

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Education, for Krishnamurti, has no conclusion. It is a living process. The essence of it lies more in non-verbal than in verbal communication, through close relationship with trees, birds and human beings. This non-verbal communication, which is beyond any systematization and regimentation, belongs to the core of Krishnamurti's teachings (on education). It implies many more things.

The essence of education, e.g. looking, listening, learning etc., are essentially non-verbal. They transcend any effort, any cultivation, because they live beyond the ideational level. There is a trap involved in Effort and No-effort process; in making effort (of learning) a man becomes trapped in contradictions, and in making no-effort one is possibly bogged down to a state of inertia, although one can make an effort to understand the moments of his own inertia. Thought is the very basis of effort, but thought cannot produce learning. To learn thought must end. Perfect looking, listening & learning can only take place when the mind

is fully free from any pre-occupation(empty mind).
 A chattering mind which is full of opinions and
 conclusions can neither see and listen nor can learn.
 It is true logically as well as scientifically.
 Looking etc, demand attention, and attention is only
 possible when the mind is alert and alive, when there
 is tremendous interest in everything around. Unlike it
 the ordinary mind finds satisfaction in immediate
 conclusions; hence our pleasure in inactivity and
 dullness.

Krishnamurti begins by enquiring into the
 function of looking(seeing) and gradually penetrates
 into its total process. He asks, -

"What is seeing ? How do you see that tree ?
 ... Is it solely an optical observation, just
 looking at the tree with the optical reaction,
 observing the form, the pattern, the light on
 the leaf ? Or do you, when you observe a tree,
 name it, saying, 'That is an oak' and walk by ?
 By naming it you are no longer seeing the tree
 - the word denies the thing, can you look at it
 without the word ?

...Do you observe it partially, with only
 one sense, the optical sense; or do you see it,
 hear it, smell it, feel it, see the design of it,
 take the whole of it in ? or, do you look at it as

though you are different from it - of course, when you look at it you are not the tree. But can you look at it without a word, with all your senses responding to the totality of its beauty? So perception means not only observing with all the senses, but also to see, or be aware of whether there is a division between you, and that which you observe.'

'It is easier to perceive something outside of you, like a tree, like the river or the blue sky, without naming, merely observing, but can you look at yourself, the whole content of your consciousness, the whole content of your mind, your being, your walk, your thought, your feeling, your depression, so that there is no division between all that and you?

If there is no division there is no conflict." 194

The Nature of Krishnamurti's philosophy of education is something uncommon. The essence of it cannot be wholly verbalized; Verbalization is a kind of measurement in words, in time and in thought, all of which are suspect in the context of Krishnamurti's teachings. The essentials in education e.g. attention, awareness etc, are indeed facts but can only be elaborated negatively. Nearly all truths of life which are whole and not fragmented can be described only in negation;

because thought, which posits, is essentially limited and cannot grasp the whole. Krishnamurti describes the nature of this Negation as, -

"In the very negation is the positive. ... If you deny hate, envy (deny it, not build resistance against it, not escape from it, nor accept it) when you deny it or violence, which breeds so much animosity, - and you can only deny it when you understand the nature of it, see what is implied in it, not intellectually, but actually - then when you deny that, in that very denial is the positive which is love in which there is no hate. Love is not the opposite of hate ?

'it is only when there is a total denial of that which is not, total denial of organized religion which is not truth, then in that denial the positive - which is not touched by conflict and is therefore completely free from all sense of compulsion and imitation, is capable of perceiving what is.'" 195

This negation has an enormous importance ~~in~~ in seeing something wholly in the total process of looking, listening and learning completely. Krishnamurti clarifies the point further to show the deeper aspect of it (negation).

"To see wholly, the brain has to be in a state of negation. Negation is not the opposite of the positive; all opposites are related within the

fold of each other. Negation has no opposite. The brain has to be in a state of negation for total seeing; it must not interfere, with its evaluations and justifications, with its condemnations and defences. It has to be still, not made still by compulsion of any kind, for then it is a dead brain, merely imitating and conforming. When it is in a state of negation it is choicelessly still. Only then is there total seeing. In this total seeing which is the quality of the mind, there is no seer, no observer, no experiencer; there's only seeing. The mind then is completely awake. In this fully wakened state, there is no observer and the observed; there is only light and clarity. The contradiction and conflict between the thinker and thought ceases." 196

Krishnamurti always makes us aware that words are not things, there is a dimension involved beyond his words. But to us, words are symbols, they have meanings and in most cases associated with images and concepts. And we need to be very much careful in this regard and it would be one of our great tasks to show that Krishnamurti's terms like attention, awareness etc, are no concepts, they are totally misrepresented when they are seen as ripples in the thought process.

Our present tasks also involve to state it very clearly that true education which means learning, and so on, is always beyond thought and time. So right education cannot be totally verbalized (theorized).

Right education implies relationship. 'To be is to be related,' and relationship takes into account both one's within and without, and that cannot be systematized. In education, a student learns to relate himself with the teacher, with his subjects, with the environment and the world and above all with himself (self-understanding). The contents of relationship (curriculum) may be systematized, ordered from any particular point of view (examination etc.) but the basis of relationship is life which cannot be represented fully by old and dead concepts, as Krishnamurti says, "I never opposed the ideas of others but I would not accept their authority, their theory of life." 197

It is also to be understood that right education according to Krishnamurti adds a new dimension to life. It denies totally any education which only stresses the verbal (thought) aspect of learning and disregards the non-verbal aspect of affecting life. The teacher, his manners and behaviours, his ~~his~~ clothes, his demeanour,

the surrounding school environment consisting of trees, hill, birds and so on - make the non-verbal side of education which affect children most. In essence non-verbal aspect in education means love and feeling, which is indispensable in relationship and communication.

Knowledge of the fact that, looking, listening & learning etc, are important factors in right education is one thing, but to practice learning, to strive towards it, to make it an ideal or goal of education are completely different and indeed dangerous steps. They entrap man into contradictions and misery, posing the same old war between being and becoming. So it is important to know what Krishnamurti actually means by learning, listening etc, when he uses them. A proper perspective into his teachings is essential.

Looking-listening-learning etc, cannot be followed as ideas (concepts or goals), nor as non-ideas (reactions to ideas). They are neither ideas, nor non-ideas; they cannot be followed at all. They are silently present and reflected in actions when the limitations of all ideas (any system) are understood. Then an occupied (chattering) mind becomes silent, and in that silence, Krishnamurti says, mind goes vertically deeper.

The understanding of "Thought cannot solve any human problem, for thought itself is the problem,"¹⁹⁸ is not easily available. It neither depends on a greater amount of knowledge and information nor on a scientific brain. It is an insight, which comes suddenly and without any prior-calculation. It is obvious in our lives that thought can not see any thing vast — the vastness of the sky or the ocean or the grandeur and the spectacular beauty of a snow capped mountain. Thought falters and gasps, yet emerges out of our born habit. Vastness should be enjoyed vastly; this is Krishnamurti's key to education and life. This obviously hints towards a different dimension of living, beyond pettiness and fragmentation.

Insight is an important factor in life as in education. The education that Krishnamurti professes helps the emergence of it (insight). But what is this insight? "It is not a calculated, remembered, activity. An insight is without remembrance, without memory, without time and that insight is in itself the action. There is no decision."¹⁹⁹ Krishnamurti himself lives on insights. "That is the whole way of my life", he once said. The word insight primarily indicates, 'an inward perception' through the mind.

According to Prof. David Bohm, 'it (insight) is inward, not only in the sense of looking into the very essence, of the content that is to be known and understood, but also in the sense of looking into the mind that is engaged in the act of knowing. The two must happen together.'

'...insight is an act of perception, permeated with intense energy and passion, that brings about great clarity. This makes possible the dissolution of strong but subtle emotional, linguistic, intellectual, social and other pressures that tend to hold the mind in rigid grooves and fixed compartments, and so, to cause it to avoid fundamental challenges. From this germ can unfold a further perception not contained in the entire previously existent field of the known This perception includes new forms of imagination and new orders of reason.' 200

Krishnamurti speaks of a difference between partial-insight (partial intelligence) and total-insight (total intelligence). The ordinary life may experience partial-insights but they ultimately lead to contradiction and conflict. A total-insight can only help man to go beyond all contradictions. Education for Krishnamurti proposes

that.

A close study of Krishnamurti's teachings appears meaningful when it is understood negatively, as not involving any systematization of reality. The very word system limits and deadens Krishnamurti's teachings. For he is always beyond systems, beyond strict formalization of life.

Krishnamurti is a mystery not only in his life and death ("Krishnamurti's death was in some way as mysterious as his life,"²⁰¹ - Mary Lutyens), but also in his teachings. From his teachings emanate both mysticism and a kind of metaphysics, whatever may be the claim to the contrary. His teachings imply an 'Intuitive - philosophy',²⁰² thinks Rohit Mehta. Krishnamurti's views are outpourings of insights, derived from the vast emptiness (silence) of his mind. This emptiness is not a vacuum: it is a positive state of negation. "It is the emptying of the innermost recess and deep hidden wants and desires."²⁰³ In this emptiness there is absolutely and literally no-thing, no influence, no value, no frontier, no word, no space-time. "It's the end and beginning of all things." (Krishnamurti's Notebook p.69)

According to Krishnamurti, "In this emptiness there was

fury: the fury of a storm, the fury of exploding universe, the fury of creation which could never have any expression. It was the fury of all life, death and love. But yet it was empty, a vast, boundless emptiness which nothing could ever fill, transform or "cover up."²⁰⁴ Thus it seems emptiness receives both a psychological and existential connotation in Krishnamurti, as if beyond thought (fragmentation) there is something which is both psychological and physical (existential) e.g. - "watching from emptiness" and the emptiness as "the essence of everything". This can well serve as the meeting-ground both of mysticism and metaphysics in Krishnamurti. But at best it can be understood that emptiness as a holistic state of mind can give rise to an approach, an outlook on life which only can touch the truth. For truth is neither intellectual, emotional nor sentimental.

Krishnamurti's teachings have NO-USE (no utility) in the material sense, because they are no thoughts and not of measurement and time. So when anyone like U.G. Krishnamurti** criticises J. Krishnamurti as

"Krishnamurti's teaching is phony baloney. There is nothing to his teaching at all. And he cannot produce anything at all. One may listen to him for

**U.G. Krishnamurti, a present day wise man. He was once a Theosophist and a passionate listener of Jiddu Krishnamurti but afterwards he has become a radical critic of J. Krishnamurti's teachings. - Author

sixty, seventy or hundred years. But nothing will ever happen to that man because the whole thing is phony." 205

Yet U.G. Krishnamurti (U.G.K.) himself may be said to differ very little from the actual status (no-use) of J. Krishnamurti's teachings. "I've no message to give to the world," says U.G.K. while commenting on his spiritual experience, "whatever happened to me is such that you can't share it with the world. It's an extraordinary experience — like the sunset, or a flower, or a mountain;" 205 At another place he says, "What I am saying has absolutely no social content at all." 205 Thus both these two wise men, J. Krishnamurti and U.G.K. emphasize on this No-use (non-utilitarian) aspect of their teachings. They both stand for negation, only that U.G.K. has taken negation too much too far. However J. Krishnamurti's teachings started with the denial of fragmentations within us and ended up in totality. His views on education become meaningful only when life signifies vastness encompassing thought, feeling, senses and everything. But to evaluate his teachings from the utilitarian and market-place point of view is totally misconceived and wrong.

Krishnamurti questions the very basis and effectiveness of psychological-evolution or in other words psychological-becoming in regard to human progress. As he says, "Personally, to the speaker, there is no psychological evolution. There is only the ending of sorrow, of pain, anxiety, loneliness, despair. Man has lived with it for a million years. And if we rely on time, which is thought - time and thought go together - if we rely on evolution, then another thousand years or more and we will still be barbarous." ²⁰⁶

By psychological-evolution, Krishnamurti means the human effort to change (become) psychologically e.g. "I say 'I shall become something' or 'I shall not be something', ²⁰⁷ and it does not refer to the evolutionary process of Nature in regard to human psychology. The nature of this psychological-becoming is that, it involves time and an ideal (non-violence or peace etc.), an effort (desire to change) and so on; It also involves - thought, memory and knowledge - which as a consequence generate conflict and tension; It cannot liberate man. Nevertheless, the way of becoming is the very basis of our society nay our education and refinements (culture). No doubt these

education etc, of becoming effect our lives, but that only Quantitatively, not Qualitatively (radically). According to Krishnamurti, there can be two kinds of living - e.g. either living from a centre (self) or living without any centre (selfless). Third is no third kind. The process of becoming is always living from a centre, it is always quantitative (e.g. from greater number of violent incidents to lesser number etc.) far from qualitative, because it involves the movement of the 'I'. ("...any movement of 'me' in any direction, is the action of violence;" - Krishnamurti). The repeated emergence of semiticism, racism, idolatry, witchcraft etc, in the process of civilization are some examples of the truth that psychological becoming (progress or evolution) are mere mentally-construct ideas and are quite unstable. In Krishnamurti, education as cultural refinements have certain importance but no fundamental significance. Only radical-change or mutation has fundamental value; This change implies a life without any centre and is not an achievement out of choice and effort. This (radical transformation) also indicates the mutation of brain cells and stands for the 'Only Revolution' in the society. There is an urgency of this kind of revolution, because 'the Future of Humanity' depends

on it, thinks Krishnamurti. According to him (Krishnamurti),

"If man does not radically change, fundamentally bring about a mutation in himself, ... we will destroy ourselves. A psychological revolution is possible now, not a thousand years later. We've already lived thousands of years and we're still barbarians. So if we don't change now we'll still be barbarians tomorrow or a thousand tomorrows." 208

Krishnamurti-education is only to provide a preparatory ground for that fundamental change in man.

However there is no way to mutation. It depends on a total insight, which nothing can guarantee.

It (mutation) may or may not come and any expectation in this regard that education in Krishnamurti schools will surely bring mutation would undoubtedly be misplaced. As it already becomes a matter of daily dismay to many enquirers (researchers as well) when they are told that many long-time associates of Krishnamurti did not change (mutated) at all ! To be true there cannot be any necessary connection between radical-transformation (mutation) and the education of Krishnamurti - Foundation schools. Those schools provide only necessary environment for a greater awareness of life. Secondly, enquiring into mutation of others is a self-defeating process because it implies a yardstick to judge when

there cannot be any such thing (yardstick) at least within the thought process. Besides, this enquiry makes mutation an idea, a goal to be achieved, which it is not.

Krishnamurti's teachings on education possibly help mutation, but never guarantees it, for it cannot be guaranteed. Total insight (out of mutation) into the facts of life has no calculation, no measurement. Any subject like philosophy (theorization), literature, ethics, esthetics etc, which seeks pleasure out of verbalization alone makes ideas their goal. In the end they act as a self-sustaining (ego-strengthening) education rather than self-exploring. For example, Beauty is sought externally, in process and entities which are immensely variable. The so-called dead objects of beauty (paintings etc.) are compared and contrasted with each other. When "Beauty is never personal",²⁰⁹ never static, it is a living thing. The sense of beauty is a state of mind, not restlessness. It is truth itself.

Any education which lives only in the Kingdom of ideas and images, and never goes beyond that is dead education for the purpose of living.

Understanding the use of thought (ideas etc.) and to be free from thought is the aim of real education. This is in other words living timelessly in time, for thought is time. Krishnamurti once used a good analogy. He said to one of his young associates, ** - "Do as a polevolter does, use thought (analysis) to go beyond it." His education is for understanding the right use as well as the limitations of thought. This function however is reverberated for centuries in the writings of the great masters in philosophy e.g. David Hume, Immanuel Kant and so on. L. Wittgenstein has written that the aim of his Tractatus Logico Philosophicus "is to draw a limit to thought" (preface). Although like other saints and religious teachers Krishnamurti finds more worth in going beyond thought than to stick to its limited periphery. The difference however is, while professional philosophers prefer to understand thought, Krishnamurti prefers more to understand life in its totality.

However the maturity of any study of a subject (philosophy or so) indeed consists in the fact that their end lies in deep contemplation, in going beyond the level of ideas (fragmentations). Love, death, beauty

**The young associate refers to Shri Rajesh Dala, now Joint Secretary, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Vasanta-Vihar, Madras.

all signify the samethingie, involvement of the whole human being. Similarly, "The right kind of education cultivates your whole being, the totality of your mind. It gives your mind and heart a depth, as understanding of beauty." 210

The concepts of insight & mutation, so important in Krishnamurti-education, are quite interesting, which have scientist's support too. In the foreward to a booklet Prof. David Bohm writes,

"...it is worth remarking that modern research into the brain and nervous system actually gives considerable support to Krishnamurti's statement that insight may change the brain cells. Thus, for example, it is now well known that there are important substances in the body, the hormones and neuro-transmitters, that fundamentally affect the entire functioning of the brain and the nervous system. These substances respond from moment to moment, to what a person knows, to what he thinks, and to what all this means to him. It is by now fairly well established that in this way the brain cells and their functioning are profoundly affected by knowledge and passions. It is thus quite plausible that insight, which must arise in a state of mental energy and passion, could affect the brain cells in an even more profound way." 211

However, Krishnamurti's talks on these psychological affairs have bitter critics too. U.G. Krishnamurti has commented,

"To me there is no such thing as mind. Mind is a myth. Since there is no such thing as mind, and mind is a myth, so the mutation of mind that J. Krishnamurti is talking about has no meaning. There is nothing to be transformed there - radical or otherwise. There is no self to be realized... To me Krishnamurti is playing exactly the same game as all those ugly saints in the market, we have in the world today." 212

In regard to mutation, there are many who found that there is seemingly a streak of contradiction between Krishnamurti's life and his teachings. He denies mutation in time, but in him mutation has taken place (as recorded in biographies) in time through different preparations and processes. Slowly but gradually Krishnamurti became a seer out of a sick and slow boy on the beach of Adyar. However he (Krishnamurti), always maintains that training and preparation etc., in his own case seem to have obstructed or delayed mutation in him rather than helped it (mutation) in anyway. Further, to clear this apparent contradiction one may take help of an analogy of football-game, where the

achievement out of scoring a goal is radically different from preparation for the goal. Here preparation takes time but not the achievement. Mutation, like achievement (scoring), is sudden and all along.

When the mutation is concerned, there may be a scientific support to it; but there is no How (method) to mutation, no How to the total insight. Thus the problem is, there is always a gap between the End (mutation) and the Means. No calculation (theories) can sufficiently bridge the gap. Mutation or radical transformation, therefore has a peculiar status, sometimes nebulous and questionable. So it is observed that, Krishnamurti-schools are not running after any idea of mutation. They are not Krishnamurtite in the ordinary sense. And it seems that they are right because, freedom from any idea of mutation or of insight, is the essence of Krishnamurti's philosophy.

Krishnamurti in his long years of teaching, asks more questions, than he answered them. He sometimes baffled a questioner with many more return-questions like a Zen-master. In Zen Buddhism, Zen masters ask most puzzling questions (KOANS) to their disciples.

They are like, -

What was your original face before your parents were born ? or,

A cow passed through a window. Its head, body and legs passed easily - only its tail could not pass through. Why ? etc.

However KOANS have importance not in answering them but in pointing at the limitation of thought and in liberating oneself from it (thought). In Krishnamurti's questions too their importance lie in holding the questions within (to see them entirely), rather than answering them promptly. But the spirit of Krishnamurti's questions lies in raising fundamental enquiries, which includes impossible questions too, but not in asking puzzling and nonsensical questions like zen. A puzzling mind out of zen-discipline cannot be equated with an enquiring and creative mind out of Krishnamurti-education. Though their essences are the same i.e., standing face to face with Reality. In Krishnamurti and in the zen-Buddhism, the act of questioning has been differently taken with different values. This difference however is tremendous. But it is always true that right questions rightly put have liberating and purifying effects; Not only spiritually, right questions can liberate man from daily morose too. To Krishnamurti, a state of

conflicts crumble, an enquiring mind seems to plunge deep into a holistic atmosphere. And that atmosphere may serve as the holistic approach in one's daily activities. It then effects not only the individual but also the society in its true and deeper development.

"Life is sacred...so we mustn't misuse life. We mustn't waste it because our life is so short." 213
 Perhaps 'Humanity has made a wrong turn' at the beginning of civilization, when thought was supposed to be the only instrument that can solve all our problems - existential (human) and material. This first step at the beginning acted as a dead trap, as our 'original-sin'. As a result, humanity got dissociated from his "Ground" (sacredness) of life. First step anywhere has an enormous importance because, "First step is the last step"; Action in the present determines all our future.

For us who aspire for clarity of thought, the importance of Krishnamurti's teachings lie in seeing totally (from our total being) the danger - of contradiction, of time, of thought, of the prevailing answers in solving human existential problems, and also seeing the utter irrationality of seeking - liberation,

choiceness-awareness, attention, intelligence, love and silence in our daily life. The former (contradiction etc.) are facts of our present living, when the latter are mere fictions of the imagination. When the state of contradiction etc. of the mind is absent, then there is or may be the latter (awareness, love etc.), - a quite different quality of mind. A man who is actually aware is least aware of his awareness; rather he is only aware of the moments of his unawareness or inattention. Education facilitates this latter awareness. It helps the understanding of all our limitations of thought and knowledge, our selfish desires and activities. It encourages further the understanding of the nature of negation in our life. It favours a realization of the fact of what we presently are.

The essence of Krishnamurti's philosophy (of education), as it has been already said, lies primarily in negation. In philosophy, the whole truth cannot be positively described, for the very description (by words) fragments the wholeness of it. To understand Krishnamurti, he should be read in between the lines or in the daily phenomena of living. To a sensitive and appreciative mind - a human face, a tree or a bird has much meaning than books.

Krishnamurti's teachings never lie in the analysis or in the surgical vivisection of things. It has a wholeness of its own. Any critical study, therefore, naturally somewhat disturbs this wholeness. The teaching is more of heart than of mind; it is rather internally consistent than logical and analytic. So there is a futility involved in the whole exercise of a critico-analytical study (including the present work), for truth needs no strengthening. A man who can listen to the lesson of a bird singing on the window-sill is more close to Krishnamurti's education than a mind with an encyclopaedic memory.

However in positive terms Krishnamurti brought to the fore the awareness that most of us do not live our lives properly or we live only as dead human beings, dead by conclusions and opinions of others ... we are dead to the extraordinary colour and beauty of the earth; dead to ourselves, and so we are dead to others. One lives one's life truly only when there is learning in it. Learning implies self-respect and responsibility. Right education is concerned with all that.

Krishnamurti-education is concerned more with the actual than with the ideal. It is more close to life and living. It never encourages escape routes, but rather

detects them, and seeks to make man free and fearless so that he can walk alone if need be. Man has to see and act on the actuality. To Krishnamurti, "...Truth is Life".²¹⁴ Education has to be one with this life. True education is a process of truth itself.

Nonetheless, there is an intrinsic disharmony involved in all educational endeavour. Education is based on the vision of a rich, integrated and joyous life which is finally an individual-odyssey with tremendous passion and courage. Krishnamurti perhaps exemplified in himself such a life. But the way of civilization is more towards collective-values and organization. The tragedy of truth is such that the integration and richness of life cannot be organized by any institution - educational or otherwise (as truth defies & transcends all organization). Perhaps herein lies the beauty as well as the frailty of all educational theory and practice of all great men, including J. Krishnamurti.
