between A and B, A issues communiques. This depicts a one-way relationship in which only A talks and B listens. B is denied his human right also to consider reality. No trust can arise out of such an encounter for A views B with suspicion and B views A with suspicion. Because trust cannot arise here, so reliance cannot.

3.1.2 Reliance in Objective Encounters

There are two ways in which the word 'to rely' is used in ordinary speech, namely, to rely on a person and to rely on a thing. The preceding subsection has attempted to bring to light what is entailed in speaking about relying on a person. The phenomenological account thus given may be summarized as follows. The phenomenon of reliance demands faith in men as an a priori condition. Once this is granted, a dialogical encounter may ensue out of which arises a type of knowing we called knowledge by participation. This knowledge has a pre-rational character as its coming-to-be demands an I-Thou encounter. Now out of dialogue and with the coming-to-be of knowledge by participation results trust. This trust is a mutual and reciprocative affair. It is the surrendering

of my total being to the other person as he also surrenders his being to me. This results in a situation of total risk and also a situation of intimate communication. Out of trust arises reliance. Reliance reveals itself as a practical orientation of my entire being towards that whom I find trustworthy.

In this section, we intend to deal with the issue of reliance as it occurs in objective encounters. The intention is commensurate with our earlier identification of the self's involvement with the world in a twofold way. In talking about objective encounters, we shall restrict ourselves to the self's dealing with 'non-human' reality. We shall not concern ourselves here with the self's dealing with other human beings as objects because this has already been considered in section 3.1.1 and posited as an anti-dialogical encounter.

An objective encounter implies a mode of knowing. This mode of knowing, we have called knowledge by observation. It has also been referred to as objectifying knowledge.¹³ Following Bubers designation, we could point to an objective encounter as an I-It

13. See S. Strasser, Op. Cit., p.124.

relationship. This is a type of relationship in which I do not commit my entire being but rather 'stands apart' from that which I relate to. My knowledge of the 'object' which engages my interest arises out of a cool detached observation. There is no reciprocity because the object cannot 'talk' to my being the way a person would. What then arises out of my encounter with an object is viewed in an instrumental way. So that strictly speaking, one could not say that I come to trust that object the way one would talk of my trusting another person. Rather, one could say the object is functionally dependable. In revealing itself as functionally dependable, as possessing of a certain utilitarian value, one comes to talk of it being 'reliable'. By 'reliable' one means that the object can fulfil certain goals a person has set. So to talk of 'reliance' in the 'it' does not mean the same thing as talking about reliance in a 'you'. The 'it' reliance is basically utilitarian, the 'you' reliance goes beyond utility by demanding the commitment of one's entire being. At this point, we would like to recall that in chapter one, we posited self-reliance as a human phenomenon. The notion 'reliance' points to a self which further points to man as an existent. In order that we understand self-reliance as properly a human phenomenon, the conception of 'reliance' in this compound notion

should derive from reliance as developed with respect to a 'you'.

3.2.0 Self-Reliance

We may immediately assert that self-reliance presupposes self-knowledge. This knowledge has as its reference point, the self not in solitude, but with respect to other persons (the 'you') and with respect to the objective world. This implies that self-knowledge presupposes both knowledge of other persons and knowledge of phenomena taken as natural phenomena. It implies both participatory and objectifying knowledge.

We start by locating the significance of objectifying knowledge in self-knowledge. In section 3.1.2, we said that when I approach the world objectively, I cast that world (now object) as separate from me. In so doing, I conceive myself as an autonomous and independent being. Not only can I turn upon the world as an intentional consciousness but I can also turn inward on the 'I'. In so doing, I come to realize in me a world¹⁴ of thoughts, feelings, dispositions,

14. 'World' here is used to refer to the interiority of the self.

passions, inclinations and desires that point to an inner self. We may call this subjective dimension of the self, the 'I'.

The awareness of this inner self is not always with us from childhood to adulthood. It occurs somewhere in the transition between childhood and adulthood. Psychologists have referred to this period of awakening as adolescence. Morris calls it the 'existential moment'.¹⁵ The phenomenologist Strasser has treated this issue in some considerable detail.¹⁶ The dawn of this awareness can throw us into feelings of great loneliness, despair or alienation but with it also comes the realization of the 'I' as unique and separate from all else. The dawn of this awareness is a necessary first essential on the path to self-reliance because it thrusts one out of the 'they' (Heidegger), the 'herd' (Nietzsche) or the 'crowd' (Kierkegaard). When we use such terms as the 'they', we are simply pointing to those modes of being-together-with-others that place roadblocks to our collective humanization. The 'crowd' is the antithesis of a

15. Van cleve Morris, Existentialism in Education, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1966, p.112.

16. S. Strasser, Op. Cit., See Lecture Four in "The Growth of Awareness", especially pp.88-97.

dialogical encounter. In the 'crowd', I do not emerge as the 'I', but I become like all others. This is the condition Freire has identified as adaptation and draws a distinction between it and what he calls integration by observing;

"Integration with one's context as distinguished from adaptation, is a distinctively human activity. Integration results from the capacity to adapt oneself to reality plus the critical capacity to make choices and transform that reality. To the extent that man loses his ability to make choices and is subjected to the choices of others, to the extent that his decisions are no longer his own, because they result from external prescriptions, he is no longer integrated. Rather, he is adapted".¹⁷
(Author's emphasis).

So the integrated person is the one who 'stands out' or 'emerges'. He is a person who recognizes himself as a being of transcendence. In becoming aware of the 'I', I recognize myself as a centre of action. No longer is the entire drama of life to be played for me, I become also engaged and in so doing, transform and dynamize reality. The 'crowd' man sank in levelling anonymity, sees reality as an absolute static given whereas the one who has attained the awareness of the 'I', who 'stands out', views reality

17. Paulo Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, London, Sheed and Ward, 1985, p.4.

dynamically. So to be a self-reliant person is to have the awareness of the 'I' as unique, as a 'standing out' who thrusts into possibilities beyond the givenness of reality as he finds it. So as we have mentioned, the first step to becoming self-reliant is to become aware of the 'I' and this dawns with the attainment of objectifying knowledge.

Now, let us see from what angle participatory knowledge plays part in self-knowledge and how this may lead further to a conception of self-reliance. In section 3.1.1, we provided a sketch of participatory knowledge from an intersubjective position. This analysis was only a partial grasp of the phenomenon of participatory knowledge because, each participant's 'arrow of knowledge', pointed outwardly towards the other. To complete the analysis, we need to look at each participant of the intersubjective encounter as holding two arrows.¹⁸ One pointing to that other and the remaining arrow pointing to himself. This is because, an intersubjective encounter not only 'speaks' to me about the 'you' but also speaks to me about the 'I'. It is this speaking to me that locates participatory knowledge in self-knowledge.

18. 'arrow' here is used analogously or illustratively and not literally.

Unlike the objectifying knowledge considered above, participatory knowledge is pre-objectifying. I do not stand aloof to reflect upon what I am, rather I arrive at knowledge of myself through an immediate and intuitive awareness. Rutto has this conception of self-knowledge when he writes that it "is the immediate presence of the subject to the reality he is".¹⁹

How, one may ask, is this 'immediate presence' made possible? It could not be made possible through cognitive knowledge as this implies a deliberation and a calculation that demands a stretch of time. It is made possible through feeling. Feeling is an 'immediate presence', first of the 'you' and secondly of the 'I'. Put compactly, we would say, "the feeling subject feels himself by the fact that he feels his fellow subject".²⁰ This is a point we have already made. That is, in speaking to me about the 'you' the dialogical encounter speaks also to me about the 'I'. The speaking takes the first form of my realization of the 'I' as a being-of-relationships. In the

19. S.K. Rutto, Self-knowledge and its Implications for Education; with Special Reference to the Creative Development of Students in Schools, Unpublished M.A.Thesis, Kenyatta University, 1986, p.149.

20. S. Strasser, Op. Cit., p.99.

analysis of objectifying experience, the 'I' was posited as a 'seperateness' from the world, as a standing-alone. This is true but not the whole truth. To complete the existential picture, we need to posit the remaining polarity of the 'I' as an 'openness' to the world. For the 'I' exists concretely as a dialectic between these opposing polarities.

In being an openness to reality, the 'I' recalls itself as a being-of-relations. This realization creates the awareness of my 'I' as incomplete without the 'you'. I come to realize that in my quest for greater humanity, I need the 'you'. Not the 'you' as obtains in the 'herd' but the 'you' of the dialogical encounter. The 'you' in that encounter which reveals me as a being-of-worth and hence engenders self-trust. Self-trust in turn is the attitude that thrusts me into engagement with the world in a critical manner thus defining me as a self-reliant person. We may infact construe the dialogical encounter as the most fundamental mode of human involvement from which results both my view of the 'I' as a standing-apart-from and as a tied-to reality. So then, objectifying experience presupposes the non-objectifying mode of awareness.

From these reflections, self-reliance emerges as the constant quest of the 'I' for humanization through a critical intervention in reality, an intervention that is not only capable of understanding that reality but also capable of modifying and transforming the given. This is a dynamic view of self-reliance. It originates from our vision of the self as dynamic, as always becoming what it is not. Thus the phenomenon of self-reliance does not refer to a material state, rather it is a formal state that orients man to view reality in a certain way.

CHAPTER FOUR

SELF-RELIANCE : THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

4.00 Introduction

One recalls that at the very beginning of this study, we attempted to bring to light our understanding of education. We started by locating education as an intentional and purposive activity which pointed to it being a wholly human activity and hence a human phenomenon. Given this conception, the existence of any authentic educative enterprise is to serve as a conduit for the further humanization of man. In chapter one, we merely sketched what this entailed. In this final chapter, we hope to fill in that sketch, details that will provide a comprehensive picture of what it means to view education as a human phenomenon. It is only after doing this that we can effectively argue the case for self-reliance in such an education.

4.1.0 Education: A Humanizing Enterprise

When we speak of education, we refer to that deliberately organized activity that takes place in a formal setting normally called the school. But in speaking of such an activity, our interest is not drawn

in the direction of providing a descriptive account, as we pointed out in chapter one. Rather, our concern is normative, hence our desire to speak of education as a humanizing enterprise.

To attain a solid grasp of education as a humanizing enterprise, we need to start with what we construe here, to be its antithesis. From our arguments in the first chapter, two notable strands of such an education explicitly emerged which we designated as teacher-centred and student-centred.

The teacher-centred form derives from the traditional conception of education as the passing onto the young the accumulated wisdom of the human race. This conception imbues the teacher with an exaggerated status of importance while reducing the students to the status of objects. The teacher becomes the centre of all activity. In this context, one pictures the teacher as standing in front of his students on a raised platform (to emphasize his sole importance), and pouring data into receptive and passive students. His activity and the implicit assumption behind it, reduces the students to mere objects. An education conceived in these terms is dehumanizing, it is what Freire has called the

"banking concept of education".¹ By borrowing from the language of banks, Freire intends to show us how lifeless and static and hence inhuman such an education is. The teacher is pictured as a bank clerk who deposits lifeless knowledge (deposits) into passive students (depositories). In his own words, we read;

"Education thus becomes an act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and the teacher the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which students patiently receive, memorize and repeat".²

It is not hard to trace the philosophical roots of such an education. The teacher acts from the assumption that all his students are the same. He views the term 'student' as a universal category, a perspective that falls under materialism as we saw in chapter two. To the teacher, the real is the permanent, the unchanging, a view that is traceable to Plato. Not that Plato was the first philosopher to expound on 'permanence' as more real than 'change', for before him, we have Parmenides. But he was the first to provide a comprehensive and clear account of

1. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, Pelican Books, 1985, p.45.

2. Ibid., pp. 45-46.

why 'permanence' should be construed as more real than 'change'. To deny the dynamic nature of education is to stifle the curiosity of minds engaged in the consideration of reality. It is to kill the spirit of research and thereby dehumanize the students.

Freire's analysis indicates what we have discussed above as the only antithesis to a humanizing education. This is actually not the case. There exists another conception of education which elevates the student's status to exaggerated proportions thus completely marginalizing the teacher's role. This is what we have called the student-centred concept of education. Let us also have a look at it.

This concept has its origin in the American rebellion against teacher-centred education at the beginning of this century. Notable among its proponents was John Dewey who was the father-founder of a movement that was especially strong in the 1930's known as progressivism. Adherents to this view, influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism denounced the teacher-centred education as authoritarian and counter to the American democratic ideas. They envisioned education to be a child's encounter with nature and therefore, rather than sit rigidly on a

desk, in a cold classroom, the child needed to be on his own to experience the natural world. Tables were now overturned. The teacher who previously stood at the centre of education was expelled onto the sidelines and the student took the teacher's seat. By laying great emphasis on the student, the advocates of this new approach failed to realize that they had simply exchanged one form of totalitarianism for another. The totalitarianism of the teacher now became that of the student. Since these two conceptions of education are totalitarian, they are ipso facto dehumanizing and are therefore, conceptions we cannot adopt in this study.

Education as a humanizing enterprise starts in dialogue. Recall our analysis of dialogue in the third chapter. We maintained that this is a communicative encounter born out of faith in men and nourished by trust. It is an encounter where at least two persons meet each other as subjects. In the context of education, then, dialogue reveals itself as a phenomenon where teacher and student meet on an equal footing, not in terms of knowledge, but as human beings, as persons. In dialogue, neither the teacher's status as a person is exaggerated beyond and above that of the student, nor that of the student above that of the teacher. The teacher and the student

both become 'considerers'¹³ of reality whether such a reality be constituted by values or empirical data. Humanization, especially that of the student, becomes a possibility not because of the student's encounter with the reality itself, but with the encounter with another subject through whom the reality considered takes a dynamic and human significance. That is why dialogue is a fundamental pillar of a humanizing education. The mistake in a teacher-centred education is to impose (through narratives) reality upon the students as if it is an absolute given. The student is not given a chance to consider such a reality in personal terms but rather he is required to repeat what he has been taught. On the other hand, a student-centred education assumes that it is the encounter with nature rather than other human beings that constitutes education. It makes the student's encounter with nature a priori to his encounter with the teacher. We maintain that this is a distortion of what is here construed to be an authentic human education. We may indicate that the reverse is true. My encounter with others is an a priori requirement for an authentic encounter with nature. So then, in

3. A 'considerer' of reality is one who approaches reality in a critical manner so that out of a critical appraisal, the reality comes to have personal significance for him whether that reality be objective or not.

the context of education, it will be through the dialogical encounter that the student comes to apprehend reality to have human significance.

We have so far talked about the 'teacher' and the 'student' in this humanizing education as if we know who they are. One could point out that in the teacher-centred education, we pointed to the teacher as the subject working upon students who were regarded as objects. In the student-centred education, the student was conceived of as a subject-in-isolation. What then, is our conception of these two important parties in this education we are calling humanizing? This is a very important question because any education worth its name hinges upon the conception given to the 'teacher' and the 'student'.

We shall start by addressing ourselves to the question, who is a student? One could subdivide the formal educational set up into three major categories, viz, primary, secondary and tertiary. On average, the primary phase sees a learner enter at six years of age and leave at fourteen years. (We are talking with respect to the current 8-4-4 education system in Kenya). The secondary phase, on average, has

student⁴ ages ranging from fifteen years (form one) to eighteen years (form four). Tertiary education which includes college and university education has students aged nineteen years and above. The all important question now arises; When we talk of the 'student' in an education that is a dialogical encounter, are we referring to the learner in all the three phases of education or the learner in only certain phases of this education?

This question is wholly answered if one recalls our analysis of the dialogical encounter that finally led us to the phenomenon of self-reliance in chapter three. We affirmed that the realization of the 'I' as unique and separate from all else (self-awareness), is a necessary first essential on the path to self-reliance. Since dialogue was posited as the phenomenon through which self-reliance could be realized, then, a dialogical encounter becomes only possible in the context of selves who have attained self-awareness. Strasser hits the nail on the head by observing that;

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4. In Britain, the term 'student' is used for only those studying at college and university. Children who are too young for college are called pupils. In America, even the very young in schools, (before college) are called students. Notice that in our case, we have preferred to use 'learner' for the primary phase. The reason for this will become clear in the next stages.

"The power and inclination to reflect, awoken only in adolescence. At this stage, the young person views himself as an interiority that is unique and that, therefore, differs and is separated from the interiority of other persons".⁵

Thus, we come to the realization that the attainment of self-awareness occurs in the transition from primary to the secondary phase of education. If, as we have said, the dialogical encounter presupposes the meeting of two 'I's conscious of their uniqueness and separateness, then the secondary and tertiary phases of education provide the required setting. The primary phase, which could be regarded as a childhood phase, is what Morris has called the "pre-existential phase of human life".⁶ But then, at the 'existential moment', the child is now ready for a dialogical encounter with the teacher. Morris speaks of the educative situation thus;

"Thus, when existentialists speak of an education theory, they will refer to a theory having its orientation and focus primarily upon the secondary phases of learning. Elementary education, in all likelihood, could assume a variety of forms and still be adequate to an existential secondary education ..."⁷

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5. S.Strasser, The idea of Dialogical Phenomenology, Pittsburgh, Dusquesne Univ. Press, 1969, p.97.
 6. Van Cleve Morris, Existentialism in Education, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1966, p.112.
 7. Ibid., p.116.

So, when we speak of the 'student', we speak of that learner⁸ in the secondary and tertiary phases of education. He is the learner who stands as subject and thus is able to recognize the freedom he possesses to make choices and at the same time the responsibility he carries in the making of his person. He comes to realize himself, not as a complete being, but as a project (Sartre), as a quest (Marcel). But his becoming is linked to the encounter with his teacher because he is fundamentally a being-of-relations. This leads us to our next question, who is a teacher?

As we pointed out earlier on, a dialogical encounter demands that the teacher and student meet in a horizontal relationship. In such a relationship, the teacher also occurs as subject. But there is a difference between being a teacher and being a student. Existential phenomenologists construe the act of teaching as a mode of being-with.⁹ To be-with in this context implies "concern and availability".¹⁰ Concern reflects the teacher's understanding of his

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8. This word is being used in a neutral sense to refer to a person engaged in the formal education system at any level.
 9. J. Macquarrie, Existentialism, New York, Penguin Books, 1986, p.261.
 10. J.R. Njoroge and G.A. Bennaars, Philosophy and Education, Nairobi, TransAfrica, 1986, p.232.

students as 'not-yets', yet on the road to becoming authentic selves. In being concerned, he provides situations, in a dialogical manner, which open avenues for the greater humanization of his students.

Availability reveals the teacher as the competent older 'you' for the students. In terms of knowledge, he has journeyed further than his students so that he is able to act as a guide in the students journey in search for more knowledge. Like Socrates, the authentic teacher seeks to make his students also 'considerers' of reality. He seeks to awaken their critical faculties and make them realize they are responsible for fashioning their own persons and their own destinies. In a nutshell, we may see the teacher as that person who helps his students to come to terms with their own existence.

So much for the student and the teacher. What about educational content or subject matter? To engage in dialogue is to talk about something with somebody. That something in the context of education, is what we call educational content. This educational content or subject matter, refers to various dimensions of reality which constitute the subject of dialogue. The teacher's treatment of subject matter should be in such a way that his students come to discover truth in free association. The teacher of a humanizing

education will be happy and feel he has achieved his objectives when his students come to hold something as true, not because he says that, that something is true, but because the students themselves are convinced that it is true. In effect, by the way he treats subject matter, the teacher's final aim should be to produce self-moving autonomous subjects.

4.2.0 Self-Reliance as an Aim in Education

In chapter two, we pointed to the self as designating that which is truly human about man. The self was posited as embodied transcendence in relationship to the world. That is, man is a project, he is that which seeks to become more than it already is, but such 'going beyond' always happens in the context of his being a being-of-relations both to the natural world and to other selves. In chapter three, the phenomenon of self-reliance revealed itself as a critical awareness of the self as posited in chapter two and as a consequence, action upon that awareness. This awareness, we saw, originated from the dialogical encounter among selves mediated by the world. In this chapter, we have already defined education in dialogical terms. Granted this, one clearly sees that self-reliance as conceived, reveals itself as a primary aim

of such an education. It is only in a humanizing education that self-reliance as a human phenomenon can be authentically realized.

When one talks of teaching for self-reliance, one does not point to any specific subject matter as a pathway to the realization of such an aim (although the importance of subject matter can hereby not be denied). What one points to fundamentally, is the awareness he hopes the student will have attained concerning himself as a person and the world as revealed through the encounter with education content. Concerning himself as a person, the student should come to the realization that in spite of hereditary and environmental factors which define his facticity, he still stands as a free agent to choose the destiny of his future and that having chosen, he becomes responsible for what he has made of himself. Concerning the awareness of worldly reality, the student needs to resist those conceptions that would have him regard all reality as pre-ordained and pre-determined for this could only lead to laziness and resignation in the face of difficulties. But he needs to come to the realization that reality bears a dynamic dimension. That it is his right as a human being, once he understands circumstances, to intervene and transform them for the better. That

at large, reality bears a human significance. This is especially important when we are considering cultural and historical reality. The two forms of awareness thus considered, are the hallmarks of a truly self-reliant person.

If the teacher desires to bring to fruition these two rather interrelated forms of awareness in the student, he needs to be a special kind of teacher. Special, because he needs to be different from the majority of teachers one comes across in our educational institutions, teachers whom Freire has called 'depositors of knowledge'. He needs to be a teacher who will treat his students as free agents for them to recognize themselves as free. This point, it should be noted, is made especially difficult by our heavy reliance on examinations. Examinations in themselves need not be bad. But if to prepare for examinations will require nothing but 'parroting' and 'vomiting' back what the teacher has taught, then this defeats the whole purpose of a humanizing education. Examinations can be set that demand for originality and creativity while still giving room for objective requirements.

If a teacher is to engage in a dialogical encounter with his students, he needs to have had a similar engagement himself. Teacher education colleges should reduce their emphasis on teaching as a role, as a profession, and instead look at teaching as a life commitment. For it is only the committed teacher who is dialogical. He is committed both to the students entrusted to his care and to the subject matter which provides the substance for dialogue. The teacher, apart from having psychological and sociological knowledge about his students, needs to have a clearly articulated philosophy of man. That is, the philosophy of man as human.

The driving motive behind a teacher's activities, should be to bring his students to a posture in relation to subject matter that Morris has called 'appropriation'. To appropriate is to 'make mine' even that which is universally valid knowledge. When, for example, the student encounters scientific knowledge, he should not be made to view it as a dry given absolute devoid of any personal significance. Rather, opportunity should be granted him to experience and rediscover such knowledge afresh. Then, only does it become part and parcel of his growing personality. As we have asserted earlier, true internalization of

11. Van Cleve Morris, Op.Cit., p.120.

what is learned occurs through dialogue and it is through the same dialogical encounter, that self-reliance as an aim in education is achievable.

4.3.0 The 8-4-4 Educational System

In chapter one, section 1.1.0, we attempted to historically trace how the notion of self-reliance had come into prominence in educational circles in Kenya. This we did by use of four major educational reports popularly known as the Ominde, Gachathi, Mackay and Kamunge Reports. It was the Ominde Report just after independence which provided for us the general direction of the educational system. At the time, it was argued that education should be seen "in the context of our nation economic development...". Basically then, education came to be viewed from the onset as performing a primarily economic function. One can understand and sympathize with this economic emphasis if one notes that at independence, Kenya was desperately in need of manpower. But by the mid-seventies, this economic concern had precipitated other problems among which, notably was the problem of unemployment. It is at this point that the Gachathi Report comes to recommend a restructuring of the entire educational system, a recommendation taken over by the Mackay Report of 1981 from which resulted the current

8-4-4 education system. It is in connection with the 8-4-4 education system that the notion of self-reliance constantly arises in a positive sense. It is normally believed that the 8-4-4 education system, launched in January 1985, is structured in such a way as to produce self-reliant individuals. By laying emphasis on technical and vocational education, it is envisaged that the graduates of this system will use skills gained either to find employment or to engage in self-employment activities. This is assumed to lead to self-reliance.

From this argument, one notes something of significance. That the notion of self-reliance here conceived, is economic. That is, once one attains economic independence by way of self-employment or finding a job commensurate with his skills, then such a person becomes a self-reliant person. Following our analysis of the notion of self-reliance, we may grant this as a very partial insight but too narrow a conception. Partial insight, because skills alone do not go into defining a self-reliant person. Narrow because man as a self is defined by many dimensions, the economic dimension being only one, albeit an insignificant one.

What we have to note is that, we could lay great emphasis on these technical subjects, but produce people who are unable to think for themselves, who in spite of the skills they have, still wait to be directed on what to do. How may they put into practice what they have learnt, if the education provided dwells only with practical matters disregarding the dignity and autonomy of individual persons? In other words, if our aim is to produce self-reliant persons, then let the education being provided be first, a humanizing education and only thereafter, an education geared towards imparting skills. Let the central emphasis be on producing people who are able to come to terms with their existence in all its varied forms. Self-reliance is not a product of technical education but rather, a product of a humanizing education, an education that puts students as human beings above subject matter while at the same time, recognizing the central role of subject matter as reality that challenges the students.

So, given our conception of self-reliance, the 8-4-4 education system does not seek to produce self-reliant individuals but rather, it seeks to produce skilled workers. One may retort that although emphasis is laid upon vocational and technical subjects,

is it not the provision of academic subjects a pointer to an all round education? This belligerent retort has underlining it, a subtle assumption - that subject matter bears a direct link to the type of person who emerges out of the educational system. The greater truth actually lies in the way the teacher treats the subject matter in the presence of his students. That is why we identified dialogue as a primary method in a truly human education. It is the only method whose spirit does not deny the student his chance to consider reality.

So, what the 8-4-4 education system needs to do, if it is desired that authentically self-reliant person be produced, is to review teaching methodology and to cut down on the number of subjects 'forced' upon the students. Teaching should be construed in human terms as an encounter between teacher and student but not at an imposition of subject matter onto passive students. On the other hand, if students are to deal with subject matter critically, the number of subjects given (at form four, they are ten), should be reduced to provide a breathing space. The effect of too many subjects is to tempt students into spending most of their time cramming to pass examinations rather than reflecting seriously on the meaning and content of

what is before them. Too many subjects develop inhuman habits of looking at reality by inhibiting creativity and originality. So the fundamental concern is not at the level of subject matter (although this is important) but the level of the teacher-student interaction. It is out of dialogue that students could emerge with the consciousness as shapers and moulders of reality whether such reality be social, economic, cultural or historical.

4.4.0 A Recapitulation

In chapter one, we indicated at the very onset that our task centred on the notion 'self-reliance' but that such a task did not involve only a concern with self-reliance qua self-reliance but primarily, with self-reliance as an aim in education.

As a point of departure, we looked at some works that had claimed to say something about 'self-reliance' in an explicitly philosophical manner. Here, we identified articles written by Julius K. Nyerere and the last two chapters from a book Philosophy and Education in Africa, co-authored by R.J. Njoroge and G.A. Bennaars.

From Nyerere, we gathered that his ideas on self-reliance underwent change from 1967 (the year he wrote the document Education for Self-Reliance), to 1976 (the latest period we could obtain articles written by Nyerere on education). In 1967, Nyerere displayed a highly social conception of the notion 'self-reliance'. Self-reliance was depicted as a form of self-sufficiency on the economic, cultural and political planes of the Tanzanian society. The individual was seen only as part of the whole, the society. Towards 1976, Nyerere began to realize that he could not posit the society as the ultimate reality descriptive of the human condition. He had also to assert the equally primordial importance of the concrete individual person. This is the time he began to speak of man as Man-in-society. In spite of this, he was still unable to address himself to the phenomenon of self-reliance as it occurred in the educational context.

At this point, we turned to R.J. Njoroge and G.A. Bennaars. They went further than Nyerere in pointing out that self-reliance in education could be achieved through dialogue and that becoming self-reliant presupposed one becoming a self. Still, this treatment did not go far enough. That is why in section 1.2.0, we posed three questions that we

considered remained unanswered. Nevertheless, the Njoroge and Bennaars treatment provided for us, a crucial point of departure from which we could attempt a bringing-to-light the phenomenon of self-reliance.

We agreed that to become self-reliant implied, first, one becoming a self. But when we tried to figure out what was entailed in speaking of one as becoming a self, the question of methodology straight-away arose. We desired that 'self' refer to that which is intimately human about man, a position which would latter justify our consideration of self-reliance as a human phenomenon. This led us to the existential phenomenological approach. This approach allowed us to construe the self dynamically, thus justifying our speaking of the self as becoming. It also protected us from two approaches with reductionist tendencies. One, the materialistic approach which would have had us construe the self as nothing but an object and two, the spiritualistic approach which would have had us construe the self as nothing but pure subjectivity. Rather, by taking account of both the insights of a materialistic perspective and a spiritualistic perspective, the self was construed as a being-in-the-world. This pointed to the self existentially as a being of transcendence, a being of concreteness and particularity and as a being-of-relations. Thus to speak of one

becoming a self is to point to one attaining critical consciousness of himself as a being-in-the-world. All these attempts to develop a conception of self that could point to man as truly human, were done in chapter two and were directed at answering the first question as posed in section 1.2.0.

Chapter three concerned itself with the notion 'self-reliance'. It occurred to us at the very beginning of this chapter to dwell first on the notion 'reliance' before developing a conception for 'self-reliance'. This stemmed from the observation that 'self-reliance' was formed by two words 'self' and 'reliance'. Since chapter two had addressed itself to the notion 'self', chapter three had to begin by a consideration of the notion 'reliance'. We began by asserting that to rely implied a mode of human involvement in the world. This assertion was justified by the observation we had made in chapter two that the self is a being-of-relations to the world. We identified a threefold way in which the self engaged in relations. There was what we called the intersubjective encounter, the objective encounter and finally the subjective encounter. We realized that these three forms of encounter had implications for the understanding of 'reliance' and we accordingly set upon

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the task of investigating what was entailed in speaking of 'reliance' in each encounter. What resulted was that, reliance as understood in the intersubjective and objective encounters formed the basis for understanding the phenomenon of self-reliance. The dialogical encounter was posited as a conduit through which one could become self-reliant. This pointed to the social dimension of self-reliance, that is, its intersubjective character. On the other hand, self-reliance emerged as that phenomenon which led one to view reality (in the general sense) critically and to intervene and transform that reality for the better as circumstances demanded. The resources for a critical intervention in reality would stem from the existential knowledge of the self as a transcendent being.

In chapter four, we defined education in dialogical terms, so that self-reliance revealed itself as a primary aim of such an education. In reviewing the 8-4-4 educational system, we came to the realization that self-reliance as espoused by policy makers and politicians alike in Kenya, is too narrow. Self-reliance is not merely the acquisition of vocational or technical skills but fundamentally, it is the capacity of the concrete individual to come to terms with his existence in all its varied forms.

4.5.0 A Recommendation for Further Possible Research

We asserted that dialogue in the sense that we defined it in this study is not possible in a primary phase of education. This does not mean that the learner should be treated in any way as Morris would have us believe (see section 4.1.0). There is need for serious reflection and research to establish a humane way of interaction between the teacher and the learner at this level.

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