Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage is a fascinating new contribution to educational theory and practice. The book covers a broad range of topical and exciting issues as diverse as faith, hope, wonder, imagination and post-human ethics of care in teaching and learning. It does so with poetic elegance as well as argumentative rigour. It combines critical edge with an affirmative stance towards pedagogical possibility, steering clear from drastic choices and dichotomous thinking. The book’s captivating metaphors and its valuable insights will be of lasting significance for a variety of fields that intersect in their commitment to an innovative and transformative pedagogy.

Marianna Papastephanou, Department of Education, University of Cyprus

Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage articulates a scholarly and reflective focus on the role of higher education in society, in the enactment of teaching and learning. The authors in their exposition of this theme are attentive to the practice of teaching and learning vis-à-vis education encounters with the aim being, to contribute to the peaceful coexistence and flourishing of all members of society. The scholarship in this book is of the highest order and engages with recent scholarship that in turn takes existing scholarship forward. The book would be of interest to academics and students involved in the discipline of philosophy of education but would also because of its interdisciplinary and international appeal, draw the attention of policymakers, developmental specialists and educators.

Philip Higgs, Emeritus Professor and Research Fellow, University of South Africa
Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage

Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage is premised on an argument that if higher education is to remain responsive to a public good, then teaching and learning must be in a perpetual state of reflection and change. It argues in defence of teaching and learning as constitutive of a pedagogic pilgrimage and draws on a range of scholars and theories to explore concepts such as transcendental journeys, belief, hope and imagination. The main objective of the book is to show how teaching and learning ought to be reconsidered in relation to that which lies beyond the parameters of the encounters, as well as that which is intrinsic to the encounters.

This book gives shape to rituals and routines of engagement and debate, before extending the limitations in deliberative pedagogic encounters to offer desirable outcomes in which both student and teacher can practice a spiritual take on teaching and learning along a continuum of ongoing action. Themes explored in the chapters include the following:

- Faith and deliberative encounters
- Post-human ethics of care in teaching and learning
- Diffracted teaching and learning

This book will be of great interest to academics, researchers and post-graduate students in the fields of philosophy of education, and teaching and learning in the philosophy of education. It will also appeal to school and university educators, policymakers and prospective teachers.

Nuraan Davids is an associate professor of Philosophy of Education at Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

Yusef Waghid is a distinguished professor of Philosophy of Education at Stellenbosch University, South Africa.
Routledge International Studies in the Philosophy of Education

Education, Justice and the Human Good
Fairness and Equality in the Education System
Kirsten Meyer

Systems of Reason and the Politics of Schooling
School Reform and Sciences of Education in the Tradition of Thomas S. Popkewitz
Edited by Miguel A. Pereyra & Barry M. Franklin

K-12 Education as a Hermeneutic Adventurous Endeavor
Education as a Sovereign Agent for Humanity
Doron Yosef-Hassidim

Indigenous Philosophies of Education Around the World
Edited by John E. Petrovic and Roxanne Mitchell

The Legacy of Isocrates and a Platonic Alternative
Political Philosophy, Normative Method and the Value of Education
James R. Muir

Pedagogical Alliances between Indigenous and Non-Dualistic Cultures
Meta-Cultural Education
Neal Dreamson

Education and Free Will
Spinoza, Causal Determinism and Moral Formation
Johan Dahlbeck

Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage
Cultivating Faith, Hope and Imagination
Nuraan Davids and Yusef Waghid

Teaching and Learning as a Pedagogic Pilgrimage
Cultivating Faith, Hope and Imagination

Nuraan Davids and Yusef Waghid
## Contents

*Foreword*

**MARIANNA PAPASTEPHANOU**

*Preface*

**xiii**

1. Transcending the limitations of argumentation and persuasion: towards a renewed understanding of deliberative encounters  **1**

2. Deliberative encounters and the quest for transcendence  **13**

3. On faith and deliberative encounters  **23**

4. On hope and deliberative encounters  **31**

5. Cultivating imagination through deliberative encounters  **39**

6. What makes a good (ethical) teacher?  **47**

7. Towards a post-human ethics of care in teaching and learning  **57**

8. Doctoral supervision as a process of ethical becoming  **68**

9. Diffracted teaching and learning  **78**

10. Teaching and learning as endeavours of power, resistance and human flourishing  **86**
Contents

11 Reflections on our pedagogic pilgrimages 94

Postscript: on the pilgrimage of writing 105

Index 113
In this innovative, original and insightful book, teaching, learning and pedagogic pilgrimage are connected inter alia with faith, hope and wonder. If one is struck by the religious undertones of these fascinating metaphors, one only needs to consider Habermas’s notion of the post-secular and his argument that contributions from a religious context of ethical insights potentially enrich or redirect secular discourses.\(^1\) Having thus framed my own response to the striking and captivating metaphoricity of the book, let me now deploy it.

The book provides a pedagogical spirituality whose loss has made pedagogy uninspiring and (as the authors explicitly state in Chapter 6) uninviting, unresponsive and unimaginative. Educational encounters have typically been theorised through persuasion, but as such, are insufficient to enhance teaching and learning in universities. Through rich aesthetic and political associations and with clarity and consistency, Nuraan Davids and Yusef Waghid remedy this by reclaiming for pedagogy its neglected transcendence.

Embarking on a pedagogic pilgrimage, transcending the boundaries of one’s own physical environment to venture beyond locality, affirms one’s faith and hope in the art of teaching and learning and makes room for imagination and wonder along the way. However, the kinetic metaphors of embarking and pilgrimage also strike another, deeper note: They point to another movement, an academic movement of the authors somewhat away from previous explorations (e.g. Seyla Benhabib’s deliberative iterations) towards new sensibilities of a less emphatic, argumentative character. Without disputing the relevance of the deliberative to higher education, the authors move beyond a communicative educational utopia of deliberative exchanges where students are expected to be convinced and drawn into something better. This new authorial journey navigates through emancipation, transcendence, affirmative politics and diffractive readings, reaching faith as indispensable material in the fabric of virtuous human encounters.

Pilgrimage as actual part of the authors’ religious and intellectual biography (as disclosed in Chapter 1) is transformed into a symbolic, ecumenical journey beyond any particularist and religious context-dependent confinements. Following Iris Murdoch, as explained in their second chapter, Davids and Waghid connect human longing for happiness and love with experiencing moral life as an erotic...
pilgrimage or a spiritual pursuit. Transcendence of the self (Murdoch’s *uns elfing*) enhances the relational character that a deliberation which is not obsessed with persuading should have. Charles Taylor praised Murdoch for her innovative outlook on morality. This operates as a springboard for the authors to explore via Taylor how transcendence in its basic dimensions involves faith (Chapter 3 in the book). Faith provides the belief that the journey’s end is some higher good and simultaneously justifies the rupture with those daily activities that distract one from the pursuit of this end. Like faith, hope is also significant for teaching and learning encounters as pedagogic pilgrimage. As a capacity of human consciousness that transcends the self, hope becomes an aspiration to be cultivated through spiritual interconnections with a higher good beyond oneself, thus sensitising the subject to social injustices, trauma and suffering. Chapter 4 explores this through Paulo Freire’s redemptive politics and bell hooks’ counterposing of hope to alienating classroom realities. In Chapter 5, the authors, hoping to make a difference, meet Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s singling out of wonder and imagination as key concepts for enhancing deliberative encounters.

Having made their argument in favour of pedagogic pilgrimage metaphorically, Davids and Waghid then move on (Chapters 6, 7 and 8) to unravel specific educational implications. Yet this is not done in the reified manner of ‘here is philosophy; there is education’. Philosophy and pedagogy continue to intersect in the passage from teaching and learning as ethical acts of responsibility for the other and friendship with the other (where Levinas and Derrida have an indisputable relevance) to a post-human ethic of care (where the authors chiefly draw from Rosi Braidotti) down to doctoral supervision as a process of ethical becoming. Chapter 9 engages with another post-humanist philosophy, that of Karen Barad, whose faith is in diffractive readings of our entanglement with the world. Patterns of difference that make a difference constitute for the book a crucial and indispensable grounding/justification of its basic thread: teaching and learning qua pedagogic pilgrimage that complicate emphatic foci on deliberation as persuasion. Ultimately, hope, faith, imagination and care form a constellation (in the Frankfurt School sense) with other key notions, such as resistance, Spinozist human well-being and Aristotelian *eudaimonia*. But the authors’ endeavour, consistent with the critical element that transcendence presupposes, could not be other than self-reflective. Thus, their final chapter (Chapter 11) turns back on their own, ‘unfinished’ project, which is also an indication of a more general, diffractive pattern: pedagogy itself, teaching and learning, is an incomplete process of ever opening up to the unknown.

It is significant that, as it happens with wonderful books that make you think further, sometimes even beyond their own scope, the reader is helped to make his or her own associations from visiting a shrine to the importance of revisiting what philosophy and education enshrine, ‘desecrate’, sanctify, profane. Beyond the Abrahamic undertones that frame the authors’ approach, the book further made me think of ancient Greek pilgrimages and their connection to temporality, their being kinds of heterochrony, ruptures of linear time. Travelling to view the sanctuaries, *theoroi* (the connection with *theoria* should not be missed) were
viewers of the divine presence that disrupted the quotidian and in whose name cities suspended even military activity – yet only to return to it more fiercely after the ‘divine’ interruption. The ancient Greek institution of pilgrimage also involved hospitality, as the gift-bearing *theoroi* were received and hosted by *theorodokoi*. But what is in the transcendent gaze and what is the visited sacred site, the end destination of pilgrimage? What qualifies as such and how it acquires this status? Through which processes? What ‘sacred truce’ (*ekecheiria*, *spondai*) is presupposed for the pedagogical pilgrimage to take place, what acquiescence to authority it may authorise? We cannot help but think of who the sacrificial victim might be – all the more forgotten and unaccounted for after pilgrimages took a more ‘symbolic’ turn. What materiality might it obfuscate? Then as now, financial means (not in the strictly monetary sense but in the broader sense of economy) enable the pilgrimage for some and not for others. For those others, there are other kinds of movement, more exilic, although not in the fashionable, groovy and safe sense that the word has now taken in much philosophy.

Then again, in a maze of deconstructive readings of education that declare or tacitly consider it reproductive of the same, the book constitutes a most refreshing alternative path: It stands out as a most engaging specimen of affirmative commitment to pedagogical possibility. Thus, the authors not only promote faith, hope and wonder as nodal pedagogical points; they enact their faith, hope and wonder, they materialise and instantiate them through their own commitment to such sources of transcendence and growth. Thus, the enthusiasm of the book and the enthusiasm it arouses in the reader recall the Greek etymology of enthusiasm\(^\text{2}\): breathing god into the (in)famous pedagogical relationship, infusing it with spirituality against flat and dry discourses that reify this relationship in times of measurability and outcomes.

**Notes**

1 As Dafydd Rees (2017:219) succinctly sums this up:

> Habermas has linked the goal of developing a postsecular approach in philosophy and politics to the need to redress the balance between the West and the rest of the world. It is no longer possible, he says, to take secular European society as the global norm. Philosophy and political theory must acknowledge the fact that “occidental rationalism,” rather than being a model for the rest of the world, is in fact the *Sonderweg* or deviant path. For Habermas, this Eurocentrism takes the form of an unreflective secularism: assuming, based on European experience, that the decline of religion is inevitable, that religion has no place in politics, and that philosophical reason has nothing in common with religious faith. Modifying the secular assumptions of philosophy and political theory is therefore the first step towards a rapprochement with the non Western world – a rapprochement that is desperately needed if Western thinkers are not to appear as “crusaders of a competing religion or as salespeople of instrumental reason and destructive secularization.”

2 It is derived from the verbs ‘entheazo’ and ‘enthusiazo’, both composed by the words ‘en’ and ‘theos’ (God) and combined in the root ‘enthous’, which means ‘to be possessed by God’, ‘to have God in me’, ‘to be ecstatic’, or, in a more transitive sense, ‘to cause enthusiasm’, ‘to inspire’, ‘to inculcate, breathe, God in the other’.
Reference

Central to teaching and learning as pedagogic practices is the notion of education. On the one hand, as Henry Giroux (2017) reminds us, education can all too easily ‘become a form of symbolic and intellectual violence that assaults rather than educates’. Such violence, he continues, is evident in the forms of an audit culture and empirically driven teaching that dominates higher education. To Giroux (2017), this violence inflicted through education ‘amount[s] to pedagogies of repression and serve[s] primarily to numb the mind and produce what might be called dead zones of the imagination’. According to Giroux, these pedagogies of repressions have little regard for contexts, history, making knowledge meaningful, or expanding what it means for students to be critically engaged agents. The result of such pedagogies, argues Giroux (2017), is that ‘education defaults on its democratic obligations and becomes a tool of control and powerlessness, thereby deadening the imagination’. On the other hand, education ‘is vital to the creation of individuals capable of becoming critical social agents willing to struggle against injustices and develop the institutions that are crucial to the functioning of a substantive democracy’ (Giroux, 2017). One way to begin such a project, Giroux (2017) explains, is to address the meaning and role of higher education (and education in general) as part of the broader struggle for freedom. In *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*, bell hooks (1994:13) states:

> To educate as the practice of freedom … comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students.

Elsewhere we have argued,

> If university classrooms are expected to offer a pedagogical space that might cultivate deliberative, compassionate and cosmopolitan encounters, then it stands to reason that educators should teach and engage with their students by way of these encounters. This means that what educators teach and
what students learn have to be conceptualised and enacted from, and within a basis of responsible action, which will be expressed through a humane connectedness.

(Davids & Waghid, 2016:41)

In succeeding works, we began to focus on explications of deliberative encounters vis-à-vis teaching and learning, and we argued for the prevalence of argumentation and justification (Waghid & Davids, 2017). Following the aforementioned contentions, this book is premised on an argument that if higher education is to remain responsive to a public good, then teaching and learning have to be in a perpetual state of reflection and change. It is not possible to conceive of a university education in a post-postmodern age, if teaching and learning do not remain abreast with societal developments and is not willing to adapt in relation to those developments. In extending our attention on argumentation and justification, this book embarks on a different analytical look at teaching and learning. In drawing on both our pedagogic journeys as students and teachers, as well as students of teaching, we reflect upon, and compare teaching and learning as a pilgrimage – that is, as a passage towards that which exists beyond and outside as well as that which is within. Commensurate with the latter two actions, we draw upon insights of transcendental and intra-actional pedagogic activities. These two concepts reveal that considering teaching and learning as pedagogic encounters is informed by acts associated with embarking on some kind of pilgrimage. Put differently, much like a pilgrimage, we argue throughout this book that teaching and learning ought to be reconsidered in relation to that which lies beyond the parameters of the encounters as well as that which is intrinsic to the encounters. In this way, we envisage to extend some of the limitations in engaging in deliberative pedagogic encounters. Likewise, we also purport that transcending and intra-acting are practices that offer teaching and learning a more spiritual take.

In this book, we argue in defence of teaching and learning as constitutive of a pedagogic pilgrimage. In other words, what makes teaching and learning a tenable university endeavour that remains responsive to change, is that it ought to be considered in relation to the idea of a pedagogic pilgrimage. In its ordinary non-metaphorical sense, explains Wheeler (1998:5), pilgrimage is a movement from an earthly home into sacred space towards visiting a sacred goal, with the hope if not expectation of a return home. According to Wheeler (1998:17), the desire for a pilgrimage, or a sacred journey, ‘encompasses as many motives as the imagination holds’. People go on pilgrimage for a multitude of reasons – out of guilt and/or gratefulness, to honour vows, to seek assistance in health or finances or the reparation of familial relations, or to seek forgiveness and solace (Wheeler, 1998:17). In turn, Bowman (1991:121) describes pilgrimages as journeys to the sacred. He continues,

[The sacred] is not something which stands beyond the domain of the cultural; it is imagined, defined, and articulated within cultural practice … it is at the sites whence pilgrims set out on their searches for the centre that pilgrims learn what they desire to find.
Embarking on a pedagogic pilgrimage, on the one hand, has some connection to affirming one’s faith and hope in the art of teaching and learning. In this sense, teaching cannot be devoid of a recognition of students’ abilities and aspirations. On the other hand, being engaged in some pedagogic pilgrimage leaves open the door for imagination. Conceptions of a pilgrimage are often couched in religious discourses of spiritual pursuit or transcendence, as the individual seeks for greater wholeness and meaning-making, often linked to his or her existence in relation to a Higher Being. To Eliade (1969), a pilgrimage is a religiously motivated journey to the very centre of the world, or to one of its homologous representations. Pilgrimages occur in places where the profane has been transformed into the sacred over time and is set apart with boundaries that delimit where profane time and space make way for the sacred realm and enable pilgrims to access the centre of the world, the axis mundi (Eliade 1969). Turner (1973:191) describes pilgrimages as ‘liminal phenomena’ – implying a transitional phase or stage. In turn, Barber (1993:1) defines a pilgrimage as a ‘journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding’. While pilgrimage creates population mobilities, trade, culture exchange or political integration, according to Collins-Kreiner (2009:437–438), it also raises fascinating interests and insights into human behaviour.

To us, the idea of a pilgrimage is not too far removed from transcendental journeys, in that we conceive of teaching and learning as that which ought to shift both the student and the teacher to another level – not unlike an adventure, which fills the spirit with a rush of hopeful pursuit. Moreover, the analogy of the teaching and learning encounter as a pilgrimage symbolises a particular rite of passage – from the familiar to the strange, from the known to the imagined and from comfort to disruption or disturbance. This imagery necessarily calls to mind not only embodiments of faith in oneself and in others but also hope that, indeed, shifts and pursues that which are yet to be reached. Yet neither faith nor hope is realisable without the imagination of who one is and what one can become. This is as true for the teacher as it is for the student. A teacher cannot teach without having hope in what and whom he or she teaches. Likewise, a student cannot learn without having hope in what and where that learning might take him or her. In sum, reconsidering teaching and learning in relation to the notion of a pedagogic pilgrimage brings to bear on teaching and learning the quest for faith, hope and imagination – those virtues of university education that enhance the pedagogic plausibility of teaching and learning, and hence the individual in relation to and with other individuals. Like a pilgrimage, teaching and learning are given shape through rituals and routines of engagement and debate as both the teacher and the learner endeavour towards that which is yet to be construed. Moreover, like the journey to self-discovery can only cease at death, so too are teaching and learning not only interwoven but can also never know an end. Simply put, teaching and learning are ongoing encounters that have much more to offer than preconceived and perhaps desirable outcomes. Rather, moving teaching and learning along a continuum of ongoing action also makes the incalculable and improbable somewhat possible.
Drawing on our deliberative encounters with university students, we show in 12 intertwined chapters why and how, in the first instance, such encounters should not be confined to mere persuasion and argumentation. We commence Chapter 1 by arguing that democratic teaching and learning do not merely happen on the basis that, because someone teaches, someone else learns. One’s learning is guided by your capacity to respond to your learning, which includes critically engaging with and bringing into question what is being taught. To this end, by drawing on Seyla Benhabib’s (2011) idea of learning through talking back, we endeavour to explicate the practice of mutual teaching and learning and, more specifically, what it means to engage in a deliberative encounter. Concomitantly, we show why deliberative encounters cannot just be confined to argumentation and persuasion as ways of how teaching and learning manifest in pedagogic action. In Chapter 2, our concern is that, often, teachers and students do not necessarily place a high premium on morality, as if any form of human educational encounter is devoid of moral intent. We are drawn to the seminal thoughts of the Irish ethical philosopher, Jean Iris Murdoch, who considers education something more than a political project, which primarily requires the existence of deliberation. In reference to Murdoch’s (1993) moral notion of engaging in a quest, we look at deliberative encounters as a pedagogic pilgrimage, and in particular, how such an idea bears on emancipatory teaching and learning – that is, teaching and learning in transcendence. Chapter 3 departs from the premise that a spiritual pilgrimage without faith seems quite unlikely in much the same way a pedagogic pilgrimage depends on the faith and commitment of its participants. Our argument is in defence of pedagogic encounters among teachers and students that can transcend deliberation. It is not enough to rely on deliberative engagement to enhance teaching and learning, and for this reason we are attracted to faith as an enabling condition in pursuit of a pedagogic pilgrimage. In this chapter, we examine the idea of faith/belief in relation to Taylor’s (2007) three dimensions of transcendence: belief in the God of faith; belief in a good beyond human flourishing, such as through the notion of agape (love); and belief in a life beyond the life of the immanent frame. Thereafter, we show why faith is a necessary condition in cultivating transcendental deliberative encounters. Chapter 4 extends our understanding of a spiritual pilgrimage to another significant concept, namely hope, in the cultivation of deliberative encounters. Hope, like faith/belief, has a spiritual role to play in deliberative encounters in the sense that, what is hoped for is couched in a language of possibility – usually the possibility of counteracting injustice, alienation and suffering. In reference to the seminal thoughts of both Paolo Freire (1997) and bell hooks (2003), we argue in defence of hope to nurture deliberative encounters in relation to embarking on a spiritual pilgrimage – that is, a venture into what is not yet and what is imagined. Chapter 5 departs from the premise that inasmuch as deliberative encounters of hope pay homage to the notion of a spiritual pilgrimage, so too, has perception (human consciousness) much to do with hope and by implication, understandings of a spiritual pilgrimage. In this chapter, we focus on the notion of perception as it unfolds in the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s
(2002) most famous work, *Phenomenology of perception*, in which he expands his thesis of the primacy of perception and advances the idea of human imagination/imagination. In reference to Merleau-Ponty, we elucidate how practices of teaching and learning cannot be enacted without the virtue of imagination. Teaching and learning, as deliberative encounters, have to be informed by reflection, hope, faith and imagination. In this chapter, we turn to the ideas of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida (who frequently draws on Levinas in his own work). Chapter 6 considers teaching and learning as a transcendental encounter, where specific consideration is given to the ideas of Levinas and Derrida, which argue for teaching and learning as ethical acts of responsibility for the other and friendship with the other – virtues concomitant with notions of a spiritual pilgrimage. Chapter 7 takes a close look at university teaching and learning grounded in the idea of a pedagogic pilgrimage in relation to our epistemological work with students under our care. By looking at Rosi Braidotti’s (2006) post-humanist (beyond human) perspective of care, we give an account of caring teaching and learning as a moment in our pedagogic pilgrimage by focusing on some of our encounters with our teacher education students. Following on the focus of this book, which is to cultivate a pedagogic pilgrimage that links conceptually to the idea of what it means to engage in renewed deliberative encounters, Chapter 8 takes a different turn, in that we draw upon some of the aspects of a pedagogic pilgrimage (encounter) by referring to two narratives on doctoral supervision. In these stories, we specifically focus on what it means to supervise students in an ethical encounter, particularly showing how the cultivation of a pedagogic pilgrimage can be actualised.

Chapter 9 reflects on another post-humanist theorist’s thoughts, namely the physicist and philosopher, Karen Barad (2007). Barad’s idea of diffraction – derived from the natural phenomenon, namely diffraction of waves – conceives of the act of interference as an occurrence of agency that produces an effect internal to the occurrence itself. When waves are diffracted, they undergo an interference of intra-action. It is not that waves are interacting with obstacles only, resulting in the effect of interference. Instead, in Baradian way, the diffraction of the waves is internal to the interference rather than between different waves or between waves and objects of interference. It is such an idea that offers a different way of looking at deliberative encounters in the sense that deliberative encounters are not caused by articulations, listening and talking back only as if these actions first have to occur before deliberative encounters unfold. We argue that such a way of conceiving deliberative encounters would help us to look more intra-actionally towards teaching and learning as ethical and careful pedagogic practices. In Chapter 10, we consider an individual teacher’s immortal role in offering resistance in pedagogic encounters that can further enhance the venture of embarking on a pilgrimage through teaching and learning. For an explication of the idea of individual immortality and how it potentially offers resistance through teaching, we turn to Baruch Spinoza’s idea of human well-being, which is grounded in an individual’s pursuit in cultivating humanity. In Chapter 11, we draw on some of the theoretical positions on teaching and learning espoused
throughout this book in articulating our reflections on our own pedagogic pilgrimages. We highlight specifically what we as teachers bring to pedagogy, what we hold back and how we guide our encounters with students. In the main, our teaching has been concerned with, firstly, critique as a practice that evokes controversy and disagreement; secondly, implicit appeals to an ethics of possibility whereby ignorance, uninformed views and a denial of goodness can be thwarted; and thirdly, students taking an ethical and political stand in the sense that they could be positioned to condemn violence, exclusion, marginalisation and injustice. We conclude the book with a postscript in which we reflect upon the ephemeral nature of writing, that is, that the pilgrimage of thoughts and ideas can know no end. We conclude by writing about our own writing and textual deliberations as akin to a pedagogic pilgrimage, which is both a journey towards the self and towards the transcendental.

References


1 Transcending the limitations of argumentation and persuasion
Towards a renewed understanding of deliberative encounters

Introduction
In much of our earlier works, we espoused an understanding of teaching and learning as a deliberative encounter. We have since moved away from the clichés of teaching for learning, and teaching as learning, towards an understanding of teaching with learning or learning with teaching. On the one hand, teaching for learning implies that what one teaches is aimed at engendering learning. This means that learning can only be effected on the basis of teaching. That is, without teaching, there cannot be learning. On the other hand, teaching as learning simply integrates teaching and learning. When one teaches, another learns. Our understanding of teaching and learning is that both pedagogic actions have a right to exist on their own, although there might not necessarily be a disconnect between the two actions as both teaching and learning for and as imply. Put differently, teaching and learning are interconnected pedagogic actions and are most appropriately elucidated on the basis of their mutuality, hence teaching with learning. Inasmuch as teaching with learning already transcends notions such as teaching for learning and teaching as learning, we contend that teaching with learning is an inherently democratic encounter. That is, the encounter is democratic on the basis that humans engage in some form of meaning-making – more specifically, teaching and learning, whereby they bring one another’s perspectives into pedagogic play. On the one hand, one teaches when one offers a justification for what one does, such as either socialising students into particular understandings or initiating them into critical ways of seeing events in the world. On the other hand, one learns when one makes sense of that into which one is socialised, or into which one has been initiated. The aforementioned acts of teaching and learning are democratic on the basis that one offers an account of what one understands and, in turn, provokes others to make sense of what they are taught or what they have learnt. The democratic ethos of mutual teaching and learning lies in the evocation of others’ understandings of why and how they perceive things in particular ways, which, in turn, offer them some opportunity to give a response to their learning. In other words, democratic teaching and learning do not merely happen on the basis that because someone teaches, someone else learns. One’s learning is guided by one’s capacity to respond to
Limitations of argumentation and persuasion

one’s learning, which includes critically engaging with and bringing into question what is being taught. For instance, one learns through talking back, as Seyla Benhabib (2011) would argue. In this chapter, we shall endeavour to explicate the practice of mutual teaching and learning, more specifically what it means to engage in a deliberative encounter. Concomitantly, we show why deliberative encounters cannot just be confined to argumentation and persuasion as ways in which teaching and learning manifest in pedagogic action.

Deliberative encounters and moving beyond an ideal speech and talking back

When students and teachers engage in mutually deliberative encounters, they proffer enunciations on the basis of listening to what one another has to say. Without listening to others, it would be difficult to articulate speech to which others would equally enjoy listening. Put differently, if teachers wish to cultivate spaces in which students are inclined to listen, then their teaching has to be of such a nature that it takes into account other perspectives and a preparedness to consider other ways of thinking. Teaching, therefore, cannot only be understood as the teacher talking; teaching has to create and encourage spaces in which students can talk back – whether in agreement or not. That is, the exercise of speech is dependent on having been considered by those with whom one is in deliberation. Inasmuch as elocution is an enabling condition of deliberation, it is insufficient without listening. Likewise, listening to others is also insufficient without responding to what one has listened to, which includes having taken into controversy someone else’s speech act. If the latter does not happen, we cannot talk of deliberative engagement. Deliberation is dependent on elocution, listening and re-elocutions. Similarly, when a teacher teaches, his or her teaching is dependent upon what sense students make of his or her articulations and to which they (students) respond in turn. Equally so, teachers then offer counter-elucidations on the basis of which meaning is deliberatively formed. And, when counter-elucidations are proffered, the possibility is always there to construe others’ perspectives as tantamount to talking back. The question arises: Is talking back enough in deliberative encounters?

For Benhabib (2011:129),

[Democratic iterations or talking back are] complex processes of public argument, deliberation, and exchange through which universalist rights claims are contested and contextualized, invoked and revoked, posited and positioned throughout legal and political institutions, as well as in the associations of civil society … Every iteration transforms meaning, adds to it, enriches it in ever so subtle ways … Every act of iteration involves making sense of an authoritative original in a new and different context.

Drawing on Derrida’s (1988) concept of iterability, Benhabib (2011) introduces the concept of democratic iterations to refer to processes whereby individuals
Limitations of argumentation and persuasion

speak and deliberate in the name of universalist rights, and in doing so, alter existing viewpoints. Previously, and also with reference to the concept of iteration, Benhabib (1992) argued that the moral perspective must be to take into account the perspective of the generalised other as well as the concrete, situated other. In this sense, who individuals are and become is always mediated through human actions, relationships and narratives – and are altered as they are told and retold in different ways. At the core of democratic iterations are practices of contestation and contextualisation. Whereas contesting a point of view relates to taking issue with what has been said or argued for, contextualising a viewpoint relates to making sense of such a view in relation to one’s situatedness – a matter of making sense of a view vis-à-vis one’s embeddedness. Teaching and learning cannot take place without some cognisance of the situatedness of students. Situatedness not only refers to contexts of race, religion, culture, language, nationality, age, able-bodiedness, sexuality or capability; it also refers to the context in which teaching and learning unfold. Making sense of and concomitantly taking issue with viewpoints raise the idea of invoking a claim and then revoking it. And, considering that every act of iteration involves making sense of and simultaneously taking issue with the possibility of argumentation becomes more pronounced, which in turn, ‘transforms meaning,’ ‘enriches it’ and makes sense of it ‘in a new and different context’ (Benhabib, 2011:75). Practices of democratic iteration in the classroom facilitate complex processes of back-and-forth engagement between teachers and students and among the students – which is why iteration has the capacity to transform and enrich meaning. The point about democratic iterations is that such iterations give rise to new possibilities and transformative meanings in that it has the capacity to evoke self-reflection and reconsideration. Simply put, democratic iterations as a consequence of deliberation could cultivate argumentation.

Jürgen Habermas (1999:304) elucidates democratic engagement as a discursive process of opinion and will-formation towards the cultivation of debate, discussion and persuasion. To Habermas (1999:304–305), an ideal procedure of deliberation, and argumentation towards persuasion in an atmosphere free from external coercion, are what makes deliberative encounters inclined towards criticism and equal participation by all. More poignantly, Habermas (1999:306) considers persuasion as a rationally motivated form of agreement in terms of which shared traditions and forms of life are democratically justified and resolved. Thus, for Habermas (1999:309), deliberative politics ought to be geared towards reaching consensus on the basis of persuasion. Therefore, unless teachers can persuade students about their opinions and perspectives, consensus-based deliberative encounters among teachers and students may not be forthcoming. The basis of any form of deliberative engagement is premised on the idea that communication ought to be constrained by acts of persuasion. Yet what Habermas seems to be remiss of is that persuasion cannot always remain a condition of safeguarding discursive communication. It might be that teachers are not always capable of persuading students about some political matter, nor should it be the expectation that students should be persuaded on this
or that matter. However, a lack of persuasion does not by implication mean that deliberative engagement has not achieved a desirable outcome. It could be that students and teachers might give further consideration to the views they articulate, especially those that do not convincingly persuade. For example, teachers do not have to persuade students through teaching that migration of communities from one region to another is wrong on the basis that such a form of persuasion – besides bordering on the edge of indoctrination – does not leave students open to coming to their own conclusions. Instead, they seem to be told something about migrating communities, which from the start imposes an opinion on students without them having engaged with the matter. Hence, we concur with Habermas’ view that ‘participants in argumentation proceed on the idealizing assumption of a communication community without limits in social space and historical time’ (1999:322). That is, it is not just because persuasion has not been pursued that deliberative argumentation has not been harnessed. Of course not. Simply put, persuasion does not amount to informing others or telling them what is right or wrong. Rather, persuasion ought to emanate from the engagement of teachers and students and not be considered a precondition for engagement. Telling students by way of imposing one’s views on them without them (students) having made sense of one’s thoughts is tantamount to indoctrination and an act that renders deliberation null and void. One can still engage in deliberative politics without the restriction of persuasion. In a similar way, ‘talking back’ should not be considered a necessary condition of deliberative engagement. One can still deliberate without having to show the capacity of talking back to others.

What follows from the aforementioned argument is that deliberative engagement cannot be constrained by a politics of talking back and persuasion. Just because the latter practices have not ensued does not mean that no deliberative argumentation occurred. It could be that talking back to anything and everything might compromise deliberation. For instance, talking back for the sake of talking back does not always sustain deliberative communication. It might be that talking back becomes an exercise in futility whereby someone merely talks back without provoking serious communication. In this sense, many students choose not to talk back, but their choice not to talk back is not necessarily an indicator that deliberative argumentation has not occurred. Similarly, just wanting to persuade for the sake of persuasion could also hinder free-flowing ideas and views, which in most cases result in deviation from the point rather than illuminating it. Placing too much emphasis on convincing others might cause them not to engage freely, which in any case would stunt deliberative communication. Put differently, talking back and persuasion are not always desirable practices to sustain deliberative encounters. Of course, we are not denying the fact that, at times, talking back and persuasion ought to be pursued. However, it should not happen at the expense of deliberation itself. This means there might be times when talking back and persuasion are not practices that ought to constrain deliberative encounters. Instead, talking back and persuasion end when the possibility of exclusion surfaces. It is
not as if talking back and persuasion should always hold sway. That in itself could, at times, constrain deliberation as some of the speeches being talked back could also be counter-productive to the deliberative communication itself. Likewise, if persuasion were to be relentlessly pursued, deliberative argumentation might also become too trivial as it might be too excessive. We think of teachers who insist on persuading students, yet fail to include them on account of these teachers’ often belligerent obsession to persuade. The upshot of the aforementioned discussion on persuasion in and through deliberation brings into consideration an idea that deliberation cannot and should not always be subjected to persuasion.

**Deliberative encounters as a pilgrimage**

If deliberative encounters cannot be exclusively linked to talking back and persuasion, what would such encounters actually look like? In some way, this question provoked in us an interest to look at something else beyond the deliberative encounters, which, we contend, cannot just be reliant on talking back and persuasion. Consequently, we agree that one practice that we have in common and which potentially offers a different way of thinking about encounters is related to the idea of a pilgrimage. We have specifically invoked the idea of a pilgrimage on account of both our own encounters as Muslim pilgrims to Makkah (in Saudi Arabia) in the late 1990s and early 2000s, respectively. We thought it apposite to bring into play the idea of a pilgrimage as a way to think differently about a deliberative encounter. Undertaking a pilgrimage to Makkah is firstly related to a deliberate quest for consolidating our faiths as Muslims. Secondly, as pilgrims, we were deeply inspired by a curiosity to understand something about the experiences of the Prophet of Islam as he propagated his divine message in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah – two prominent Arabian cities in which holy mosques of Islam are situated – the two magnificent Harams or mosque spaces – and which are still revered by millions of Muslims today as the two significant holy sites of Islam together with the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. Thirdly, our own emotional and intellectual growth as humans is directly linked to our conscious dedication to pilgrimage or *Hajj* – the fifth pillar of the Islamic doctrine. The Muslim pilgrimage culminates on the plains of Mount Arafat, also known as the Mount of Mercy (*Jabal al-Rahmah*), during which Muslims gather in the hope of forgiveness and a renewed way of being and acting. Turner (1973:214–215) explains:

[The pilgrim is] confronted by sequences of sacred objects and participates in symbolic activities which he [or she] believes are efficacious in changing his [or her] inner and, sometimes, hopefully, outer condition from sin to grace, or sickness to health. He [or she] hopes for miracles and transformations, either of soul or body. As we have seen, in the pilgrim’s movement toward the ‘holy of holies’, the central shrine, the route becomes increasingly sacralized as it progresses: at first it is his [or her] subjective mood of
penitence that is important while the many long miles he [or she] covers are mainly secular, everyday miles; then sacred symbols begin to invest the route; while in the final stages, the route itself becomes a sacred, sometimes mythical journey until almost every landmark and every step is a condensed, multivocal symbol capable of arousing much affect and desire. No longer is the pilgrim’s sense of the sacred private; it is a matter of objectified collective representations which become virtually his [or her] whole environment and give him [or her] powerful motives for credence. Not only that – the pilgrim’s journey becomes a paradigm for other kinds of behavior ethical, political, etc.

The idea of a pilgrimage is, of course, in no way, limited to the religion of Islam. Religious traditions all over the world attach particular importance and reverence to specific holy sites, which are deemed imperative to particular religious identities, histories, traditions and values. Turner (1973:213–214) describes the pilgrimage as ‘beginning in a Familiar Place, going to a Far Place, and returning, ideally “changed”’. A pilgrimage to these sacred sites holds particular associations and enactments of connectedness and sacredness, and is often couched in a language of spirituality and transcendence. Shintos, for example, journey to Three Grand Shrines, or the Ise Shrine Okage Mairi, which celebrates the Shinto goddess Amaterasu. In Buddhism, there are four sacred pilgrimage sites, all of which are connected to the birth of Lord Buddha and located in the Gangetic plains of Northern India and Southern Nepal. These sites are Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha; Bodh Gaya, where Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree; Sarnath, where Lord Buddha delivered his first teaching to five monks; and Kushinagar, which is the holy site where Lord Buddha chose to die. Likewise, Christians might choose to trace the footsteps of Jesus by visiting his birthplace in Bethlehem, the church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish, and the Mount of Beatitudes, or the Jordan River Baptismal Site. Various practices of pilgrimages span across a range of religious and ideological terrains, inasmuch as they can be described as metaphorical explorations into the self.

In turn, scholars like Eade and Sallnow (1991:15–16) describe a pilgrimage as a commodious arena capable of accommodating many competing religious and secular discourses. They explain,

[The allure or power of a shrine] derives in large part from its character as a religious void, a ritual space capable of accommodating diverse meanings and practices … This is what confers upon a major shrine its essential, universalistic character: its capacity to absorb and reflect a multiplicity of religious discourses.

Despite its association with sacredness, spirituality and religiosity, Clifford (1997) is of the opinion that it is possible to relate conceptions of pilgrimage to bigger projects of exploring how practices of displacement are not incidental.
To Clifford, they are actually constitutive of cultural meanings in a world that is constantly ‘en route’ – that is, in motion.

In much the same way, we think about pilgrimage as a consolidation and enhancement of our faiths. We therefore look at deliberative encounters as a procedure through which participants can harness and stimulate their pedagogic activities or, more specifically, that their faith in pedagogic encounters might yield unexpected and uncalculated experiences. Likewise, being drawn to a place of worship, such as through the circumambulation of the Ka’ba in Makkah on the part of Muslim pilgrims, invariably invokes an idea that there is something at the centre of an encounter that profoundly affects participants. First, inserting faith into a deliberative encounter is tantamount to stimulating the consciousness of participants to have faith in deliberation without knowing – perhaps in advance – what the encounter might yield. This implies that teachers and students would want to engage in encounters because being drawn to its centre might produce something unexpected or improbable. Second, revering sites of worship during a pilgrimage is like paying homage to the encounter that will not result in the exclusion of others. By implication, during an encounter, teachers and students become obliged to treat one another with reverence. Third, and most significantly, dedicating one’s emotional and intellectual growth to the experience of a pilgrimage is to immerse oneself in an act of reverence that one hopes would bring about lasting civilisational change in oneself and in others – a matter of invoking communally shared action of interest to humanity. As pilgrims engage in a perpetual intellectual and emotional journey, we deem it apposite to attribute our continuous human advancement to what it means to serve humanity with zest and wholehearted dedication. And, as we shall argue throughout the remaining chapters, deliberative encounters cannot be confined exclusively to acts of listening, articulation, talking back and persuasion. Rather, like a pilgrimage, encounters should also be about the not yet thought of, faith and reverence in the established traditions and in the curiosity to uncover new and revered acts of doing that can enhance our humanity. As Muhammad Asad (1980:375) so aptly reminds us – a pilgrimage is that human encounter with God and other humans when one’s own experience ‘suddenly comes to life with the currents of all the human lives that have passed through it’. Immersing one’s life journey with those of others brings to life our very act of humanity because no longer would our encounters desire only listening, articulation, criticism, talking back and persuasion. Instead, our deliberative encounters with others will draw us into the present ‘towards some unchartered horizons … [that is, a] world without bounds’ (Asad, 1980:375). At once, encounters, as we argue later on in this book, would also be about the post-human experience, in the same way a spiritual pilgrimage invokes the presence of God and other non-human or non-materialist connections. Likewise, encounters of a different kind, as we elucidate later on in the book, cannot just be about interactions among different people. For once, looking at the idea of a pilgrimage extends encounters beyond the interactions among humans towards intra-actions, in other words, those actions within or intrinsic to the encounters themselves.
The fascination about embarking on a pilgrimage is that while it might be a completely individualistic endeavour, it simultaneously brings to bear the social condition of what it means to be human and also to invoke dimensions of the post-human experience. In other words, while the journey might affect (or not) the individual in an intimate and profound fashion, and while recognitions of self-knowledge and appeasement might remain undisclosed, the individual’s pilgrimage cannot be divorced from who had given shape to the pilgrimage before him or her. In this sense, the pilgrimage is a confirmation of a social journey, ritual and language, which connects one being to another. Emanating from this confirmation is a temporary coming together of individuals who share in a common set of beliefs and values, who – except for these beliefs and values – might never come together in a community of shared devotion. In turn, something must have preceded an individual’s decision to embark on a pilgrimage. It could be a desire entirely driven by a curiosity in history – a sense of imagination about the past and the antiquities, which now come to bear on an individual’s life. Or, it could be a pilgrimage driven by an embedded need for a connection with a Higher Being – a metaphorical satiation of an individual’s soul, or the seeking of forgiveness, peace or certainty. And, of course, it could be a convergence of all of the aforementioned – in which an individual not only strives towards a sense of self-knowledge but also towards making sense of what he or she believes, in whom he or she believes, and why he or she believes – perhaps to put to rest the restlessness of being. We are reminded of Zygmunt Bauman’s (2005:2) depiction in *Liquid Life*:

In short: liquid life is a precarious life, lived under conditions of constant uncertainty … Liquid life is a succession of new beginnings – yet precisely for that reason it is the swift and painless endings, without which new beginnings would be unthinkable, that tend to be its most challenging and most upsetting headaches.

All of these motivations and justifications are imbibed in particular forms of deliberation and deliberative encounters – whether in relation to the self, the individual’s belief system or a Higher Being. At the centre of a human desire to embark on a pilgrimage – whether it is to whatever site of sacred history, meaning or memory – resides a need to seek clarity and understanding of who one is. It is in knowing the self that one reaches a sense of serenity and gratification, which implies that a pilgrimage is an intentional deliberation towards and with something. A spiritual traveller or pilgrim gives thought to where he or she is going, and why; he or she makes measured decisions about what to do next, what to see, what to absorb. That he or she is estranged from his or her normal place and routines of the day, and removed from the patterns of his or her daily life, creates the perception of a different passing of time. This suspension of time and space, of not being entirely familiar, and more attuned to what the senses encounter, are all enactments of rebirth – which allows the individual to think about his or her life in a renewed fashion and within a reimagined deliberation.
Towards a renewed understanding of deliberative encounters

Following on Benhabib (1992, 2011) and Habermas (1999), it is not enough to consider deliberative encounters only in relation to persuading the other and talking back, or through cultivating argumentation. Although Benhabib (2011) adopts a positive stance towards democratic iterations, because they transform and enrich meaning, she also acknowledges that while democratic iterations can be progressive, they can also be regressive (see Benhabib, 2004). Thomassen (2011:132) points out that, although ‘repetition transforms meaning (because no repetition is pure), it is important to be clear that, on the Derridean view of iterability, the effects of iterability are not necessarily positive’. Thomassen (2011) continues that there is therefore no guarantee that the process is progressive or that the process will lead to any particular outcome. In turn, deliberative encounters cannot just be confined to argumentation and persuasion as ways of how teaching and learning manifest in pedagogic action.

There are particular limitations attached to conceptualising teaching and learning only in terms of argumentation and persuasion, not least because of the reality that a number of students do not necessarily feel capable of or desire to participate in talking back. In this sense, the inclination of certain students not to participate in deliberations is not necessarily an indicator of either disinterest or a lack of understanding. Many students have a comprehensive understanding of a particular subject matter or debates but consciously choose not to participate or voice their opinions. While some students might enjoy the social capital, which makes his or her participation in class easy and welcoming, others simply do not. At the university where we (the authors) teach, black students, who constitute the minority, often do not feel confident in class discussions or debates. They feel intimidated by the voices and positions of the other students, who constitute the majority of the class. In turn, the degrees and extent to which students might feel intimidated and out of place are further affected by nuances of language and accent. We therefore find that, while it might be common to identify students of colour who might feel out of place, it is more difficult to be aware of students, who might be experiencing other forms of marginalisation or exclusion – whether externally imposed or not. One example, which comes to mind, is that of a student who had just returned from teaching practice and who attempted to share a disturbing experience of homophobia at the school where he had taught. He attempted to share his discomfort at the way the principal, and consequently, teachers treated him. After briefly sharing his experience, no other student in the class offered any kind of response to his experience. The sense of disappointment on his face was immediately evident. He had hoped for some sort of affirmation or empathy for what he had experienced from his peers, but it was not forthcoming. The lack of response from his peers forced him to slip back into his silence because he had learnt that what he had to say did not invite resonance from others. Moments such as these offer profound spaces not only for teaching and learning but also...
for the complexity and fragility of students’ identities and contexts. Students, therefore, quickly realise what is open for argumentation and persuasion and what is not. It is up to the teacher to ensure that boundaries and barriers are always brought into contestation. It is equally important to debunk any notions of sacred cows.

As already explicated, it is often within teachers’ zealous needs to persuade and to argue a point that the learning slips further and further away, and so does the teaching. Students have to come to their own learning on their own terms. They can only meet the desires of the teacher when their own learning has mutually engaged with what the teaching has brought into their space of learning. Similarly, teaching translates into teaching when the teacher releases his or her own desire for argumentation and persuasion into the learning processes of the student. In other words, inasmuch as the teacher does not have to persuade the student about this or that, so, too, the student does not have to be persuaded to think in a particular way.

In returning to Bauman’s (2005:2) observation that ‘liquid life is a precarious life, lived under conditions of constant uncertainty’, we proffer another reason why teaching and learning have to transcend argumentation and persuasion. Students, as we know, do not enter the teaching and learning space as collegial, intellectual or political equals. Moreover, the normative discourse through which education is transferred, transmitted, exchanged or shared necessarily depends on a metaphorical approach of the ‘survival of the fittest’. Also in reference to Bauman (2005), Stengel (2013:11) maintains that students whose educational experiences are framed or constrained into a competition for the scarce approval of outsiders are operating in the face of fear. Sadly, she continues, ‘they do not fear being stupid, but looking stupid’. The school, state Masschelein and Simons (2013:16), abuses its power, both openly and clandestinely: ‘[d]espite the scholastic narrative of equal opportunities for all, they say, the school facilitates subtle mechanisms that reproduce social inequality’. Moreover, contend Masschelein and Simons (2013:17), ‘Learning is no fun. Learning is painful’. The school, they continue, succeeds in not only closing itself off to society, but it also closes itself off to the needs of young people, alienating young people from themselves or from their social surroundings (Masschelein & Simons, 2013:15). Underscoring this deep alienation is what Bauman (2005:2) describes as a fear – ‘the fears of being caught napping, of failing to catch up with fast-moving events, of being left behind’. Stengel (2013:11) describes it as follows:

Those students whose fears are rooted in a need to control something or someone in a world out of control bully those they cast as different, lending concrete content to the free-floating anxiety of other students. Students who come as immigrants or with immigrant parents are always afraid that the system will cast them out. Homeless students cannot be cast out, but they are not really in either. Quiet girls are invisible. Active
Limitations of argumentation and persuasion

boys are trouble and in trouble. African-American boys are dispatched on the school-to-prison pipeline. Pressured privileged teens commit suicide because they cannot measure up. Everybody has a reason to fear, that is, to withdraw, to close up. Is it any imagination that most students are not ‘engaged’?

Following on the above, it is not only that deliberative encounters have to transcend the limitations of argumentation and persuasion; deliberative encounters also have to counter the numerous and complex pitfalls of competitive structures of teaching and learning, as well as the alienation and fear of students. If deliberative encounters are to transcend these limitations and impediments, then teaching and learning have to be considered as mutually contingent practices – that is, that teaching happens within learning, and learning unfolds within teaching. A construction of teaching and learning within the other creates the impression of a mutual dependency between teacher and student and between teaching and learning. Such a construction speaks to an undefined encounter, one that is open to what is traversed, and inclusive of all thoughts, without the promulgation of one idea above the other. In addition, teaching within learning lends itself to taking account of all identities, in particular the diasporic voices of students displaced all over the world. In a liquid modern society, states Bauman (2005:3), life cannot stand still – it must modernise or perish. It is up to the teacher to get to know all students, to invite all ways of life into the classroom and to walk alongside all new ways of being so that new journeys might evolve. Similarly, it is up to the teacher to make him- or herself known to his or her students. If the teacher expects students to participate in his or her teaching, and by bringing themselves into the classroom, then they have the right to know who their teacher is. Often, teachers construct themselves as aloof and unapproachable, and therefore, beyond reproach. They approach and construct teaching as an indifferent or remote endeavour, believing or thinking that teaching should not take any emotive forms. But, teaching is neither an aloof nor an elusive activity. Teaching is necessarily about the student being allowed access into the life world of the subject being taught, which, in turn, is given shape and meaning through the identity of the teacher. What such an understanding of teaching and learning evokes is a mutually embarked upon journey of discovery about something, and about the self – in short, a pilgrimage!

In sum, what deliberative pedagogic encounters would not necessarily accomplish can be augmented by the spirituality associated with a pilgrimage. Teachers and students would no longer remain constrained by articulations, listening and talking back. Both teachers and students would also not be hampered by persuasion and eloquence. Through their internalisation of a pedagogic pilgrimage, they are driven from inside their selves towards both the human and post-human experience, which, in turn, bring them into dependent interactions, yet simultaneously also open them up to intra-actional experiences.
Limitations of argumentation and persuasion

References


