

# GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY OF MAN

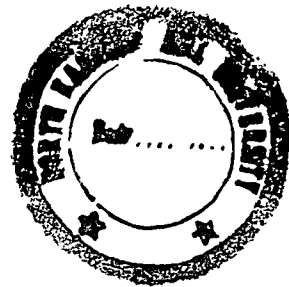
BY

SHEPHALI PANIGRAHI

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

To



THE NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY

1981

Unit  
(thesis)

DS  
320.55:128  
GAN/PAN;3

WEST LIBRARY  
Acc # 102574  
Dsc #  
Da  
Class. 715/94  
Sub  
Date  
v

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Supervisor's Certificate	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
INTRODUCTION	1 - 4
CHAPTER - I PHILOSOPHIES OF MAN (Naturalism, Kant and Religious Philosophy of Man)	5 - 36
CHAPTER - II MORALITY AND RELIGION	37 - 56
CHAPTER - III SOME GANDHIAN CONCEPTS	57 - 105
CHAPTER - IV MODERN CIVILISATION	106 - 135
CHAPTER - V MARCUSE AND GANDHI : On Modern Civilisation	136 - 159
CONCLUSION	160 - 162
BIBLIOGRAPHY	163 - 167
BIO-DATA	168

Certified that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by Miss Shephali Panigrahi that the contents of this thesis did not form a basis of the award of any previous degree to her, or, to the best of my knowledge, to any body else, and that the thesis had not been submitted by her for any research degree in any other University.

In habit and character Miss Shephali Panigrahi is a fit and proper person for the degree of Ph. D.



(PROF. MRINAL MIRI)

Supervisor

Department of Philosophy

North Eastern Hill University

SHILLONG  
the 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec. '81

Department of Philosophy  
N.E.H.U., Shillong-793002

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My first philosophical debt is to my teacher and guide Professor Mrinal Miri without whose guidance and help I would never have completed the work. His encouragement for independent thinking and humility to understand what a student wants to say gave me subtle encouragement to develop whatever intellectual ability I now possess.

My words fail to express my gratitude to my uncle, Prof. R. Panigrahi, whose life and activity have constantly been a source of illumination and inspiration to me at every walk of my life.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Sujata Miri who as the Head of the Department had a keen interest in the progress of my work. I am also grateful to other teachers of the Department for their helpful advice.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues and friends for their useful suggestions.

Shillong  
The 15th Dec.'81

SHEPHALI PANIGRAHI

-----  
**INTRODUCTION**  
-----

## INTRODUCTION

Any attempt at a philosophical treatment of Gandhi, might provoke the question, "was Gandhi ever a Philosopher?" And the question should not, perhaps be a surprising one. Gandhi's writings are occasionally confusing and inconsistent, and frequently they happened to be his immediate response to experiences, that he had at particular times and problems that he might have been facing from time to time. His writings, therefore, might not seem to have any systematic structure. Frequently statements made at a later time would appear to be inconsistent with statements made earlier. Sometimes they would also be repetitions.

But a deeper and persistent search into their meaning reveals altogether a different picture. It is true that Gandhi did not present a so-called philosophical doctrine, but his statements on truth, morality and religion contain invaluable philosophical insights into the fundamental nature of man and human society. The primary concern of my research has been to try and achieve a coherent philosophical understanding of some basic Gandhian concepts.

Gandhi's name is commonly associated, in our country with ideas like non-violence, love, respect for all religions, "basic" education and so on. - These ideas frequently remain disparate even in people who profess to be Gandhian. Our constitution enshrines the idea of secularism which might be said to be the result of Gandhi's view of unity of all religions. But it is found that our attempt to work with Gandhi's ideas has been in vain. Practice of non-violence in the political sphere is found to be more or less an impossibility. It is rather found that one practises non-violence only if one is weak and not competent enough to face one's opponent; or sometimes non-violence is practised to fulfil one's selfish motive. In fact hatred and envy occupy a much more prominent place in our relation to our fellow human beings. Instead of realising the unity of all religions we have developed a kind of secularism in which we denounce religion and morality.

Naturally the objection arises that Gandhi's thoughts and writings are in no way helpful to our life and society. Concepts of truth, non-violence, love are mere ideologies which cannot be actualised in our life. Gandhi has often been accused of being an opportunist who followed the path of non-violence having no other

alternative in his fight for independence. People condemn Gandhi by saying things like: - 'faced with a difficult or embarrassing situation, Gandhi would often wriggle out of it by referring to his "inner voice". Preachings of truth, non-violence, morality and religion are pillars behind which Gandhi would hide his actual selfish motive.'

My attempt in this thesis has been to point out that our main failure with Gandhi has been our inability to realise the great unity and true significance of Gandhi's thought. Gandhi's writings, his thoughts and work constitute, altogether a different but complete whole. The criterion of determining the meaning of any concept used by him, any course of action adopted by him lies within that complete whole.

In my search for such an understanding of Gandhian thought I start my first chapter with a discussion of various philosophies which have guided my general outlook. In this Chapter I discuss the views of Empiricism, Naturalism and Kant; and then try to point out how Gandhi as a truly religious man differs from all of them.

The second chapter, in which I make a humble attempt to show a kind of necessary relation between

morality and religion, gives a philosophical support to Gandhi's view that morality and religion are inseparable.

In the third chapter an attempt is made to analyse certain Gandhian concepts like non-violence, truth, humility, fearlessness. Agreeing with Gandhi I have tried to argue that to be a human being is conceptually associated with man's being non-violent and moral. Gandhian concepts have a unity in the sense that all his concepts like non-violence, love, compassion, truth, humility, fearlessness and so on constitute the integrated personality of a moral-religious person.

The fourth chapter is a brief exposition of the idea of Modern Western Civilisation with some general criticism. In the fifth chapter I discuss Herbert Marcuse's critique of modern civilization. Finally it is pointed out that thinkers like Herbert Marcuse, while looking for a different form of civilisation remain within the framework of the pseudo-metaphysics on which modern civilisation is founded. Gandhi's critique of modern civilisation is an altogether different story, it is peripheral to his thinking, Gandhian thinking strives to participate in the transcendental centre; it is concerned with the destiny of man.

-----  
**CHAPTER - I**  
-----

PHILOSOPHIES OF MAN  
(Naturalism, Kant and Religious  
Philosophy of Man)

Broadly speaking naturalism is a species of thought which holds that whatever exists or happens in the world is natural in the sense of being susceptible to explanation through the methods of natural sciences. It is defined as repudiating the view that there exists or could exist any entities or events which lie, in principle, beyond the scope of scientific explanation. The following statements explain the nature of Naturalism. Edel says, "Reliance on scientific method together with an appreciation of the primacy of matter, and the pervasiveness of change, I take to be the central points of naturalism as a philosophic outlook".<sup>1</sup> The second is from Hook:

What unites them all is the whole hearted acceptance of scientific method as the only reliable way of reaching truth about the world, nature, society and man. The least common denominator of all historic naturalisms, therefore, is not so much a set of specific doctrines as the method of and scientific or rational empiricism."<sup>2</sup>

The third is from Dewey. It runs: "it suffices here to note that the naturalist is one who has respect for the conclusions of natural science."<sup>3</sup> In all these

---

<sup>1</sup>J.H. Krikorion (ed), Naturalism and Human spirit, p.63

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p.45.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p.2.

statements the phrases like "reliance on scientific method", "the whole-hearted acceptance of scientific method", "respect for the conclusions of natural science", make it obvious that naturalism is a view which holds that valid knowledge is knowledge warranted by scientific method and strongly believes that the application of scientific method to all fields of experience would enlarge our understanding and increase our control. The realm of knowledge consist of things to which scientific methods of observation and experiment can be applied for explanation.

Adoption of scientific methods as the sole criterion of determining the intelligibility of things and concepts means a far-reaching change in our habits of thought in which we no longer permit ourselves to use as tools in our thinking concepts of which we cannot give an adequate account in terms of natural explanation. Since the common feature has been a total empiricism in the treatment of things many of the mental notions are eliminated from our discourse by showing that no adequate account of them in terms of behaviour can be given. It thus gives rise to the theory of psychological behaviourism according to which the meaning of a mental concept is restricted to the representation of particular operations and

---

behaviour. To quote from Mc Dougall,

"desires are not unobservable entities in some inaccessible realm; they are a certain type of observable behaviour ..... The degree of one's hunger may be verified by the amount of food one eats; the degree of weariness may be determined by the number of hours one sleeps and the degree of one's pain may be determined by the amount of anodyne one takes."<sup>4</sup>

According to naturalists, thus, man is logically reducible to a kind of object of nature. Mental phenomena, like all other physical phenomena can be understood by means of the experimental methods of science. Psychology ceased to be any philosophical speculation about mind and became physiological observation of neuro-muscular-glandular interaction within the organism.

Naturalism has a related ethical doctrine, to the general effect that there is no unbridgeable gulf between ethics and other studies. It is a widely accepted view that there is logical distinction between explaining facts and evaluating them. Ethical naturalists deny the prima facie distinction between establishing facts about the world as it is and making a word estimate of those facts. According to Ethical naturalism, moral judgements just state a subclass of facts about the natural world. It holds that ethical terms can be

---

<sup>4</sup>W.H.Sheldon, "Critique of Naturalism" Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 42, p.261.

analysed into non-ethical terms, and that ethical conclusions can be logically derived from non-ethical premises.

Since scientific method is the maxim for determining the intelligibility and unintelligibility of things, it leads to the rejection of the "self-evident" speculative assertions which are considered 'supernatural'. Randall, one of the naturalists says: "there is no room for any supernatural in naturalism - no supernatural or transcendental God and no personal survival after death."<sup>5</sup> According to Hook the existence of God, immortality, disembodied spirits, cosmic purpose and design, as these have been customarily interpreted by the great institutional religions, are denied by naturalists for the generic reason that they cannot be experimented upon by the methods of natural sciences. In so far as experience is understood to come through sensation all supersensory knowledge is attacked. Thus the absolute truths of metaphysics and religion are abandoned by naturalists as non-sensical and absurd.

However, this does not necessarily carry with it a rejection of 'religion' as such. Many of the naturalists have reconstructed religion in a naturalistic way. They envisage a kind of religion which is mostly

---

<sup>5</sup>W.H. Sheldon, op.cit., p.262.

concerned with the functional aspect without making any claims beyond the natural world. For example, Dewey, the acknowledged leader of Naturalism, does not believe in the transcendental core of religion. For him the important thing is the religious quality which experience can assume under certain conditions. Any unification of the whole personality around the pursuit of an ideal end is religious. Whenever a person is thoroughly committed to the pursuit of any ideal, be it scientific, social, artistic, or whatever his experience attains the kind of fulfilment that has always been characteristic of what is most valuable in religion. According to Dewey, in traditional religion this quality has been "encumbered and obscured by irrelevant trappings, particularly the theological dogma in terms of which it has been pursued."<sup>6</sup> Huxley, as a thoroughgoing naturalist, holds that the supernaturalistic world-view in terms of which religion has traditionally performed its functions is not tenable in the light of modern scientific knowledge. Moreover, he thinks that it is possible to develop a full-blown religion on a naturalistic basis. As the basis for such a religion, Huxley puts forward "evolutionary naturalism", a view of the

---

<sup>6</sup>Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol. 7-8, p.146.

spatio-temporal universe inspired by modern biology and cosmology in which the universe is conceived of as an indefinitely extended creative process, always tending to higher levels of development with all the sources and principles of this creativity immanent in the process. The basic role of man is to be the chief agent of this evolutionary advance on earth through the application of his intelligence to the problems of life.

Akin to the Naturalists the positivists also deny the supernatural aspect of religion. Saint Simon, the promulgator of the positivist philosophy, clearly denies the necessity of a religion or theology which talks of an absolute God. He argues by saying that (a) it is finally realised in modern times that the relation between God and the universe is completely 'incomprehensible and pointless'; and (b) that therefore the human mind should henceforward devote itself to 'discovering facts'. The so-called God of Theology or the authority of revelation has nothing to do with the facts of nature which is to be observed by man on his own. Saint Simon thus rejects the concept of divinity and says that the new religion should be only a general scientific theory of physical as well as moral facts. He says that besides the concept of a

---

saviour and the authority of revelation etc. the idea of God is nothing but human intelligence universalised.

Following Saint Simon's view Comte also says that it is to humanity that man owes everything that he is and has. It is because he shares in the general biological and psychological capacities of human nature that he is able to live a human life. And the men of a given generation are able to lead a fully human life because of the labours of their predecessors in building up their cultural heritage. Moreover, according to Comte, the service of humanity, in the many forms this can take, is the noblest ideal which could be proposed to an individual; and humanity, unlike an omnipotent God, needs this service. Thus Comte proposed to set up a religion of humanity with man, viewed as a unitary being, as the object of worship. Comte denied the transcendental aspect of religion while he liked the functional aspect of it. He was impressed with the ritual structure of Roman Catholicism and took it as his model. For example, in the analogue of baptism, the sacrament of presentation, the parents would dedicate their child to the service of humanity in an impressive public ceremony. This kind of observances, according to Comte, inspires a man to

---

love humanity. The naturalists as well as the as well as the positivists hold that there is nothing over and above the sensory world of experience, and thus they are committed to reject traditional religions which are based on beliefs in the supernatural.

Kant agrees with the above thinkers by saying that our knowledge starts with experience. He holds that if a thing cannot be brought as a datum of empirical intuition it cannot be an object of knowledge. For him if there were no data of sensibility in the world there would be no experience, so, no knowledge. The broader is the field of experience, the more empirical information we gather, the richer is our knowledge. Thus according to Kant our knowledge begins with experience, "But", at the same time Kant also says,

"though all our knowledge begins with experience it does not follow that it all arises out of experience. For it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is made up of what we receive through impressions and of what our own faculty of knowledge supplies from itself."<sup>7</sup>

What he means is that the sensibility gives the sense - impression of certain things of the world, and our faculty of understanding gives them the form and organises them into a system of knowledge. The sense intuitions through its greater application may bring more and more items for knowledge and enrich its field but unless our

---

<sup>7</sup>I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p.42.

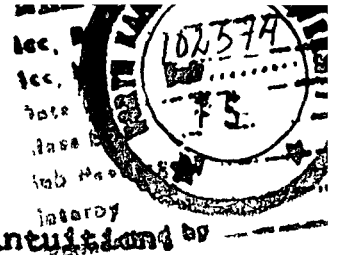
understanding coordinates them into a system particular intuitions of sensibility can never add up to knowledge. Sense-experience tells us what is and what was, but not that it must necessarily be so and cannot be otherwise. An empirical study can bring the series of facts which have happened in the past, it may present a uniformity of certain events in certain circumstances, but they can, in no way, assure us that in future also the similar events are necessarily going to take place in similar circumstances. Man is not satisfied with the accumulation of certain experiences of natural events without any investigation into their necessary relation to one another. There are, thus, two stems of human knowledge namely, sensibility and understanding, "objects are given to us by means of sensibility...; they are thought through the understanding."<sup>8</sup> Through the sensibility we are presented with all our factual raw material, the understanding on the other hand, enables us to organise intellectually our raw material by classifying, discriminating, judging, comparing. Understanding interprets actively (synthesises) the sense impressions passively received. Sensibility and understanding are so intertwined for the possibility of knowledge that Kant says that senses are blind

---

<sup>8</sup> I. Kant, op.cit., p.65.

without understanding and our understanding is empty without senses i.e. knowledge is impossible without any of these two.

In the transcendental deduction of the categories Kant gives the arguments as to how do the a priori concepts of understanding serve as a priori conditions of a possible experience; and the conclusion he reaches is that no intuition or experience is possible without the form or concept to which it belongs. Natural sciences explain facts, hold certain theories about the natural world and the method on which the naturalists claim their theory to be based is the empirical method. But pure empirical knowledge can in no way help us to find out the empirical law of nature. It is by the "transcendental synthesis" of sensibility and understanding that we acquire the knowledge of empirical laws. Kant says that however exaggerated and absurd it may sound to say that the understanding is itself the source of the laws of nature, and so of its formal unity, such an assertion is nonetheless correct and is in keeping with the object to which it refers, namely, experience. Certainly empirical laws, as such, can never derive their origin from pure understanding. That is as little possible as to understand completely the inexhaustible multiplicity of appearances merely



by reference to the pure form of sensible intuitions.  
But all empirical laws are only special determinations of the pure laws of understanding, under which, and according to the norm of which they first become possible. Through them appearances take on an orderly character, just as these same appearances, despite the differences of their empirical form, must nonetheless always be in harmony with the pure form of sensibility. In this connection I would mention that for Kant knowledge is a priori synthetic in nature. It is only when the a priori concepts of understanding are applied to the synthetic experience of particular facts that we acquire knowledge.

The principles of natural science are a priori synthetic judgments. Certain fundamental laws of physics such as, 'in all changes of the material world the quantity of matter remains unchanged', - or 'in all communication of motion, action and reaction are always equal', are not only necessary in the sense that they are established by the a priori form of understanding but also synthetic, for they give us new knowledge about natural objects. Kant makes similar remarks regarding Mathematics also.

This view of Kant goes against the empiricists'

---

view that the empirical method of observation and experiment comprise the sole source of human knowledge. For empiricists synthetic-apriori judgments are not possible. According to Hume admitting a judgment to be strictly universal and necessary is nothing but an indirect way of describing it as tautologous. As to the nature of the principles admitted in Physics Hume holds that they are synthetic but not necessary or certain.

This view of Hume is not acceptable. The actual existence of Physics as a science, and also its steady and methodological progress throughout the ages unmistakably point their validity and necessity. If the fundamental propositions were not necessarily true, the whole structure of natural science would topple down at any time.

To elaborate this point we can take the concept of causality. Hume holds that the causal relation is the happening of certain events in a regular succession the knowledge of which is derived from our past experience. When an empiricist says, 'the sensory event of kind  $F$  occurs at  $t^1$ , then a sensory event of kind  $G$  will occur at  $t^2$ , for him the statement about such orderliness of events is not based on a reflection of the underlying universal causality behind the

---

occurrence of particular events, rather it is an habit of expectation which is based on regular and successive occurrence of certain events. According to the empirical view since causality is not based on any idea of necessity, the regular and successive events are always liable to be otherwise. A certain orderliness of events in the past cannot assure its same orderliness in the future also. If the law of causality is nothing but an experience of a regular successive events which are always liable to be otherwise, then physical sciences which are fundamentally based on the law of causality, would not be able to make any statement about future events. Physical sciences would be nothing but histories of natural events. But we see on the contrary that Physical sciences make statements which are found to come out true after thousands and thousands years.

For Kant the law of causality implies a relation between two states, determined necessarily which of them must take place before and which of them after, and that they cannot be otherwise. He says that the concept of a cause involves the character of necessity which no experience can yield. The concept, thus, carries the necessity of the synthetic unity of the events, and, so, is a pure a priori concept

---

which lies in the understanding. Our experience which gathers the knowledge of particular events have to conform to the apriori law.

Similar to the apriori principles of nature moral laws and their principles also are essentially different from all principles which we derive from particular cases of actions. Morality, for Kant, has an entirely pure foundation. Without using any anthropological knowledge of human nature; morality imposes apriori universal laws on man because he is a rational being. Man is the subject to this moral law independently of his particular desires and actions. Men do not, however, discover their duty by certain theoretical procedures but by recognising the categorical requirement of reason. The moral law thus contains no notion based on experience of how things are - it is apriori, i.e., it is beyond experience. A man adopts or rejects certain action according as it harmonises or conflicts with the formal maxim of doing one's duty for duty's sake, and such dutiful actions only, according to Kant, can be considered good actions.

Since knowledge, for Kant, could extend only to the limits of human experience the question of

---

Metaphysics are not objects of knowledge. Metaphysical matters like existence of God, immortality of soul and so on are beyond both sensibility and understanding. They remain within the realm of pure reason. It is never possible to bring them to the state of objects of sense-experience. The nature of Metaphysics, as Kant describes, is 'a bottomless abyss and a dark ocean without shore and without light houses'.

In spite of advocating the view that the field of knowledge is limited to mere objects of experience, Kant says,

"but our further contention must also be duly borne in mind, namely, that though we cannot know these objects as things-in-themselves, we must yet be in position at least to think them as things-in-themselves"<sup>10</sup>, otherwise we should be landed in the absurd conclusion that there can be appearance without anything that appears."<sup>11</sup>

Metaphysical concepts for Kant, are in the realm of pure reason. They can never be brought to the sphere of the

---

<sup>10</sup>To know an object I must be able to prove its possibility, either from its actuality as attested by experience, or a priori by means of reason. But I can think whatever I please, provided only that I do not contradict myself, that is, provided my concept is a possible thought. This suffices for the possibility of the concept, even though I may not be able to answer for their being, in the sum of all possibilities an object corresponding to it. But something more is required for I can ascribe to such a concept objective validity, that is, real possibility, the former possibility is merely logical. The something more, need not, however, be sought in the theoretical sources of knowledge; it may lie in those that are practical. - Ibid., p.27.

<sup>11</sup>Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p.27.

knowable world. Kant, thus, never claims the knowledge of metaphysical matters. But in his moral Philosophy Kant uses the notion of the existence of God and immortality of the soul as the presuppositions of morality. So far as our reason is concerned the moral law commands us categorically to do certain things and the moral worth of our action depends on obeying the command without any ulterior motive. But when a man has acted morally, Kant says that he is worthy of being happy and his happiness should be in proportion to the moral excellence of his conduct. Kant thinks that this demand can be fulfilled if the world is under the guidance of a supreme Reason, that is, God. The moral demand that virtue should be rewarded with happiness is thus the basis of the conviction that God exists.

Whether this kind of functional use of God is acceptable to us or not is a question to be discussed afterwards. Before that I would like to point out that such an acceptance of God by Kant brings insecurity to his moral theory. Belief in the existence of God contradicts his own position.

According to Kant, to have moral worth an action must be done from the sense of duty. A goodwill,

---

he adds, is good, not because of what it brings about, nor even because of its presumed aptitude for bringing about a certain result, but simply by virtue of its own nature. He points out that goodwill is not manifested in actions inconsistent with duty, nor in actions consistent with duty but done either to gain advantage for oneself, or merely because we have a direct inclination to do them. An action done from the sense of duty owes its merit not to the purpose it is meant to serve but to the principle on which it is done that duty is the necessity of acting from respect for law which can be applied universally. Kant's ethical doctrine, that virtue consists in the performance of duty naturally leaves out happiness to be an ideal of moral activity.

Thus we see that morality, for Kant has an entirely pure foundation without any reference to particular cases of moral deeds. Without using any anthropological knowledge of human nature, morality imposes, apriori, a universal maxim on man since he is a rational being.

But the point which makes his theory inconsistent is that while Kant says that human beings are autonomous

---

in the sense that they do not discover their duty from the experience of practical life but by recognising the categorical requirement of reason, suddenly looks for some presuppositions of morality which belongs to a sphere which is beyond the capacity of human reason. Immortality of the soul and existence of God are two of the presuppositions of morality, and he "proves" the immortality of the soul and the existence of God by saying that since all our good deeds are not rewarded with happiness in this life there must be a continuation of life beyond this death in which we receive results according to our deeds. God is the moral Governor who ensures this and so he rewards and punishes the people according to their good or bad deeds respectively. Once we consider human beings as morally autonomous beings do we need a God who would reward their moral acts with happiness?

What is curious is, however, that happiness which he had previously left behind, later occupies his serious thought. - Kant probably might have thought that the doctrine expressed in the formula 'do your duty for the sake of duty' is too rigoristic and, consequently sought to soften it by holding that, although the moral aspirant must act solely with a view to the achievement of virtue as understood by him,

---

yet in so doing he need not give up his desire for happiness. In this Kant cannot stand exclusively on his view of practical reason as he wished to, but takes into account the importance of inclination and thereby surrenders the strict critical stand point.

The view that only the virtuous people are provided with happiness leads us to say that a man is virtuous because he wants to be happy and a man is happy because he is virtuous. From this it follows that virtue and happiness have a kind of means-ends relation. But virtue cannot be related with happiness either as its means or as its end. Desire for happiness cannot be the means of virtue because, as Kant himself says,

"maxims which place the determining principle of the will in the desire of personal happiness are not moral at all, and no virtue can be founded on them."<sup>12</sup>

Nor can virtue be a means for happiness. Because in that case the objection would arise as to - is it the case that human beings are moral only because they are rewarded for it? A moral virtue is worthy because of its own value. The value of a moral act cannot be compared with things which have economic value (a market price) or even with things that have an aesthetic

---

<sup>12</sup>Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, p.209.

["Any action which is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral. It also follows that all good deeds that are prompted by hope of happiness in the next world cease to be moral." Ethical Religion, p.43.]

value (a fancy price). The incomparable worth of a good act springs from its being done in accordance and with reverence to the moral law.

It may be worth-while here to consider, independently of Kant, the relationship between one's being moral and one's being happy. What is it to be happy? Is happiness something which outwardly comes to us or given to us by someone else only when we have acted morally?

True happiness has to be differentiated from pleasure. Pleasure may be defined as a desirable state of mind which we have when our desires and wishes are satisfied. One feels pleasure where one's desire is fulfilled; the pleasure may last for a while, then gradually loses its intensity and finally disappears. Pleasure, thus, is a temporary state of mind. It does not have any direct relation with one's being moral; rather one's being moral or just sometimes becomes hindrance to one's achievement of pleasure.

Happiness, on the contrary, is a more or less permanent state of one's mind. Unlike pleasure happiness does not have any necessary relation to the outward satisfaction of our desires and wishes. It is something inner; procurement or loss of material things, and

---

fulfilment or unfulfilment of worldly needs cannot in any way affect this state of mind. Happiness is, thus, related to the inner world of a man; it cannot be conditioned or dependent on someone else providing it from outside. True happiness resides there where a man transcends his ego and morality imposes upon man the obligation of "forgetting" himself in the interests of others. 'Morality' and 'happiness', taken in this sense, may be said to be necessarily related and essentially complementary to each other. While morality or justice may or may not be compatible with pleasureable sensations one is necessarily moral if one is truly happy and vice-versa.

One of the ways in which the controversy about the relationship between morality and happiness is generated is when the philosopher (or a layman) asks the question, "Why should I be moral?" and looks for a "logical" argument in reply to the question. In the Republic, Plato insists that a man's virtue must be beneficial to himself, and if justice is a virtue it must contribute to the just man's happiness. This view of Plato gives rise to the theory of Eudaimonism which holds that a man's life is an endeavour to achieve happiness and only a moral life is the life of well-

---

being and happiness - so there arises the question as to - is morality a means to achieve happiness?

I would not enter into the controversial debate on this point. I would only say that the skeptical question "why should I be moral" would not arise to a moral person. "should" calls for a reason, but the only one that is pertinent to one that the skeptic won't realise and the moral man does not require for the purpose of being moral, since he is moral to begin with. To suppose that moral skepticism can be countered by providing reasons sufficient to persuade one who is not moral to become moral, may well be as absurd as to suppose that a skepticism about the whole business of morality can be met by providing logical arguments that will persuade the skeptic. One must be logical in order to recognise the force of a logical argument, and one must be moral in order to be moved by a moral reason. "What a man does is for Plato only an "image" of what he is; his "external" conduct is only a manifestation of his "inner" life, which is the life of the "real" man, the soul. Hence when he asks himself in what it is that a man's justice "truly" consists he feels constrained to look to what goes on inside a man, in a man's soul."<sup>13</sup> True happiness like true morality

---

<sup>13</sup>G. Vlastos, Plato, p.82.

transcends the "external" world. It necessarily consists in the manifestation of the "inner" life of a man. His hankerings for the fulfilment of worldly desires vanish and he attains a more or less permanent state of peace and tranquillity. Morality and happiness, in this sense, are so intertwined that it is impossible to disentangle and separate them; it is beyond the means-end analysis.

But what <sup>then</sup> is it to be moral? Is it merely acting in a certain way which people call good? Is it obeying certain rules and conventions introduced by the society for the sake of interest? Does it consist in making certain moral choices at certain times?

Morality is something which constitutes and embodies the whole life of an agent. Being moral is not like an experience which comes to one like a flash of light within a moment. The moral life of a man goes on continually within, it is not suddenly switched on before the moral decision to be made and switched off after it is over. Questions like - how can I improve as a person? Can we make ourselves morally better? What is a good man like? Are some of the fundamental problems for a moral agent, and a man's life is nothing but a striving towards a clear understanding

---

and achievement of a possible solution of them. In this continuous progressive journey through the process the structure of values are gradually and imperceptibly built up within the agent.

We make moral choices from time to time. But that is not very important to understand the moral life of a man. What happens in between such moral choices is indeed what is crucial. A progressive change in one's behaviour may be suddenly noticed, but a sincere analysis of the matter would point out that such a change is brought into his behaviour after a steady and perpetual attempt on the part of the agent. So it is obvious that one cannot understand the moral life of a man if one makes a piecemeal study of the explicit moral choices.

Moral concepts have meaning in our ordinary language. But the full significance of them may not be understood by knowing merely how the word is used in the given impersonal network of our ordinary language. Through the progressive change in one's moral perception a particular moral term might have acquired a particular significance, or might come to have a radically altered meaning. In order to know in which way the meaning is different, and how the alterations take place we are

---

to look into the whole continuous life of the individual. The insight into moral concepts is not gained once for all - the pursuit of such insight is a progressive achievement continuing through life depending on the vicissitudes of life that the moral agent faces. The direction and alteration of the moral concepts is conditioned by and dependent on the history of the moral agent. Since the history of an individual is personal, and in no way transferable from one to the other there is an inalienably private element in one's understanding of moral concepts. The more one moves forward the deeper and newer the understanding is, and the deeper it becomes it acquires more privacy, and so it depends more on the individual. The vocabulary of the impersonal public life becomes, to some extent, blunt when applied to the moral concepts.

This nature of the moral life is recognised neither by British moral philosophers nor by Existentialists. The highest virtue of British moral Philosophy is reason. It pictures man as a morally autonomous being who is steered along by a will that is always rational. There is nothing in a person that is not explained by the public language. As opposed to the inner life view of morality the contemporary moral

---

philosophers hold that we can ascertain what a man's moral principles are if we study what the man does. They are not concerned with what goes on before or after the explicit behaviour of the agent. If there is anything which is not explicit through action, it has no meaning in the public life, so does not have any importance at all. Making moral decisions, in this sense, are nothing but acting in a certain way.

But is it really the case? Can we estimate the moral worth of an action by considering merely the action without any reference to the person concerned? The statements like "I am inwardly active", "I have decided privately" may be very sincere expressions of a person, but <sup>taken</sup> the contemporary view of morality, since these statements refer to something beyond our explicit behaviour, become mere utterances, or in other words, they are meaningless.

Since the British philosophers identify a moral life with will and action, it follows that for them a person is nothing but his will and action. A person is what a person does.

Such a view is necessarily unacceptable. It ignores a vital part which is beyond one's explicit activities, and it is that part of a life which plays

---

the most crucial part in building up a personality. To know a person we necessarily need to study his will and action, but merely that would not suffice to understand the person.

Linguistic analysis claims to give a philosophical description of the human phenomenon of morality. It takes certain moral concepts like freedom, responsibility, self-awareness, sincerity and gives simply some linguistic explanation to each of them separately in a neutral way.

The position that follows consistently from the metaphysic of contemporary British moral Philosophy is that moral concepts such as 'praise', 'blame', 'responsibility' are nothing but some empty action-guiding terms profitably retained in our vocabulary. To praise somebody or to blame somebody does not literally make any sense, they are still in our vocabulary because they can be used as profitable device to bring about desired changes in human beings and human societies. To-day indeed this is the position boldly taken by many.

This view of morality certainly goes against the innerworld view of morality. The latter holds that

---

a moral endeavour consists in proceeding towards gaining an insight into the moral concepts. Morality as conceived in this view is grounded in something much deeper.

Moral values are in some sense unitary. If we concentrate and reflect upon any of the moral virtues we are led to consider an inner relation among them all. Let us take the example of courage as a virtue. If we reflect upon it and ask why we think it to be a virtue, what kind of courage is the highest, what distinguishes courage from rashness, ferocity, self-assertion and so on, we are bound, in our explanation, to use the names of other virtues. We cannot attribute the value of courageousness to an unjust, intemperate, selfish and proud personality. Similarly a temperate or a just man cannot be a coward. Values have an inner unity in the sense that, they all together build up a moral personality.

It is a short-coming of much contemporary moral philosophy that it eschews discussion of the separate virtues without referring to a line of unity among all of them. For them terms such as 'sincerity', 'authenticity', 'freedom', each of them constitutes a sovereign concept

---

without any reference to the other. The point is what is authenticity without sincerity and freedom, or what is freedom without any of them? We come to understand one of them only when we understand its relationship to others. The attempt of the modern moral philosophers to understand one moral concept as completely isolated from others may help us to proceed upto a certain point, but we can never grasp it completely unless we understand what role it plays in a moral life which unites all other virtues.

Existentialists picture man as an absolutely free being who has enormous freedom to make choices. An individual is the sole authority of his moral decisions, and he is absolutely free to exercise this authority.

This existentialist picture of choice seems unrealistic, over-optimistic, romantic. It ignores what appears to be a sort of continuous background of a moral decision. How can a man be absolutely free? When the time for decision comes the man is not free to alter the situation in which he has to decide. In a way explicit choices become less important, the decision lies somewhere else. The result of a decision

---

is not the outcome of the explicit choice, the decision is very slowly and gradually cultivated within a person. The decision is rather a necessity. If we look into the life of an agent, if we notice how with a steady attention and attempt one proceeds, how continuously the attempt goes on, how it builds up the concept of value round<sup>d</sup> about us, we can clearly see that when the actual moment of choice comes most of the business of choosing is already over.

In the existentialist picture of morality the individual plays the most vital role. An individual builds up his own moral principle, whereas the other view holds that morality is an attempt at detachment from one's own self(ego). In our ordinary life we identify a thing or an action as my thing or my action. The "I" becomes most important. The I-ness or the egocentric attitude dominates over us so much that we completely forget to consider others' interest. While for an existentialist I am most important in creating values, on the other view the values are cultivated to transcend this I-ness. A moral life, in this sense consists in the understanding of the nature of this ego and in finding the techniques for its defeat. To expel self, to understand the dignity of other human

---

beings is not an easy task, it demands a perpetual moral discipline. Unsentimental and non-egocentric acceptance of facts directs one's attention from oneself to the world outside him. This exercise of detachment may be said to be a step forward towards the ultimate end of moral life. Selflessness and detachment from one's own ego through relentless attempt to achieve perfection gradually leads one to a state in which one transcends oneself beyond one's own ego. If we are led to ask the further question - what is it which dictates man to be moral, to hanker for the Good, to realise perfection, the idea of compassion or love will be naturally suggested. It is not simply that suppression of self is required before accurate moral vision can be obtained. The moral agent sees his objects in a light of justice and mercy. The direction of attention is away from self, towards the great variety of the world, and the ability so to direct attention is love and true happiness resides in this realisation.

In this respect morality shares some common aims with religion. There is obviously a sense in which one's religion like morality is a matter of one's

---

inner or private life. The genuineness of the moral pursuit which gives an insight into the transcendental core of man expresses itself in spiritual joy and harmony. Religion, in this sense, is not something that one makes a public show of, and this sense of being religious may be said to have nothing essentially to do with man's social existence. The idea of love which unifies and integrates the moral life of a man crops up from the notion of God who is the supreme example of this togetherness.

-----  
CHAPTER - I I  
-----

## MORALITY AND RELIGION

Towards the end of the previous chapter I came abruptly to the point that morality and religion are, in some sense, necessarily related. Although I made some remarks towards this position, I have not really argued for it in any detail. There are various established theories which hold the view, just opposite to the above. People holding these theories think that the idea of morality can be totally isolated from that of religion. A man can be moral without being religious and vice-versa.

Throughout history we find that religions usually incorporate a code of ethics, and moral behaviour of a person expresses his religious belief. Religion and morality, both, involve articulated sets of beliefs, practices, attitudes and motives.

Morality contains certain forms of beliefs namely, (i) beliefs about the nature of man, (ii) beliefs about ideals, about what is good or desirable or worthy of pursuit for its own sake, (iii) rules laying down what ought to be done and what ought not

---

to be done, and (iv) motives that incline us to choose the right or the wrong course. Morality is thus wholly or almost wholly concerned with relations between men, with how they ought to behave towards another, with what general rules governing relations between man and man a society ought to adopt.

Like morality religion also consists of certain beliefs and practices. They are, viz., (i) belief in supernatural powers, which may be thought of as persons or impersonally as "forces"; (ii) appropriate emotional attitudes, as sense of the sacred or numinous or uncanny, an attitude of humility or reverence in its presence, and (iii) rites and ceremonies and other religious duties.

What is the relation between these two sets of beliefs - morality and religion? Some of our activities appear to have mere moral worth whereas some others are claimed to be religious though they do not refer to morality. Certain deeds and duties again, seem to contain both religious and moral beliefs. Sometimes religion and morality seem to be very contingently related and sometimes they seem to be necessarily related in the sense that one cannot be there without the other.

---

To start the discussion I can take up the naturalists' point of view. Following the general outlook of naturalism the naturalists hold that moral worth of a thing is to be judged by finding out how it satisfies man's needs. There is no room for the concept of 'supernatural' in the moral life of man.

Being influenced by this kind of a philosophy the contemporary British Philosophers (viz, Hampshire) also hold that the moral life of a man has a sovereign field of its own. They take different concepts central to the idea of morality like freedom, authenticity, rightness; analyse them and understand them in complete isolation from other fields of man's life. This view ultimately leads us to say that morality as a field of human life does not have any necessary relation to other spheres of human life.

Again, British philosophers while analysing moral concepts give a sovereign field to each concept. They think that the concepts like 'freedom', 'authenticity' 'rightness', each of them can be analysed and understood with its full meaning without any reference to any other concept. For example, the moral concept of freedom can be understood in its full meaning and

significance without any reference to other moral concepts like 'authenticity' or 'sincerity'. This implies that even the moral concepts themselves do not have any necessary relation among one another.

Certain objections would arise in accepting such a view of morality. The point is that if a particular moral concept can be analysed and understood in its full significance in complete isolation from other moral concepts, or in other words, if a moral particular does not have any necessary connection to another, what is it which makes us call all of them 'moral concepts'? It is true that the concept of 'freedom' is distinguishable from the concept of 'authenticity', and that we must not confuse the concept of rightness with the concept of goodness, but is it possible to say that one leads an authentic life while he does not know what freedom means for a moral agent?

Thirdly, these philosophers identify certain moral concepts with the moral life of a man. No doubt a moral life is built up with certain moral concepts, but a moral life is certainly much more than acting in consistency with certain moral concepts.

Another view of morality comes from the

---

existentialists led by Sartre. Sartre holds that human beings are absolutely free. He maintains that we are what we choose to make ourselves, that we have no essences, no human nature. A man's character and his actions arise out of the way in which he evaluates things; and his evaluations are entirely his own. No one can force one to value something high or low. Even if one takes over one's opinions from someone else, they become one's and one chooses them. He further says that a man cannot choose entirely what he is or who his parents were, or how strong he is. What he can choose is his reaction to the facticity.

There is, therefore, no question at all, in Sartre's view, of discovering any absolute value in the world. There just are no such things. If a man says that something is good or that it is bad, that is his own choice. The moral philosophers, according to Sartre, who assert the existence of absolute value, keep themselves in a form of Bad Faith. To suppose that values are somehow given is just to fall into the kind of refusal to face the absolute freedom. A man must decide for himself

---

how to live, what is good and what is bad; and this is a purely personal decision, which no one can take on behalf of another. One's moral principles are one's own creation. The moral agent himself is the source of all values.

Sartre does not believe in the existence of God. He says, "there is no human nature, because there is no God to have a conception of it. Man simply is."<sup>1</sup> "Atheistic existentialism, of which I am a representative, declares with greater consistency that if God does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or as Heidegger has it, the human reality."<sup>2</sup> People who bring God to justify his moral beliefs, do so, according to Sartre, in order to avoid the challenge of the absolute freedom. The responsibility which is associated with a free action brings anguish and nausea. The man, naturally wants to avoid the responsibility, he does not want to realise the fact that he is free. So man takes shelter in God. Man thinks that God is

---

<sup>1</sup>Jean Paul Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism, p.28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

there to command and he has only to perform what has already been decided by God. Man puts the responsibility upon God and avoids the anguish that a man has to undergo as a free being. Man believes in God to escape from the reality of the world.

sartre's view, therefore, is that since there is no God, morality, if there is any, can have no connexion with religion. One's morality is one's own creation. sartre's Philosophy, thus, champions a kind of humanism which says that man is the basis of things. To live in this world, to life in society and in behaving with other living beings man needs certain moral principles. Man himself creates and decides those principles. One's being moral is in no way necessitated by one's being religious. Morality is thus, independent of religion.

There are objections to such a theory of morality. Taken the sartrean view of morality, a moral principle is an individual's decision. Every individual has got his or her own capacity to decide. There is always the possibility of different people having different views of morality. There may be as many moral principles as there are human beings. Morality becomes something entirely subjective.

---

Again, if morality is an individual's own decision, then the decision of each and every individual is supposed to possess moral worth. In that case two opposite decisions of two individuals are supposed to be good. If it is so, each and everything becomes good, which ultimately leads us to say that there is no distinction between good and bad. Thus Sartre's view of morality destroys the basic notion of moral concepts - good and bad, right and wrong.

In this connection I would also like to refer to the Marxist view of morality. For Marxists there can be no moral principle beyond man's reality in the society. According to them economic problems are the source of difficulties in life. Talks of morality cannot settle the matter. Capitalism prevails over the society. The aim of the Marxist is the end of capitalism and the rise to power of the proletariat, and this has to be actualised by force. For Marxists religion and ethics are partly folly and partly deliberate means of confounding simple people. Under their camouflage are concealed weapons for exploiting the masses. They are opiates to dull the people's power to think and act for

---

themselves and an attractive outer skin to hide one's selfishness.

Against Marxism, I would only like to say that the Marxist discussion itself begins with the presupposition that human beings are moral by definition. There can be no history of man which does not give us a history of morality of the people.

We have seen the kind of objections which might be raised against thinkers like Naturalists, existentialists and Marxists. There are difficulties in giving morality a sovereign field of its own. There are also various problems in making morality a completely subjective affair. Nor can the moral worth of a thing be judged from its utility in the fulfilment of the basic needs of life.

But these objections cannot directly help us to say that the basis of morality lies in religion, or, religion and morality are mutually dependent. The problem still remains.

What is it to be moral? What is that towards which a moral man endeavours? What makes us call a man good? When we enquire into the nature of these questions we feel that an analysis of a "right"

---

action or a search of the utility of an action in one's life cannot contain answer to them. They actually do not reach the centre of the problem. A right or dutiful action can be characterised as a moral or good action, but that action alone cannot sufficiently represent the whole concept of morality or goodness. Similarly, following the naturalists' point of view we can agree to say that a just action is a good action (since it satisfies certain basic needs of human life), but that action alone can, in no way, embody the concept of goodness; nor can an existentialist kind of subjective account of morality help us to understand the concept of morality. None of these views can touch the real significance of the above questions.

When we call some action or thing good, the goodness of the thing is not something which can be found in the thing in the ordinary way. In this respect goodness differs from beauty. Beautiful things contain beauty in a way in which good acts do not exactly contain good, because beauty is partly a matter of the senses. It is as if we can see beauty itself in a way in which we cannot see goodness itself. The goodness or "value of a thing

does not belong inside the world of truth functions, the world of science and factual propositions."<sup>3</sup> So when we discuss the nature of the 'good' or absolute goodness we speak of something rather more complicated and which cannot be experienced. With this realisation, I think, some people have tried to say "goodness is not in this world", which has unfortunately been misinterpreted and given rise to the famous controversy around the is-ought distinction. I agree with Iris Murdoch when she says - "It seems to me that the idea of the transcendent, in some form or other belongs to morality, but it is not easy to interpret."<sup>4</sup>

What is a good man like? We realise on reflection that in our study of human history we find certain people who are traditionally characterised as good (viz. Jesus, Socrates) but if we try to contemplate these men we find that the information about them is scanty and vague, and that their great moments apart, it is simplicity and directness of their diction which chiefly colours our conception of them as good. There may be contemporary cases of good people. If we consider the cases we may find them obscure or on a closer inspection full of frailty. Goodness is both rare and hard to picture.

---

<sup>3</sup>Iris Murdoch, Sovereignty of Good, p.58.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.,

Contemporary view of morality identifies the goodness of a person with the rightness of his action supported with sincerity. But the goodness of a personality is not to be judged from a particular right action. There lies a background which ties up the whole personality behind some particular actions. A right action can consistently be there with pride and dishonesty, similarly, one's action may appear to be wrong in spite of his being honest and humble. The kind of goodness which we have tried to search with Jesus and Socrates refers to a permanent strength of their nature which makes us call their actions moral, and characterise them as good. All moral virtues like rightness, sincerity, courage are found together in them. They no longer remain independent, they signify and substitute one another to constitute the whole personality which present us the notion of the good.

Let us talk about the notion of an object of attention. It is a normal psychological fact that man needs an object of attention to guide his life and activity. One cannot suddenly change his attitude and behaviour unless he changes his object of attention. the object of attention is the source and it supplies

---

energy for a man's activity. When a man fixes the object of attention in performing any single action he focuses his thought upon that object.

"Consider being in love. Consider too the attempt to check being in love and the need in such a case of another object to attend to. Where strong emotions of sexual love, or of hatred, resentment or jealousy are concerned, 'pure will' can usually achieve little. It is small use telling oneself 'stop being in love, stop feeling resentment, be just'. What is needed is reorientation which will provide an energy of a different kind, from a different source. ....Deliberately falling out of love is not a jump of the will, it is the acquiring of new objects of attention and thus of new energies as a result of refocusing."<sup>5</sup>

Do we need such an object of attention in case of a moral life? The men, whom I have taken as the examples of the good person, are necessarily religious. A religious believer, especially if his God is conceived of as a person, can focus upon something which is the source of energy in his life. For a man like Jesus God is the object of attention, it represents absolute goodness, it is perfection. Jesus concentrates upon God and directs himself through the path of the moral.

But these examples of good persons like Jesus and Socrates would not solve our difficulty. Our

---

<sup>5</sup>Iris Murdoch, op.cit., pp.55-56.

concern here is to find out a kind of morality or a moral person who unlike Jesus does not necessarily connect his morality with the concept of a supernatural being.

What would be the object of attention for such a person? It is the concept of goodness which would dictate his good activities. The concept of goodness, as we have already said, goes beyond particular moral concepts like courage, sincerity and so on.

The notion of goodness or morality in this sense, as I have already said, refers <sup>to</sup> the idea of transcendence. We have accepted the possibility of there being a moral agent who does not believe in religion. Such a man directs his conduct according to his notion of 'pure good'. But the question is - what is it for someone who is not a religious believer and not some sort of mystic, to apprehend some separate 'form' of goodness behind the multifarious cases of good behaviour? For him, given the contemporary views of morality, such a notion of goodness might be reduced to the much more intelligible notion of the interrelation of the virtues, plus a purely subjective sense of the certainty of his moral judgements.

---

How can I be morally better? This is one of the important problems of a moralist. The desire to become better and better is a continuous endeavour for the person concerned. This looking forward for better and better necessarily implies a direction which ultimately leads to a point where the moralist conceives of an absolute goodness, i.e. perfection.

The statements like "no man is perfect" and so on imply that a man's activity may be good, may be better, but never perfect. We always leave the possibility of saying "it could have been better"? A deep understanding of any field of human activity, music, painting, for instance, involves an increasing revelation of degrees of excellence. The idea of perfection, thus, guides one's life producing an increasing sense of the direction through constant effort.

Once we accept that a truly moral person must have the notion of an absolute goodness or perfection which is necessarily transcendent, and that he must be guided by this notion, we have, here, the necessary religious under-spinning for morality or the moral life. It is true that what is thus transcendent may not be

---

thought of as identical with God, but it is near enough to the idea of God for the concept of religion to be correctly applicable. This is why Gandhi can say, a self-confessed atheist, who is nonetheless a moral person, is ipso facto a deeply religious person. For a person, who is already religious (in the sense that he believes in the existence of a transcendent God as well as goodness), the ideas of morality and religion find their connection viz. the ontological agreement.

In this connection I would like to say that if my thesis depends on the validity of the ontological argument, it might not be acceptable. There are objections and criticisms against the ontological argument. Kant has vehemently criticised the argument by saying that having an idea of something in mind and there being the real existence of the thing are two completely different things. He says that one's idea of having thousand dollar in one's pocket does not mean that one really has thousand dollar in the pocket.

Of course, there would be arguments against Kant also. But I would not go into the details of it.

---

What I would like to say is that if considered carefully, the ontological proof is seen to be not exactly an argument in which the conclusion follows from given premises but rather a clear assertion of faith which could only confidently be made on the basis of a certain amount of experience. Existence of God or the perfect being cannot be established in terms of proof or evidence. Idea of perfection or God necessarily refers to a state of transcendence the nature of which cannot be explained or understood in terms of empirical concepts. So the empirical concepts like 'proof', 'evidence' cannot help us in any way to discuss about God. A man who can conceive the idea of perfection never bothers about how he can prove the existence of the Perfect Being, or whether he can do it or not. The faith itself has its own assertive force. - The desire for God is certain to receive a response. The conception of God contains the certainty of its own reality. For a believer God is an object of love which uniquely excludes doubt and relativism. - Such assertions, although they might receive very little sympathy from analytical philosophers, would build up the basis of life for a truly moral or a religious believer.

---

Throughout the previous discussions I have held that a truly moral life aims at goodness, and not freedom or a particular right action although right actions and freedom are natural products of attention to the Good. Of course, a right action is important in itself--an importance which is not difficult to understand. But it should always provide the starting point of reflection and not its conclusion. A right action along with a sense of obligation may be called virtue. And it is the action which gives us occasion for grace or for its opposite.

"However, the aim of morality cannot be simply action. Without some more positive conception of the soul as a substantial and continually developing mechanism of attachments, the purification and re-orientation of which must be the task of morals, 'freedom' is readily corrupted into self-assertion and 'right action' into some sort of ad hoc utilitarianism".<sup>6</sup>

"True morality consists", Gandhi says, "not in following the beaten track, but in finding out the true path for ourselves and in fearlessly following it."<sup>7</sup> So performing a particular right action and one's endeavour towards the goodness cannot be identified, nor can the existentialist view establish the inner sense of a moral life. In Miss Murdoch's word -

---

<sup>6</sup>Iris Murdoch, op.cit., p.71.

<sup>7</sup>N.K. Bose, Selections from Gandhi, p.254.

"Much existentialist thought relies upon such a 'thinking reed' reaction which is nothing more than a form of romantic self-assertion. It is not this which will lead a man on to unselfish behaviour in the concentration camp. There is, however, something in the serious attempt to look compassionately at human things which automatically suggests that 'there is more than this'. The 'there is more than this', if it is not to be corrupted by some sort of quasi-theological finality, must remain a very tiny spark of insight, something with, as it were, a metaphysical position but no metaphysical form. But it seems to me that the spark is real, and that great art is evidence of its reality."<sup>8</sup>

In this sense morality is somehow similar to mysticism.

"The background to morals is properly some sort of mysticism, if by this is meant a non-dogmatic essentially unformulated faith in the reality of the Good, occasionally connected with experience. The virtuous peasant knows, and I believe he will go on knowing, in spite of the removal or modification of the theological apparatus, although what he knows he might be at a loss to say."<sup>9</sup>

Considering this nature of morality Iris Murdoch says,

"Morality has always been connected with religion and religion with mysticism. The disappearance of the middle term leaves morality in a situation which is certainly more difficult but essentially the same."<sup>10</sup>

I would only like to add that the "disappearance of the middle term is a symptoms of our times and not a matter of philosophical discovery; for correct

---

<sup>8</sup> N.K. Bose, op.cit., p.73.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.74.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

philosophical reflecting ensures the existence of the middle term rather than show its disappearance.

The whole discussion about the relation between morality and religion might be used as a philosophical support to Gandhi's statements like - "True religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil." "As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God on his side."<sup>11</sup> For Gandhi morality has its true basis only in religion, there can, at the same time, be no religion without morality. Unlike Kant, Gandhi says that the relationship between religion and morality is not one of God's instrumentality with regard to morality. He says that it is misleading to think of God as either the source of morality or as being subject to the moral law; for this suggests that God and morality are distinct and separable. God on the other hand is morality, just as He is Truth. It is religion which determines the genuineness and significance of one's moral endeavour and one's religious insight is also, at the same time, his moral insight into the essential purity of his being.

---

<sup>11</sup>N.K.Bose, op.cit., p.255.

-----  
CHAPTER - I I  
-----

## SOME GANDHIAN CONCEPTS

(I)

Truth

"I am impatient to realise the presence of my Maker, who to me embodies Truth and in the early part of my career I discovered that if I was to realise truth, I must obey even at the cost of my life, the law of Love." "God as Truth has been for me a treasure beyond price; may he be so to every one of us."<sup>1</sup>

These statements imply that truth is the guiding principle of Gandhi's life and activity. He says that all that he does by way of speaking and writing, and his ventures in the political field are directed to attain that end. But what does he mean by this 'Truth'? Enquiries are made into the nature of the concept, but frequently what happens is that when one tries to analyze the concept of truth, one does nothing but add some more adjectives which do not make the concept clearer at all. Realising this nature of Truth Arun Sourie in one of his articles says that one should put aside the nebulous concepts

---

<sup>1</sup>N.K. Bose, Selections From Gandhi, p.8.

of Truth and God from Gandhi's writings and thoughts and should shift the focus to the aspect of 'human emancipation' as a goal in itself.

Acceptance of Gandhi's "human emancipation" independently of his conception of Truth and God, might be thought to refer to his theory of morality - his method of non-violence, love and so on.

But the problem is, "can we ever isolate Gandhi's concept of non-violence or love from the concept of Truth - God." Gandhi's view on non-violence, his political struggle, his ideas of social reform - all spring from and refer to the same principle i.e. love which he identifies with Truth and God. God or Truth has been both the foundation and source of energy to his life and activity. For Gandhi man is basically rooted in God, so the emancipation of human beings necessarily refers to a realisation of the nature of Truth and God.

The concept of Truth, as it has emerged from Gandhi, requires a careful study than is probably often given to it. Gandhi said:  
 "...Devotion to this Truth is the sole justification for our existence. All our activities should be

---

centred in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life."<sup>2</sup> Although it is not a definition, it gives us clear idea of how much importance Gandhi attached to truth and non-violence. He placed so much importance on them that they became, in his eyes, absolute essentials for humanity.

Truth as used by Gandhi is necessarily a moral - religious concept. He says "One thing took deep root in me - the conviction that morality is the basis of things and that Truth is the substance of all morality."<sup>3</sup> In order to understand Truth as a moral concept we have to look into the nature of morality and its relation to man, and see how the moral concepts acquire their meaning.

What is a good man like? How can I improve as a person? Can we make ourselves better? These are some of the questions with which problem of morality starts. The terms like 'improve', 'make ourselves better' express a necessary feature of a moral endeavour. Morality is a journey in which one attempts constantly to improve oneself from bad to good, good to better and so on - towards the ultimate idea of Perfection.

Gandhi's concept of Truth which he identifies with God conceptually refers to the same idea of

---

<sup>2</sup> Collected works of M.K. Gandhi, vol. XLIV, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> M.K. Gandhi, An Autobiography, p. 25.

perfection. And non-violence is the method through which he constantly and relentlessly strives for the realisation of the idea of Truth. Gandhi says "Often in my progress, I have had faint glimpse of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me."<sup>4</sup> My definition has been ever widening which implies that constant moral endeavour leads to a change, a better understanding of one's life, and a clearer insight into the nature of moral concepts, Gandhi says that when he reflects deeper and remains peaceful the meaning of Ahimsa and Truth become clearer. The ever new insight into these concepts result from the increasing purity of his heart. He grows daily more contented and feel greater peace of mind. The moral attempt goes on continuously and in the process a man gains finer insights into the nature of moral concepts e.g. good, truth. The more one progresses morally, the more one's moral comprehension of oneself and others becomes clearer.

In our everyday dealings and conversations we use several moral terms. Their meaning are not fully understood only by knowing how the word is used in the given impersonal network of our ordinary language.

---

<sup>4</sup>M.K. Gandhi, An Autobiography, p.xi.

In order to know in which way the meaning is different, and how the alterations take place we are to look into the whole continuous life of the individual. The insight into moral concepts is not gained once for all - the pursuit of such insight is a progressive achievement continuing through life that the moral agent faces. Thus we see that the direction of the alteration in the meaning of moral concepts is conditioned by and dependent on the history of the moral agent. Since the history of an individual is personal, and in no way transferable from one to the other, there is an inalienably private element in an individual's understanding of moral concepts. The more one moves forward the deeper and newer the understanding is, and the deeper it becomes it acquires more privacy, and so it depends more on the individual. The vocabulary which is dependent on our impersonal public life is blunt when applied to the moral agents.

The contemporary British moral philosophers do not recognize this nature of moral concepts. The highest virtue of British moral Philosophy is reason. It pictures man as a morally autonomous being who is steered along by a will that is always rational. In this picture the intentions or motive of the moral

---

agent are irrelevant because in most cases they are not public and the best way in which we can ascertain what a man's moral principles truly are, is to study what he does.

Arun Shourie also follows the empiricists' view of morality when he says that Gandhi's concepts of Truth and God are nebulous and confusing. These concepts relate to an idea of supernatural of which we do not have a very clear idea. He says that concepts of Truth and God remain as obscure after Gandhi's accounts of them as they were before him. So he (Arun Shourie) chooses to 'get past' these terms and to focus, instead, on the 'human emancipation' as the central aspect of Gandhi's thought and activity.

But the question is - what is Gandhi's subject matter of thought if the concepts of Truth and God are not there? What is Gandhi's daily activities, what is his political striving for if there is no reference to the concepts of Truth and God? Gandhi himself says, "Through the pursuit of Truth, we know the measure of purity in our motives. It increases our vigilance in regard to the smallest social duties and to our daily work."<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Collected works of M.K. Gandhi, Vol. XLV, p.21.

"Before all else, I am here to uphold the Truth as I see it, for I believe it is the keystone of life. On it everything else depends. It comes first, last and always. And in all things it is possible to put Truth first. For myself I have always tried to do it. In my political ambitions I eschew all lies and fraud. For the attainment of no object would subscribe to deceit."<sup>6</sup> The meaning and significance of Gandhi's deeds and activities necessarily refer to his inner life where reside his concepts of Truth and God. The idea of rejecting Gandhi's concepts of Truth and God while focusing upon his activities is misleading - so unacceptable.

Gandhi's idea of morality, Truth and God can get a philosophical support from Iris Murdoch who vehemently criticises the contemporary moral Philosophy of British thinkers. This kind of an attitude towards morality, according to Iris Murdoch has grown up because they pay very little importance to the inner life of man. She feels that this follows from Wittgenstein's arguments for attacking the notion of logical privacy. To quote from Iris Murdoch - "while Wittgenstein remains sphinx-like in the back ground others have hastened to draw further and more dubious

---

<sup>6</sup>Collected works of M.K.Gandhi, Vol.XLVIII, p.79.

moral and psychological conclusions. Wittgenstein has created a void into which Neo-Kantianism, Existentialism, Utilitarianism have made haste to enter."<sup>7</sup>

For Wittgenstein the existence of a private entity (cogitatio) is logically impossible; because (a) such an entity cannot form part of the structure of a public concept, (b) such an entity cannot be introspectively discovered. Of these two moments (a) has received more attention. If something is no use it does not matter much whether it is there or not. No sense can be attached to the idea of an 'inner object' if it is not connected with one's other outer activities. If we make a hypothesis about the independent existence of 'inner object' then it is as useless as a wheel which does not move with the movement of the machine. The 'inner life' is hazy, any way not 'part of the mechanism', gradually it leads to say that it is logically impossible to take up an idle contemplative attitude towards moral concepts. 'I am inwardly being or doing' is something private and personal, but is imposed upon me in the sense of being identifiable only via public concepts and objective observers.

---

<sup>7</sup>I. Murdoch, Sovereignty of Good, p.15.

The indication of such a development is found in Stuart Hampshire's book 'Thought and Action'. He says "the play of the mind, free from any expression in audible speech or visible action is a reality, as the play of shadows is a reality. But any description of it is derived from the description of its natural expression in speech and action." And again, 'The assent that takes place within the mind and in process of communication when no question has been actually asked and answered is a shadowy assent and a shadowy act.'<sup>8</sup> Thus, from the observation that private experiences and thoughts are logically parasitic on public meanings, Hampshire comes to the conclusion that private thoughts are somehow less real than public expressions. It is, in this way, that the attack on the logical privacy results in a devaluing of the contemplative aspects of human life. It leads to a disregard of the notion of 'the inner life'.

But such an extension of Wittgenstein's arguments against the possibility of the notion of logical privacy is very much misleading. We can say that the attack on the notion of the logical privacy is by no means an attack on the importance of what has often been called 'the inner life'.

---

<sup>8</sup> Murdoch, op.cit., p.5.

Wittgenstein does not rule out the possibility of an inner experience but what he wants to say is that even inner knowledge of the meaning of 'pain' would have to connect with the natural expression of pain in a certain way. Knowledge of the meaning would have to be exercised in use of the word, and the use of the word would have to fit in with the usual symptoms and circumstances of pain - with symptoms such as wincing and circumstances such as injury.

I do not think that Miss Murdoch would have any disagreement with Wittgenstein on this point. Both of them would agree on the point that even when thoughts do not lead to actions or verbal expressions directly or indirectly they may be extremely important. In this connection D.Z. Phillips says that a man may come to think of an acquaintance in a certain way after much heart-searching, reflection and consideration and rejection. Not all the thoughts that pass through one's mind issue directly in word and deed, but that does not mean that they are any less important for that reason. Against Hampshire he says,

"The analogy with the reality of shadows is extremely inappropriate. The shadow of a wall is dependent on there being a wall to throw the shadow, it is a one way dependence. But this is not the case with thoughts which do not issue directly in expression or action. They can contribute indirectly in that they may involve the

consideration and rejection of other actions or opinions which might have been given expression."<sup>9</sup>

Iris Murdoch considers the case of a mother (M), who feels hostility to her daughter-in-law (D). M finds D quite a good-hearted girl. But she does not like D's accent or the way D dresses. She feels that her son has married beneath him. It is assumed that M is a 'correct' person. She behaves beautifully with D throughout and never express her real opinion, M is an intelligent lady. She criticized herself and thinks that she herself is old-fashioned and conventional. She feels that, may be, she is jealous and snobbish. With these reflections and inward criticisms the time passes and gradually M's vision of D alters. By that time D is dead. So the change is not in D's behaviour but in M's mind. D is now discovered to be not vulgar but refreshingly simple, not undignified but spontaneous, not noisy but gay, not tiresomely juvenile but delightfully youthful, and so on. M's outward behaviour is beautiful from the beginning without any alteration. But there has been an alteration in M's mind. M has in the interim been active, she has been doing something. This change in M's mind is what we would call moral change. It is something which we approve of, something which is somehow worth doing in itself.

---

<sup>9</sup>D.Z. Phillips, Death and Immortality, pp.9-10.

The woman does not express the gradual changes brought about by contemplation (by way of doing or saying anything), but one can never deny the importance of the change. Wittgenstein would say that there were always a chance of the expression of the change coming into M's mind, and although the continuity of change is not expressed - what remains important is that such contemplation in M's mind could not have taken place if she would not have taken the outer world into consideration. The woman has undertaken a promise inwardly to change her attitude to her daughter-in-law. Undertaking something has a public back-ground. When one promises to change one's behaviour, one does it because the former behaviour had or would have a certain undesirable reaction in the public.

Morality is essentially connected with change and progress. Miss Murdoch says that words mislead us, because words remain same while concepts alter; e.g. the image of love or courage one has at the age of twenty is different from that what he has at the age of forty. We use the same words (courage or love) to mean two different concepts.

---

She

"there are two senses of 'knowing what a word means', one connected with ordinary language and the other very much less so. Knowledge of a value concept is something to be understood, as it were, in depth, and not in terms of switching on to some given impersonal network."<sup>10</sup>

"We do not simply through being rational and knowing ordinary language, 'know' the meaning of all necessary moral words. We may have to learn the meaning; and since we are human historical individuals the movement of understanding is onward into increasing privacy, in the direction of ideal limit, not back towards a genesis in the rulings of an impersonal public language."<sup>11</sup>

Gandhi's concept of Truth lies far beyond one's rational analysis through ordinary language. Its understanding needs a deep realisation in the heart. He says that he can see Truth everyday clearer and clearer. The process through which the soul has been passing is an effort of the heart. The intellect has been hooked to its service by prayer, meditation and constant watchfulness which are essentially matter of the heart and which have been the predominant factors that have contributed to the growing revelation of Truth. Every man, is, according to Gandhi capable of gaining a revelation into the nature of this Truth, man's spiritual foundation. Thus Gandhi's understanding of human nature, morality, Truth is necessarily related with the transcendental centre which is beyond all empirical analysis.

## (II)

Non-Violence

Gandhi says:

"I plead for non-violence and yet more non-violence, I do so not without knowledge but with sixty years' experience behind me."<sup>12</sup>

According to Gandhi non-violence is the law of our being.

What is the nature of non-violence which plays such a significant role in Gandhian literature? The concept of non-violence can be analysed and understood in contrast to the concept of violence. Let us analyse the concept of violence and see how this concept differs from that of non-violence.

We often characterize an action as violent while another as not. Social scientists and political theorists talk a great deal about violence. This assumes that we have a well-defined concept of violence and a straight forward demarcation between violence and non-violence can be made. But it is not easy to spell out the specific criterion of determining an act of violence. There are many significant conceptual questions that arise in connection with the notion of

---

<sup>12</sup>Harijan, 2 - 2 - 26, 20.

violence which need serious consideration e.g.  
What is violence? What are the factors implied  
when we describe any action or an agent as violent?  
What makes the distinction between violence and  
non-violence? Is there any unique criterion by  
which we can define violence?

The word 'violence' is used in several  
contexts. Generally we use this term to characterize  
behaviour. We call different varieties of behaviour  
violent though they do not seem to have any similarity.  
We call an act of physical aggression (like murder  
etc.) with an intention to harm or destroy the  
victim violent. There are many other activities  
which do not take the form of physical assault, e.g.  
We can be violent to one's dignity by disobeying and  
insulting him.

Sometimes the word violence is used in relation  
to physical force. But an illustration will show  
that we can do a violent act with much less physical  
force than what we need to do a non-violent act e.g.  
we can think of a condition when one is going to  
commit suicide. somebody else may need a strong  
physical force to stop the man, whereas a man with  
a little physical attempt can push another from the  
railway platform down in front of a running train.

---

The purpose of an action is sometimes taken into consideration to judge if the action is violent or not. The purpose of a violent action is to damage, to harm or to injure. But there may be some violent actions which may not have any such purpose in view. Sometimes violence is practised as a corrective measure in the society. For example, a teacher or a guardian may sometimes behave like a violent man in the sense that he beats his students or youngers, but his purpose is not to injure or damage them, but to guide them in a better way. Some people say that the spring of a non-violent action should be compassion. If this statement is correct the above examples may seem to be cases of non-violence.

Then it may be said that ill-will and hatred may be taken as the preconditions of violent behaviour. A question may be asked as to what about a hired criminal. This man may not have any ill will against his victim. Rather he may have compassion and sympathy for the man. He does it only because he is paid for it. Then is not this action violent?

So we find it very difficult to get a specific criterion by which we can distinguish a violent

---

action from a non-violent one.

Dr. R.S. Mishra<sup>13</sup> by way of trying to find such a criterion said that an action of violence is a violating act which is potentially injurious, hurtful, or destructive. In order to talk on violation Dr. Mishra brings the notion of authority. By authority he means some individual or organization which regulates human behaviour in different spheres of human interactions. Acceptance of the authority means to participate in a rule-governed activity. The term violation becomes meaningful only when there are rules. A rule implies that it may be obeyed or violated. Violence, according to the writer is basically attributed to human actions. Human actions are rule-governed. So violence is a violating act which is directly or indirectly injurious, harmful.

Dr. Mishra's paper throws light on the notion of violence. It points out how different it is to use a term and to talk about the same in way of spelling out the condition of its proper and improper use. But there are some points in his paper which are not very clear and seem confusing.

---

<sup>13</sup>Dr. R.S. Mishra, "On Violence,"

In discussing the conditions of a violent action Dr. Mishra says that our emotive responses to violence are un-uniform and often contradictory. In certain violent contexts we are thrilled, sometimes we dread violence and some other times we welcome it. For example he speaks of sports like bull fighting or boxing. For some people it is disgusting whereas for others it may be a matter of excitement.

But are these illustrations cases of violence? It seems to me that this illustration and the conclusion reached in the paper are contradictory to each other. He says that violence involves two factors: (1) a violating act, and (2) directly or indirectly injurious and destructive. The illustrations of bull fighting or boxing are not violating acts. Because the writer himself calls them sports. Any sport or game is always constituted and regulated by some rules. So long as they can be recognized as games they do not violate any rule. So if violence implies violation, the games of bull fighting or boxing cannot be a violent actions; or if they are violent the criterion of violence does not lie in violation of rules.

---

Again he says all actions which seem to have apparent similarity are not violent. For example, a criminal's killing a man is violent, while a police man's shooting a man, is not violent. It is not clear to me how far this illustration is acceptable. When a police kills a man to maintain the peace of the country; I think it can be said that the Government is taking the violent method, and we can never say that the Government is non-violent in doing so.

Dr. Mishra says that in areas of characteristically human activity, the decision as to what is right and what is wrong in any given case is taken by appeal to established practices and norms. The sphere of authority extends to all those areas of human conduct where there are established way of doing things. "... .. the notion of an "established" way of doing things is essential to the notion of authority as such."<sup>14</sup> A violent act, according to Dr. Mishra is a violation of the rules of such a kind of authority.

But in determining the violent or non-violent feature of an action the notion of such a kind of authority is not applicable. By this what I mean

---

<sup>14</sup>R.S. Mishra, "Op.cit.,"

to say is that I find it difficult to say that a violent act violates some established socio-cultural rules. In the above discussion it has been pointed out that bull fighting or boxing, as games, do not violate any established rule of the game, yet it can be called a violent game. Similarly a police man's shooting a man for the maintenance of the rules and regulations in the country, though it does not violate the rule of the so called authority, is said to be a violent way of ruling a country. What an act of violence violates is a principle which may be universalizable to man without any reference to any particular society or culture. The possibility of universal applicability of the principle makes it possible for Gandhi to call it "the law of our being". For him man's existence and development necessarily implies an inherent non-violent nature in them.

As soon as this is said it implies that non-violence is the principle of our existence and violence is the violation of this principle. People like Hobbes would deny this. According to Hobbes man is selfish, aggressive and quarrelsome by nature. Non-violence is not the natural law of human existence. If it is ever possible to find non-violence in one's behaviour it is possible by the strict rules and

command of the Hobbesian King. If Hobbes' view is acceptable the act of non-violence is obedience to some established rules while the act of violence is violation of them.

I would not enter into the detail controversy at this point. Only this much I would say that the following arguments go against the Hobbesian theory of human nature.

According to Dr. R.S. Mishra the prediction of violent or non-violent (especially in the normative sense) is applicable only to the actions of human beings. But there are cases in which we significantly use the word 'violent' for animals also. For example, we say, 'the dog became so violent that the police man had to shoot him'. In what sense do we use the word 'violent' here? Is not the normative sense of violence important here? The dog violates the principle of being a dog, because a dog normally is not so violent. And its being violent is injurious and harmful to the society, so he is killed.

Of course, if the violation of any rule necessarily implies a willful act with an intention to harm, then this condition would be lacking in

---

case of the dog. But the same may be the case with a human being also. A man due to some reason may become completely violent, so that the violation of the principle of his being or existence, or doing harm to his fellow beings does not involve any conscious intention. And yet we call the man violent.

To act violently, according to Dr. Mishra, is to be deviated from the normal. At first the question arises as to what is normal. There are controversial views on this matter.

Though we are not very clear of the notion of 'normal', and so cannot spell out the criterion of its determination, yet given the form of life we live we can roughly understand what is normal and what is a deviation from it.

If a man is violent in his behaviour we can always ask the question 'why' and expect to find out a genuine reason. But such a question generally does not arise in case of a non-violent behaviour. This implies that normally we are supposed to be non-violent and we are violent only when there are some reasons.

The two comments on the nature of violence viz.

---

(1) an act of violence is a violation of an established socio-cultural rule, and (2) an act of violence is a deviation from the normal, I think, cannot go together. The nature of a rule is such that it can be violated. Human beings are liable to act rightly or wrongly implies that rules are violable. We can violate a socio-cultural rule which was established before and make a new rule instead of that, and acting according to that new rule becomes normal. So if violence is the violation of an established socio-cultural rule then an act of violence cannot be a deviation from the normal, or if it is a deviation from the normal, the violation of an established socio-cultural rule cannot help us in determining an act of violence.

I would agree with Dr R.S. Mishra to say that violence is a deviation from the normal, which automatically implies that non-violence is the normal feature of human existence. We have already pointed out that a violent act always pre-supposes some reasons besides which there was no chance of his being violent.

From this I would step forward to discuss Gandhian concept of non-violence. For Gandhi non-violence is not only the absence of violence. The

---

true connotation of non-violence necessarily comprise of love, compassion, humility and so on. How can a man be non-violent if he cannot love his fellow beings? The concept of 'human being', for Gandhi, is much more than merely his brute nature. Man has a inner core which is necessarily transcendental. In that transcendental centre lies the unifying force, i.e. love, which expresses itself through fellow feeling and compassion in the life of a man.

We might ask the question as to why should we be non-violent while a violent means is quite helpful to us to attain success in our life?

A naturalistic kind of answer can be given to this. One can say that one's being non-violent presumes a non-violent behaviour from others. And if all becomes non-violent our life in this world becomes much easier and happier. Everyone can perform his or her activities in his own way and so, can lead his life in the best possible way which would result in a happy society - a prosperous world.

But I do not think that the naturalistic kind of treatment of the concept of non-violence would take us very far. We all understand the

---

theoretical validity of the argument but does it really operate in our life? On the basis of naturalistic argument can we ever assure that at one time all men can become non-violent? Most politicians do talk about non-violence, they have founded a committee which would try to establish peace and harmony in the mutual relations of the countries. Like the Naturalists they support their view by saying that a non-violent and peaceful relation among the countries would help to build up an economically prosperous world. Poverty would disappear, and man would lead a happy, harmonious and free life.

But is it really the case? Politicians are shouting for peace and non-violence, but have they been able to establish them? Through various economic and political measures and policies we have been able to control the economic crisis to a certain extent, and we look forward to further betterment. But can we ever claim that this economic development has added to our peace and happiness? Not in the least, we can rather say it has resulted in the opposite. Questions arise - why a richer country or a rich man, who does not have to worry

---

for his daily necessities, is unhappy? Why are we always frightened with the thought of war and violence? Why have suspicion and doubt acquired the most important place in human relation?

The point is neither we, nor our politicians are clear about the nature and basis of the concept of non-violence. We want to use the 'Gandhian weapons' without understanding their meaning and significance as meant by Gandhi. The Naturalists talk of non-violence as a useful measure of controlling society, but they do not look for the basis which is beyond all its usefulness.

Universal prosperity cannot assure us of a non-violent and peaceful life. There is no necessary relation between prosperity and peace. The foundation of peace and non-violence lies somewhere else. The basis of non-violence, peace and happiness lie in the nature of man, his sense of morality, and spirituality. Gandhi, through his whole life longed for an inward moral-religious experience. Much in his life and thought remains unexplained, so misunderstood, if we forget his insistence that religion and politics were bound inextricably in the common

---

search for Truth. "Truth exists, it alone exists. It is the only God and there is but one way of realising it; there is but one means and that is ahimsa. I will never give it up. May the God that is truth, in whose name I have taken this pledge, give me the strength to keep it."<sup>15</sup> According to Gandhi man's inner search leads him necessarily to realise that in his transcendental core he shares a common feature with all his fellow beings. Realisation of this is the source of non-violence.

In most cases we and our politician talk of non-violence in order to avoid war and crisis. Man does not have the courage and strength to face a war. War results in crises and death, so he takes refuge in non-violence. A cowardly person cannot challenge his rival, so he considers it better to remain non-violent. To criticise this point I would agree with Gandhi when he says that non-violence is the weapon of the brave. It needs a tremendous strength and courage to make a journey into one's own nature which is the source of non-violence. Gandhi writes that the sages who discovered the never failing law of non-violence were themselves great warriors, when they discovered the ignoble

---

<sup>15</sup>M K Gandhi, Non-Violence, p.33.

nature of armed strength and realised the true nature of man, they discerned the law of non-violence. To quote from Gandhi:

"I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advice violence. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment."<sup>16</sup>

Working under the essentially human law of non-violence, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul.

All the concepts of morality and spirituality are necessarily bound up together in the sense that each of them is necessarily needed to understand the meaning and significance of any other. We can understand the concept of non-violence only with reference to forgiveness, love, justice and so on. Non-violence can never go along with cowardice which gives rise to fear and hatred. A cowardly person who is always scared of his neighbour cannot in any way love him. It is his courage, or to use Gandhi's term, it is his fearlessness which makes it possible for him to love, or to be non-violent to his fellow beings.

---

<sup>16</sup> M.K.Gandhi, op.cit., p.145.

"As we reflect deeper and remain peaceful, the meaning of ahimsa and truth becomes clearer. I even realise the supreme utility of these two. I believe we realise God in the degree to which we practise them. I am getting more convinced than ever in my view that seeing God except through truth and ahimsa is an impossibility."<sup>17</sup>

### (III)

#### Humility

Humility literally (acc to O.E.D.) means humbleness. It is frequently considered to be a desirable thing in human behaviour. Why is humility considered desirable and pride, which may be thought to be the opposite of humility not considered desirable? An attempt to answer this question makes it necessary for me first to discuss the general problem of whether humility is a virtue at all.

There are various theories which discuss virtue and differentiate it from vice. Take the naturalistic explanation of what a virtue is. Now one reason why prudence, temperance, courage and justice are considered cardinal virtues is that they are thought to benefit a man who has them. These

---

<sup>17</sup>

Collected works of M.K. Gandhi, vol.LV,p.20.

qualities help a man to act well and to live in a better way as a human being. Of course in case of justice it might be said that the just man himself is generally found to be in a disadvantageous position compared to others who might be viewed as the beneficiaries of this just action. It is even said by some that injustice is more profitable than justice to a man of strength and wit. If so, can justice be a virtue at all?

Naturalists would not agree with the view that so long as a man is strong and witty he does not need to be just in his dealings with his fellow-men. In this connection, Philippa Foot says,

"those who think that they can get on perfectly well without being just should be asked to say exactly how such a man is supposed to live. We know that he is to practise injustice whenever the unjust act would bring him advantage; but what is he to say? Does he admit that he does not recognise the rights of other people or does he pretend? In the first case even those who combine with him will know that on a change of fortune, or a shift of affection, he may turn to plunder them, and he must be as wary of their treachery as they are of his. Presumably the happy unjust man is supposed, as in Book II of the Republic, to be a very cunning liar and actor combining complete injustice with the appearance of justice: He is prepared to treat others ruthlessly but pretends that nothing is further from his mind. Philosophers often speak as if a man could thus hide himself even from those around him, but the supposition is doubtful."<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Philippa Foot, "Moral Beliefs"

To keep on pretending he has to hide his true attitude from the people around him. He must be very much aware and careful all the time, in case the least spontaneity betrays him. A just man, on the other hand would naturally like to remain just even if his justice might bring disaster on him. He is found prepared under certain circumstances even to face death rather than to act unjustly. In performing a just action the just man does not need the presence or awareness of the other. He acts justly, naturally and spontaneously. The naturalists would claim that the need for one's being just in one's dealings with others depends on the fact that they are human beings and not inanimate objects or animals. Hence they reject the view that justice is not a virtue because injustice is more profitable than justice. For Naturalists justice is as much a virtue as prudence, temperance, and courage are.

Now humility does not appear to be necessary in the way the other virtues are necessary for the ultimate ends of our life.<sup>19</sup> Rather in some cases

---

<sup>19</sup>An ultimate end is that the reason of the need of which is necessarily connected with what a man wants. Ask a man why he uses exercise; he will answer, because he desires to keep his health. If you then enquire why he desires health, he will readily reply, because sickness is painful. If you push your enquiries further and desire a reason why he hates pain, it is impossible he can ever give any. This is an ultimate end, and is never referred to any other object. (Enquiries, Appendix I, v) 7

it may seem to be in conflict with self-confidence. A man with confidence can lead a better life and help others to live in a better way. Confidence in this sense may be considered a virtue, while humility does not by this kind of reasoning appear to be at all desirable.

I will try to show in what sense even from the naturalist standpoint humility is desirable and therefore a virtue. Humility may be said to be the opposite of pride or over-confidence which sometimes stands as a barrier to our success. If a man is proud he thinks too much of himself and underestimates others. Pride sometimes brings disaster to the proud man. For instance, a man who is arrogant about his courage might underestimate a risk, and run into some disaster; the man possesses the virtue of courage, his courage here is the cause of harm to him, because possessing it he fell into the state of pride. While courage is a virtue and having courage is being virtuous, being proud of the virtue leads to disastrous consequences. Again if a man is proud of his wisdom, he does not think that he has anything to learn from others. He does not find it important to consider others' view points and opinions.

---

His knowledge does not increase, it remains stagnant and partial.

Humility is neither over-confidence nor a lack of self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence makes everything shaky. It becomes difficult to do anything with lack of confidence. We need confidence, resoluteness and determination to win any success in our life.

Humility is a state which I would like to describe as the happy mean between lack of self-confidence and pride. While both over-confidence and lack of confidence as extremes are undesirable to us humility may be said to be a desirable characteristic of human nature.

As a reply to the question of whether humility is a virtue or not we can say that since the lack of humility, i.e., pride stands as a barrier to one's progress and development and in some case might bring disaster to man therefore humility is necessary in our life and in this sense humility may be considered a virtue even by a naturalist.

Gandhi considers humility a virtue independently of naturalistic support to it. His ground for

---

calling humility a virtue would again be an appeal to human nature. Man's nature cannot be understood except by reference to the idea of morality and, therefore for Gandhi, of religion. Humility for Gandhi, is the basis of one's moral and religious endeavour. A man may have all the so-called cardinal virtues like, prudence, temperance, courage, justice and so on, but none of them would be considered virtue if the sense of humility does not guide them. A truly just man can never be proud of his sense of justice. And if he is proud about his being just, there would be doubt about his being just at all.

Humility as a moral-religious concept helps and guides the agent in his journey towards the ultimate. Gandhi's concept of religion and morality have their basis in the inner core of man. One's religion and morality express themselves through one's love and respect to one's fellow beings. Humility about one's ownself only can direct one's attention towards others. A man can truly love another only when he can transcend his own ego; and one can transcend one's ego only when one can cultivate humility and unselfishness.

"I should like you to cultivate the humility which would benefit a dedicated seeker after truth. I know that it cannot be cultivated consciously. But it lies behind every genuine discovery."<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Collected Works of M.K Gandhi, vol. XLIX, pp 301-302.

Here it may be pointed out that humility is given a much more important place in some religions like Christianity, Jainism and Vaishnavism etc., perhaps in others. A religious man is humble because he does not find the meaning of his achievements as his alone in complete isolation from any reference to God or a Supreme Reality. Here let me quote Gandhi, "I have not the slightest doubt that prayer is an unfailing means of cleaning the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility."<sup>21</sup>

Though humility is important in our life, yet one can never seriously claim to possess this quality. As soon as one claims that one is humble, one is not humble any more, rather one is proud. This paradox arises only with the first person pronouns but not with the second or third person pronouns. A truly humble man can never say, "I am humble, and you know humility is a good quality, so I want you to follow me."<sup>22</sup> In fact, a humble man cannot even be aware of his humbleness because as soon as he is self-conscious about his humbleness, he is no more humble.

Following the same kind of argument I would

---

<sup>21</sup> M.K. Gandhi, The Story of My Experiments with Truth, p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> similar is the case with morality also. A truly moral man does not claim that he is moral.

like to say that humility cannot be a matter of vow or what may be called an explicit act of intention (somewhat of the nature of Austin's "performative acts"). If to be humble is necessarily to perform an act of intention of the form - "let me perform this self-effacing act!" then one could never succeed in being humble, one would then necessarily be aware that one was performing an act of humility and this is incompatible with true humility. Gandhi is aware of this paradox when he expresses the following statement in his autobiography, "I feared humility would cease to be humility the moment it became a matter of vow."<sup>23</sup>

How can a man be humble while remaining unaware of his humility at the same time? As already pointed out humility by itself cannot be an observance or a vow to be observed. The true connotation of humility, for Gandhi, is self-effacement and self-effacement by itself is not an observance. Observances are means of achieving a state while self-effacement is the state itself. We undertake to perform various kinds of observances, namely, prayer, worship, fasting etc.. They are not meant for achieving worldly pleasure, rather sometimes they prevent us from getting

---

<sup>23</sup> M.K. Gandhi, op.cit., p.298.

pleasure from the affairs of the world. These observances, for a religious man, do not have any meaning or significance unless they refer to or lead to a state which is beyond this-worldly things. That particular state Gandhi calls the state of self-effacement or true humility.

Humility is identified with selflessness and it embodies the whole of our life, unlike a particular observance humility is a way of life in the sense that it guides and is present in all the works and performances, attitudes and beliefs of a humble man. Even a single action which we do for our fellow beings if it is done without humility it does not have its true significance and strength, and so cannot attain its aim. "If the acts of an aspirant after moksha or a servant have no humility or selflessness about them, there is no longing for moksha or service. Service without humility is selfishness and egotism."<sup>24</sup>

#### (IV)

#### Fearlessness.

Fearlessness literally means a state or quality of being without fear. Fear is an undesirable

---

<sup>24</sup> M.K.Gandhi, op.cit.,

state of mind in which a person experiences a feeling with the anticipation or expectation of evil or pain. According to the traditional thinkers of India fear is a normal and natural characteristic of human nature. To quote from the Manava Upapurana:

"Āhāra nidra Bhaya mithunanca  
Sāmānyametaḍ Paṣubhiḥ narānām".

There are certain characteristics which are common to both man and animal. Some of these are; desire for food, feeling of fear and desire for sexual satisfaction. Man has a body, body has certain needs. These above characteristics are physiological necessities of human existence. Krishnamurti says that for most men fear is a constant companion; whether one is aware of it or not, it is there hidden in some dark recess of one's mind. When we talk of the state of fearlessness we ask for a stage when the mind is completely and totally free of the burden. In the words of M.K. Gandhi: "fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear, fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one's nearest and dearest, of losing reputation, giving offence, and so on."<sup>25</sup>

Fear is inevitably related to attachment. Thought of losing that to which one is attached brings

---

<sup>25</sup> N.K. Bose, Selections From Gandhi, p.15.

about fear. It is through attachment that one's true being or sad! identified with one's mind and body. Man feels said when he is bodily sick, getting old, losing friends and relatives and so on. Man wants to avoid this feeling of sadness. But he realises that feelings of sadness is closely connected with the feeling of attachment. If he wants to get rid of sadness he has to go beyond all attachments which he cannot do. He is always frightened by the thought that any moment he is going to lose things to which he is attached and that this will cause his suffering and sorrow.

In this connection it should also be mentioned that the presence of the objects to which we are attached gives us a feeling of pleasure. A young and healthy man is supposed to be a pleasant man. A man enjoys a kind of pleasure when he acquires name, reputation, power, money and so on. One feels frustrated if tomorrows pleasure is denied - one feels unfulfilled, angry, anxious and all psychological miseries arise. Man generally directly or indirectly always aims to attain pleasure, and pleasure comes from the achievement of the objects of attachment, man cannot help but feel attached to certain objects,

---

But the fact is that the objects of attachment, as we have already mentioned, are subject to transition - destruction. A man's body is subject to sickness, old-age and death. Fame and reputation come sometimes, again they disappear. Money also flows from one to another from time to time - so is our pleasure; it comes with the presence of these things and disappears with the loss of them. The thought of the loss of pleasure gives rise to fear. So pleasure is necessarily related to fear, "Fear and pleasure are the two sides of a coin; you cannot be free of one without being free of the other also."<sup>26</sup> Since man by nature seeks pleasure he cannot be without fear - fear is more or less a constant companion to man.

The question would arise: what is it to attain the state of fearlessness? How is it possible?

Fearlessness may be said to refer to a state of being in which a man goes beyond all attachments and pleasures. Our hankerings for pleasure are entirely stopped and the mind is completely free from the feeling of attachment. Krishnamurti would call such a state of being - 'a life in which there is no fragmentation;'<sup>27</sup> since for him, problems of life

---

<sup>26</sup> Krishnamurti, The Impossible Question, p.54.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.72.

start when life is seen fragmentarily. Gandhi says that the state of perfect fearlessness can be attained only by him who has realised the supreme; it implies freedom from delusion. For him, only a seeker after Truth can conquer over all fear. Attachment to a thing, the hankering for worldly pleasures divert our attention from our inner reality. We identify ourselves with the outer things of the world which drives us far away from our real being.

The question might be asked; why does, then, men feel attached to things when he knows that attachment deludes him? Why does he run after pleasure while he knows that pleasure is transitory?

In reply to these questions I would just like to say that the realisation of the existence of one's true being demands a sincere and constant effort on the part of man. The outer things attract our attention more and keep our mind busy with them. Again, the realisation of the inner sometimes brings a feeling of enormous loneliness, man needs tremendous strength and courage to sustain the feeling. Naturally he wants to avoid it and so attaches himself with other things of the world.

The state of fearlessness necessarily refers to a state beyond all worldly limitations. But how

do I, see something totally beyond all conditioning and limiting screens of thought memory and so on? How is the mind which is so caught up in the habit of fragmentary outlook and activity to see the whole? To quote from Krishnamurti: "We see things fragmentarily, don't we? Business, family, community individuals, my opinion and your opinion, my God and your God - we see everything in fragments."<sup>28</sup> Our mind is crowded with the known, which is the product of thought. The mind is filled with past knowledge and past experience. It is knowledge that divides - 'I don't know', and 'you shall know'. We divide our past from the present and future. Knowledge differentiates known from unknown, my knowledge from your knowledge. A lot of our attention is taken away by living in the past and dreaming of the future.

The consciousness of 'I' and 'mind' is at the root of one's being limited and having fragmentary experiences. The 'I' relates itself with a mind and body which are limited and conditioned - and this leads to fear. In the state of fearlessness one has to go beyond the consciousness of 'I'ness. - so there is not you - I distinction, no problem of my having something and losing it.

---

<sup>28</sup> Krishnamurti, op.cit., p.129.

A fearless life is that which always lives in the present - To live always in the present implies that there must be no time, no past, no future, no success, no ambition. Such a state of mind demands a tremendous inward awareness which is beyond all thought and activity.

In this connection it should be mentioned clearly that in the state of perfect fearlessness though one goes beyond the limitations of time, thought, sorrow-happiness, me-thou, yet the soul can experience them whenever necessary. They all would be there, it is only that the attitude towards them would be different; one must not attach one's being to them.

"Fear has no place in our hearts, when we have shaken off attachment for wealth, for family and for the body."<sup>29</sup> 'Enjoy the things of the earth by renouncing them' - is the sovereign precept. Wealth, family and the body will be there just the same, we have only to change our attitude towards them. "Nothing whatever in this world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. Why then should we entertain any fear? - when we thus cease to be masters and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will

---

<sup>29</sup>Krishnamurti, op.cit., p.15.

roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace and see satyanarayana, the God of Truth, face to face".<sup>30</sup>

The concept of fearlessness must not be confused with the concept of courage. 'Courage' is a moral virtue in the sense that a courageous man leads a happier life and helps others to lead a better life also. Cowardice leads to mischief and evil. The life of a coward is full of miseries and difficulties. Courage, on the other hand, according to Naturalists, is, directly or indirectly, one of the basic necessities of human existence.

Similarly to cowardice, a sense of fear also generates all kinds of mischievous activity. A man who is always afraid of something or other, cannot lead a normal life. One has to overcome fear to certain extent in order to live as a human being. So being fearless and having confidence in oneself or having courage might be confused to refer the same state of mind.

But courage and fearless-ness are two completely different states of mind relating to different stages in one's moral and religious endeavour.

---

<sup>30</sup>Krishnamurti, op.cit.: p.15.

Gandhi says that in the highest forms of courage, fear still persists as an element; there is at least the consciousness, and, therefore, the anticipation of danger. Many of the bravest soldiers have gone with trembling limbs and pulpitating heart through their earlier engagements, and many a moral or religious act of devotion or of self-sacrifice has been carried out in fear and trembling, yet it is all the more highly valued on that account. Fearlessness, on the other hand, is insensibility to danger, where the natural or normal individual would be keenly conscious of it. Courage as a moral virtue is not directly related to religion, while fearlessness as a necessary quality of a moral being is inseparably connected to religion. True connotation of fearlessness is understood and realised in religious life. In religion which gives the sense of an Infinite power behind the finite individual, and of infinite goodness, tends to itself to remove all fear, to produce fearlessness. A perfectly fearless person leads a life of perfect security and trust. All stain, all effort, doubt, hesitation, worry, mental and to some extent, even physical fatigue fall away.

(v)

#### Means and Ends

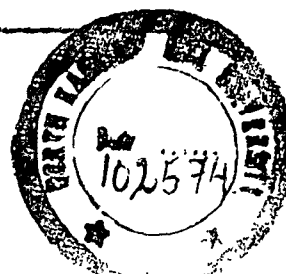
A 'means' literally means a method or process through and by which we can attain certain ends. The

---

relation between a means and an end is in a sense necessary because only a properly worked-out means can attain the desired end.

As to the identity of means and ends it is said that means are separately identifiable from their ends. And since they are separately identifiable, the activities which are supposed to be the 'means' might represent a very different character from the supposed aim. For example, a violent revolution is thought to be the means of attaining progress and prosperity of the country. Progress or prosperity is generally thought to be closely related to human happiness. As the example goes, it is said that the means is a violent revolution. Violence is considered to be a means of happiness. There seems to be a natural opposition between the idea of violence and that of morality. The true understanding of the idea of happiness as I have tried to show, depends on an understanding of the connotation of morality and religion. The means and end, here, as it appears to us, are in nature diametrically opposed to each other.

Most modern Political Thought, both in theory and practice, assumes this essential "logical" divergence between means and end,



Human actions are usually defined and understood in terms of this means ends framework. A certain action of a man is accepted to be a means to certain ends. Sociology and other "modern" sciences usually define human action in terms of achievement of certain given and specific ends by a proper adjustment of means to certain ends.

The mean-end dichotomy is essential for utilitarian thought. For utilitarians maximum pleasure for maximum number of people is or ought to be the end of our activity. They say that everyone should perform that act or follow that moral rule which will bring about the greatest good (happiness) for everyone concerned.

In the discussion on the objective of moral judgement, some thinkers hold that the moral worth of an action is determined by the end it aims to achieve. Again, some others say that the moral worth of an action should be determined by the means one adopts without any consideration of the end. Some say that both means and ends are necessary to be considered to understand the moral worth of an action.

Gandhi's thought and activities might also be sought to be understood in terms of the means-ends

---

framework. It is said that Gandhi's method of non-violence is the means to attain the end of Truth. Given the above analysis of means-ends identity and relationship it can be said that non-violence as a means is identifiable independently of the end, and the act of non-violence can acquire its worth without reference to the end.

But according to Gandhi non-violence and truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. He says;

"they are like the two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc, who can say, which is obverse and which the reverse? Nevertheless, ahimsa is the means; Truth is the end, means, to be means must always be within our reach, and so ahimsa is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When once we have grasped this point, final victory is beyond question."<sup>32</sup>

For Gandhi, as I have already said man's nature basically comprise of a moral religious core and one's life is supposed to be an attempt to realise this nature of his being. Truth as the ultimate end of a man's live is a moral-religious concept and it is only non-violence which shows us the path to Truth. Moral-religious life is an integrated life in the sense that each thought and activity of a person is directed

---

<sup>31</sup> N.K. Bose, Selections From Gandhi, p.13.

to and guided by the single aim, that is Truth. Moral-religious virtues build up a unique life in the sense that they all are tied up with a single thread which gives integrity to a moral life. Non-violence, love, fellow-feeling are inseparably tied up together in the way that the absence of one has to follow necessarily by the absence of others. It is only and necessarily non-violence and not violence which gives fellow-feeling and love which ultimately leads us to the attainment of Truth of God.

Some people have tried to analyse the concept of non-violence or love independently of the concept of Truth and God. In this connection I would only like to say that by giving such an analysis of Gandhi's thought we would be unfair to Gandhi. Isolation of one idea from another and identification of each of them separately would break the integrity and the unique spirit of his life and philosophy.

Mean - EW: Monthly  
near what values  
OK  
EW: Monthly  
near what values  
OK  
EW: Monthly  
near what values  
OK

-----  
CHAPTER - IV  
-----

## MODERN CIVILISATION

Man's primary endeavour, today, seems to be to move towards an achievement of economic growth and material success. By intelligent intervention through successive attempts man has greatly accelerated and greatly expanded the range of his possibilities. With the help of scientific knowledge and technological development we have been increasing the growth of production in both the fields of industry and agriculture and gradually trying to meet the scarcity of material goods. The constant endeavour after material achievement has influenced our outlook so much that we think if only there were more and more wealth everything else would fall into place. The ends of scientific and technological progress and ever-increasing production-cum-consumption have acquired a kind of absolute value in our life. The ideals of modern man and his principles of action are the outcome of a rationalism which denounces spirituality. The contemporary civilisation which is based on this rationalism rejects morality and religion. ".....People living in it make bodily welfare the object of life."<sup>1</sup> Men measure their progress by their material

---

<sup>1</sup>M.K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p.35.

possessions. "This civilisation takes note neither of morality nor of religion. Its votaries calmly state that their business is not to teach religion. Some even consider it a superstitious growth."<sup>2</sup>

Two opposite philosophies of man are associated with this civilisation. They may be said to be the pre-suppositions of the development of such a civilisation. There is (a) the one deriving primarily from Kant, according to which, man, in his true being, is "autonomous"; and (b) the other inspired by the ideas of the essential monistic completeness of "modern science". ---According to which man is logically reducible to an object of nature. The idea of "autonomy" of man, according to the latter, must, therefore be an illusory idea.

Diametrically opposed as these two philosophies of man seem to be, they share a common failure, namely, the failure to account for the traditional moral insights of man. This failure has resulted in the development of the so called "modern civilisation."

(A) Let us first consider the philosophy which is said to be derived from Kant. The fundamental questions

---

<sup>2</sup>M.K.Gandhi, op.cit., p.37.

related with the notion of morality are the criteria of distinguishing (i) between moral and immoral on the one hand and (ii) the sphere of morality from that of the non-moral on the other. For Kant, man as a rational being is an end-in-himself, hence the questions relating to the moral sphere of his life makes no appeal to anything other than man himself. G.E. Moore holds a similar view when he says that man, by nature, is gifted with a moral intuition. Moral decisions and one's distinction between moral and immoral, or the sphere of morality from that of non-moral are to be made by man himself with the help of his intuitive capacity. Following a similar argument Hare says that morality is just a matter of individual decision. It is implicit in man's mere capacity to think rationally (universalisability). For Sartre the capacity of moral judgment is inalienably associated with man's exercise of his freedom.

All these thinkers hold in common that man, and man alone is the only source and ground of moral decisions. The ultimate principles of guiding a man's actions are a matter of 'pure' choice for him. 'Pure' choice here means choice which is completely ungrounded on anything else. It is the ultimate exercise of human freedom.

---

Popular figures  
and philanthropists.

A natural consequence of this philosophy of man has been a kind of moral anarchy which characterises much of modern civilisation - a phenomenon which finds linguistic expression in phrases such as "permissive society", "every man's right to pursue his own 'ideal'", and so on. This moral anarchy quite naturally sanctifies the pursuit of "bodily pleasure" as a sole legitimate goal of life."<sup>3</sup> Its (modern civilisation) true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. Hence the acceptance of the above Philosophy of man makes it difficult for us to give an account of the traditional view of morality. The traditional moral insight which builds up universal moral principles, such as, "one ought never deliberately to injure another human being," "humility is a supreme principle of morality", have no importance in man's life.

But it is to be noticed that any and every principle is not a moral principle; the above principles constitute and embody the life and work of any truly moral person. The point is that if acting and living on such principles makes one a truly moral person, then morality as being purely "a matter of choice and decision" becomes dubious. The question is - what is it

---

<sup>3</sup>M.K.Gandhi, op.cit., p.37.

that makes a principle a moral principle? In order to find out the criterion of morality we may consider the view that the moral character of a principle depends on its satisfaction of the purely formal requirement of "universalisability". It has been made abundantly clear in the recent philosophical debate that this requirement can quite easily be shown to be capable of being satisfied not only by undeniably universal moral principles such as, "one ought never deliberately to injure another human being," etc., but also by principle of action, which are only dubiously moral or even immoral. Morality is rooted in something much deeper than the "formal" properties of man's capacity to reason, and also, they get the distinctive moral character from that grounding alone. The traditional view of morality is said to be based on this deep insight of man. The view which takes universalisability as the criterion of morality does not take any note of this insight and even if the traditional moral insights do find a place in this philosophy of man, they do so only at the cost of their traditional distinction.

(B) The other Philosophy of man derives from the idea of the essential monistic completeness of modern science. Scientific method is the only method which can

---

legitimately and exhaustibly explain the things of the universe. Other "non-modern" ideas, theories and methods are ruled out as "unscientific" systems of faith and belief rather than rational knowledge and therefore, unworthy of a serious consideration.

"The scientific movement has unleashed an avalanche entirely transforming the industrial economic and social landscape in which people had lived stable lives for millennia. In rapid succession came railways, steam power, electricity, telegraphic communications, iron ships, motor cars modern highways, aeroplanes, stock exchanges, medicine with seemingly miraculous cures and, of course, revolutionised methods of warfare. To the Victorians buoyed up on the tide of wealth and empire, science required no justification it spelt success, prosperity, expansion, progress - to question its rightness would have appeared blasphemous."<sup>4</sup>

The relevant theses of this Philosophy are:

(i) man is ultimately exhaustibly describable in physical terms alone; (ii) as so describable, man in his totality is reducible to a mere object of nature; (iii) man and "his world" can therefore also be exhaustibly explained in terms of the norms of explanation of the natural sciences (i.e. through cause effect relation).

These form quite explicitly the foundation of the academic discipline of Experimental Psychology and have given rise to a study of human nature on the basis of its behavioural expressions.

---

<sup>4</sup>R. Sampson, 'Religion and Science', Gandhi Marg, 1981, p.79.

In philosophy this view of man finds a somewhat ambiguous expression in what is known as the doctrine of philosophical behaviourism - ambiguous because, while on the one hand, it agrees essentially with the idea that there is nothing more to man than a special kind of material body, on the other hand, it finds it necessary to make irreducible distinctions such as between 'cause' and 'reason', 'law' and 'rule', 'movement' and 'action', 'utterance' and 'speech', 'fact' and 'truth'. The second of each of these pairs of these concepts is supposed to be indispensable in any attempt to grasp the distinctive reality of man, while the first is applicable to the world of nature alone. But given the metaphysical base of philosophical behaviourism, the irreducibility of above distinctions cannot in the long run be justified - philosophical behaviourism inescapably collapses into psychological behaviourism.

According to the liberal empiricist philosophers also there is no such thing as a non-empirically determinable 'nature' of man implicit in the notion of which there might be moral standards applicable to all men. Man's nature can be discovered empirically and a strict empirical investigation will reveal that man has no distinguishing feature which can provide him with

---

unquestionable moral principles.

The common feature of the above two views is a total empiricism in the treatment of concepts. Their meaning is restricted to the representation of particular operations and behaviour. This operational point of view may be well illustrated by P.W. Bridgman's analysis of the concept of length:

"We evidently know what we mean by length if we can tell what the length of any and every object is, and for the physicist nothing more is required. To find the length of an object, we have to perform certain physical operations, the concept of length is therefore fixed when the operations by which length is measured are fixed; that is, the concept of length involves as much and nothing more than the set of operations by which length is determined. In general, we mean by any concept nothing more than a set of operations; the concept is synonymous with the corresponding set of operations."<sup>5</sup>

This mode of thought is a predominant tendency in thought and awareness of modern man. Many of the concepts are being eliminated by showing that no adequate account of them in terms of operations or behaviour can be given. It is claimed that empirical study of man's behaviour can give an exhaustive explanation of human nature. The question arises - in what way can we account for our fundamental moral concepts? The only position that behaviourism can imaginably take consistently with its

---

<sup>5</sup>Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p.27.

metaphysic, is that fundamental moral concepts such as "responsibility", "praise", "blame" etc. can have no legitimate application at all. Given this view of human reality morality as traditionally conceived, would be seen as necessarily having only an illusory place within it. Some have, however, taken a conciliatory attitude - they maintain that moral notions are not entirely useless, and, therefore, might profitably be retained within our vocabulary. To praise somebody, or to blame somebody may not literally make sense, but nevertheless this might be a useful device to bring about desired changes in individuals and society. Similarly traditional moral principles such as, "one ought never deliberately to injure another human being," "humility is a supreme principle of morality," etc. need not be rejected altogether but could be retained for their usefulness in controlling human behaviour.

Such a kind of treatment to moral principles is in no way acceptable by the traditional thinkers. This patronising attitude to the traditional moral principles makes them lifeless. Taken the above view the moral insight on which the traditional morality is based, becomes just a matter of illusion.

It does not require much insight to see that this latter view of morality is at work - wittingly or

---

unwittingly in much of today's secular politics at both the national and international level. The basic motivation in both national and international politics today, is manipulation and control of people and societies, and in the fulfilment of its motivation, "moral exhortations" play much the same role as bombs and missiles and the behavioural scientist's "experiments with population and resource control methods."

Following the liberal empiricists' view one would either arrive quickly at a moral anarchism not unlike the moral anarchism involved in the idea of man's autonomy, or attempt a defence of traditional moral principles on the basis of an "empirical," and therefore a misty notion of "human well-being". According to these thinkers the satisfaction of human needs is the ground for the justification of traditional moral insights. Unfortunately, however, quite naturally - the only general and intelligible empiricist account for human needs must ultimately make an appeal to the notion of "human happiness." The notion of "human happiness" without a basic metaphysical-religious, and therefore non-empirical underpinning degenerates into the idea of ever-increasing consumption of the fruits of industrial growth and gradually becomes a potential source of moral confusion. The idea of "human happiness" as has already been mentioned in the previous chapters,

---

is necessarily related with the inner and transcendental nature of man which is beyond this empirical endeavour.

The failure of these philosophies of man to account for morality "the traditional moral insight-" has resulted in a far-reaching influence which has changed our society at large. Devaluation of moral values, and increase of moral anarchy and confusion characterise the nature of the contemporary civilisation in general. The best possible economic prosperity is the ultimate value of the present civilisation. It looks forward to a system which gives greater and greater production-cum-consumption. Technology and industry dominate over the social and individual life of man. The belief which dominates over the whole system is that science and technology have unlimited power to satisfy human demands. Our present difficulties lie in the fact that technological progress is as yet incomplete. They think that modern science and technology are able to solve the problem of production, and they have provided a lot of increase "human happiness."

I shall discuss some of the achievements of modern western science and see how they help to ameliorate the human condition.

(a) Having human happiness in view of an

---

important achievement of scientific and technological development is the progress of medical science. The present medical system is dependent and developed upon the belief that science is complete and autonomous. Naturally we think that medical science has enormous capacity to cure our sickness and so to add to human happiness: Industrialisation profiting from new effectiveness has given a new efficiency to medical science. It is a fact that today medicine can cure many complicated diseases which were thought incurable earlier, so, people are much more dependent on medicine than ever before. Medical profession has extended over an increasing range of every-day occurrences in everyman's life.

But the way the whole medical system is organised it becomes more or less an impossibility for under-developed and developing countries to avail of proper medical treatment for all the members of their society. Better training in medical science, better instrument and medicine mean high cost of production, and quickly becomes beyond common people's capacity to get such medical treatment. Access to specialists and prestige hospitals is available to people who have the capacity to bear the expenditure. Good medicines and proper medical facilities are given to the people of large cities while poor villagers suffer.

---

Carlyle of  
Boston  
not  
sure  
Rune

Hospitals and doctor-based health care fits the principle that 'those who have will receive even more and those who have not are taken for the little that they have.

It may be supposed that the distinction between rich and poor, developed and undeveloped would vanish by gradual industrial and technological development and by use of proper economic measures. But the point is that the way the medical science is progressing today and promises further, it encourages man to depend more and more on medicine; - but has our medical science been able to cure all diseases? The more the medical science is developing and the further the method of treatment is advancing, the diseases are becoming more and more complicated and incurable. Modern medicine "seeks to increase bodily comforts and it fails miserably even in doing so."<sup>6</sup>

A doctor takes care of a man's body or treat the patient's mind, but he can treat not "human sickness". The belief in the autonomy of medicine prevents man from finding out the real meaning of his sickness and sufferings. Gandhi says,

"these doctors violate our religious instinct. Most of their medical preparations contain either animal fat or spirituous liquors, both of these are tabooed by Hindus' and Mehamedans. We may pretend to be civilised, call religious prohibitions a superstition and want-only indulge in what we like. The fact remains that the doctors induce us to indulge, the result is that we have become deprived of self-control and have become effeminate."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> M.K. Gandhi, op.cit., p.37.

<sup>7</sup> A.K.Saran, "Gandhi and the concept of Politics: Towards a normal civilisation," Gandhi Marg, p.694.

Gandhi's complaint that "doctors induce us to indulge" is not so much a charge against individual practitioners of modern medicine as it is an indication of the central weakness of a "scientific", "autonomous" medicine.

Medicine cures the diseases caused by lack of self-control and indulgence and it thus encourages self-indulgence and gratification of instinctive needs. For this reason he says "hospitals are institutions for propagating sin. Men take less care of their bodies and immorality increases."<sup>8</sup>

(b) Industrialisation and mechanisation have resulted in the development of transport communication. Motorised transport has removed man's self-powered transit. Before a man would walk several miles together to reach his destination but today he does not want to walk even a furlong if possible. It seems that the transport system helps us in various ways - without spending human metabolism we can go somewhere much more speedily than we could go to the same place without it. Since man does not have to waste his metabolism while going to his place of work he can do his work more efficiently. One does not have to spend much time for his journey to the destination so he can spend more time at home and enjoy his leisure. A man having a transport

---

<sup>8</sup> A.K. saran, Op.cit., p.694.

of his own enjoys a kind of "personal freedom." He can go anywhere within a short span of time whenever he wants. If everyone can use transport in his journey for a 'trip' or a 'travel' they all can reach the same distance within same time. So it is said that the transport system gives us equity. The aim of all developing and underdeveloped countries is to make it possible for all its citizens to have the capacity to use transport.

We understand the usefulness and necessity of particular transports. It helps not only an individual but also the whole society. The primary work of a transport is to lighten the burden of physical labour a man has to undergo in walking a certain distance and so to give more time for intellectual pursuit and to develop one's potentiality and efficiency. It is easy enough to see that transport fulfils this purpose when we watch any particular vehicle at work. But "what is generally overlooked is that equity and energy can grow concurrently only to a point. Below a threshold of per capita wattage, motors improve the conditions for social progress. Above this threshold, energy grows at the expense of equity."<sup>9</sup> Leisure is good and necessary upto a point only, beyond that leisure makes one's life boring monotonous and frustrating.

---

<sup>9</sup>Ivan D Illich, Energy and Equity, p.17.

Use of more and more transport has excluded people from the use of their metabolic energy and has forced them to become captive consumers of conveyance. A systematic transport communication makes one a habitual passenger, and one becomes entirely dependent on transport. An adequate transport communication promises a traffic utopia of 'free' rapid transportation for all. This makes us forget the fact that man is born almost equally mobile. Transport deprives him from his natural ability to walk a certain distance in a certain period of time. Transit, 'the human metabolic energy' is not the product of an industry, it is the independent enterprise of transients. The ability to engage in transit, is native to man and more or less equally distributed among healthy people of the same age. But continuous and ever-growing dependence on transport cripples a man and results in man's inability to do physical labour.

An inevitable consequent of industrialisation and transportation is urbanisation. By a regular transport communication the villagers can expose themselves to the market and competition that goes on in a city. Being influenced by city life they gradually start feeling unsatisfied by their own manufacture. They create and shape their demand and supply according to the needs

---

and necessities of city dwellers. Instead of hand-made goods they run for those which are made by power-driven machinery. "Flour mills are ousting the chakki, oil mills the village ghani, rice mills the village dhenki, sugar mills the village gur-pans,"<sup>10</sup> This displacement of village labour is exploiting and impoverishing the villagers and enriching the moneyed man. It breaks the autonomy of the villages and makes them dependent on mechanisation and industrialisation.

Manifestation of natural ability is necessarily associated with man's "personal liberty." Today since a man cannot use his natural ability he is deprived of his personal liberty also. The system of industrialisation is interested more in mass, production of material objects than in human beings. "As soon as a poor country accepts the doctrine that more energy more carefully managed will always yield more goods, for more people, that country is hooked into the race for enslavement to maximum industrial output."<sup>11</sup>

The over consumption of energy through industrialisation and mechanisation not only destroys the physical environment through pollution but, the more important,

---

<sup>10</sup> M.K. Gandhi, Industrialise and Perish, p.39.

<sup>11</sup> Ivan D. Illich, Op.cit., p.22.

causes the disintegration of society itself. Further energy inputs results with more and more industrial outputs and better transport; but unfortunately it increases inequality, inefficiency and personal impotence. The use of energy on a massive scale, and increasing productivity act on society like a drug that is psychologically enslaving, degrading and exhausting to its members.

In the light of its general outlook, modern world has shaped its education system. Economic development and material progress are the ultimate aim of man in today's society. Industrialisation and increasing production are the aims of the present socio-economic system. We are convinced beyond question of the omnipotence of technical intelligence, can do no other than trust to ever greater numbers of experts to salvage the promise of industrialism. Accordingly the principle of business becomes the training of experts, for whom progressively more room is made available in Government and the economy. Naturally the present system of education aims at introducing methods through which common people can be made more acquainted with the techno-scientific world. Education has become largely identical with the acquisition of knowledge of various

---

techniques. Specialised trainings in technology form the most important part of education.

"By 1984 it will be desirable that the most ordinary of men is not embarrassed by the use of logarithm table, elementary concepts of the calculus and by the definitions and uses of such words as electron, coulomb, and volt. He should further have become able not only to handle a pen, pencil and ruler but also a magnetic tape, valve and transistor."<sup>12</sup>

Where "education" is not the acquisition of technical skill, it is, for the most part, the imparting of literacy. It consists of teaching and learning certain text books in the classroom which have rarely any relation to our life. The criterion of measuring one's education is how much "academic qualification" one has. The more one's "academic" qualification the more educated one is.

Does such a process deserve to be called 'education'? To clarify the point we can take an example. There is a man who earns his bread honestly. He has a lively awareness of his natural surrounding; is capable of an unselfish assessment of himself in relation to others in his family and society. His conduct is generally informed by a capacity for compassion and love. But he cannot write his name. What purpose would be served if we give him a knowledge of letters? A man without any knowledge of letters can lead a happy life which may be an intuitive

---

<sup>12</sup>E.F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful, p.71.

understanding of the true sense of morality and spirituality. But since the man does not know how to write his name can we call him 'uneducated'?

On the other hand take a person who has a vast knowledge in literacy with outstanding academic achievements or a man who is most skillful and active in scientific and technological activities. But if we look at his "private" life we find that he has made a mess of it. In the academic life the man is praised for his brilliant and outstanding ideas while in practical life he can neither realise nor settle the actual problems of life. If his academic activities cannot bring any meaning or significance to his private life; if one's academic life is not continuous and integrated with one's real life then, surely, it is doubtful that one could be said to have imbibed education in the most vital sense of that term. Literacy, at best is an uncertain means to true education - a state which is necessarily an embodiment of civility and of a moral (and spiritual) awareness informed by an intelligence which is fundamentally unselfish (without ahankāra).

Schumacher says that education can help us only if it produces a 'whole man'". By 'whole man' Schumacher

---

refers to the man, whose life is a 'continuous whole' in which there is an integration of one's moral and spiritual awareness with academic and other particular experiences.

"A truly educated man is not a man who knows a bit of everything not even the man who knows all the details of all subjects (if such a thing were possible) the 'whole man in fact, may have little detailed knowledge of facts and theories he may treasure the Encyclopedia Britannica because 'she knows and he needn't' but he will be truly in touch with the centre. He will not be in doubt about his basic convictions, about his views on the meaning and purpose of his life. He may not be able to explain these matters in words, but the conduct of his life will show a certain sureness of touch which stems from his inner clarity."<sup>13</sup>

Gandhi gives a very important place to education when he says that a human being without education is not far removed from an animal. By this 'education' he certainly does not mean a system of literary or technical training through which man can be made at best a creature of technical know-how, a scientist or an academician who is a skilful, active worker in industries, laboratories or universities. This kind of an occupational training is far from serving an educational purpose. "Real education", for Gandhi "consists in drawing the best out of yourself".<sup>14</sup> "Character-building" is the goal of

---

<sup>13</sup> E.F. Schumacher, op.cit., pp.85-86.

<sup>14</sup> N.K. Bose, Selections from Gandhi, p.283.

education. There are many virtues of man like courage, confidence, humility love and so on. The purpose of education is to develop and integrate them in man. Literacy or academic learning is just a means to this greater end. That is why he says, "India's great lack of literacy, deplorable as it is, does not appeal to me nor make me feel that India is unfit for self rule".<sup>15</sup> "Literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height, and character building is independent of literary training."<sup>16</sup> "Moral development" is the most important factor in the development of an individual or a human being. In this connection, I should also mention that Gandhi invariably and indispensably connects morality with religion. He says that the source of all values must be the fact of man's as well as the whole world's being rooted in God. The religious as the ground of man's being and of the value and meaning of his life must permit all sphere of his life. Man's spirituality must express itself through all his ordinary activities in the temporal world; morality and spirituality cannot therefore be separated from one another. To quote from him - "Religion which takes no account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them, is no religion."<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> N.K. Bose, op.cit., p.287.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.255.

"If any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpractical it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe that the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term."<sup>18</sup>

Given the centrality of man's religious insight and its inevitable unfoldment in man's endeavour ("self-purification"), it is impossible that the religious can be divorced from any sphere of human life. The most important task of education is to make man aware of this fact and to help him to realise the ultimate aim. A similar view is expressed by E.P. Schumacher when he says,

"Education cannot help us as long as it accords no place to Metaphysics. Whether the subjects taught are subjects of science or of the humanities, if the teaching does not lead to a clarification of Metaphysics, that is to say, of our fundamental convictions, it cannot educate a man and consequently, cannot be of real value to society."<sup>19</sup>

There are certain problems in our life, solutions to which, cannot be found through our "mere" intellectual capacity. In this connection I would like to bring forth G.N.M. Tyrell's distinction of 'convergent' and 'divergent' problems. Convergent problems are both created and solved by man's intelligent reasoning power; viz., the problems

---

<sup>18</sup> N.K.Bose, op.cit., p.255.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.84.

of science and technology. 'Divergent' problems, on the other hand, are the problems of living. These problems --- in Politics, Economics, Education, marriage, society --- are always problems of overcoming and reconciling opposites. They demand of man not merely the employment of his reasoning power but the commitment of his whole personality. Physical sciences and Mathematics are exclusively concerned with 'convergent' problems. Science cannot produce ideas by which man could live. Even the greatest ideas of science are nothing more than working hypotheses. They are useful for purposes of specialised research but never applicable to the conduct of our life. But unfortunately even the subjects which consist of 'divergent' problems, the way they are presented today lack the awareness of their presuppositions. Economics is being taught without any awareness of the view of human nature that underlies present day economic theory. Politics is taught without any reference to its metaphysical roots. Politics talks about the political life of man, while it ignores that man's relation to one another is basically an expression of his moral nature. Economics which deals with the well being of humanity, misconceives the concept of "well being" itself. As a result mutual understanding and goodwill vanish from human relationships in society.

---

Growing confusions, misunderstanding and hatred are common features of human relations. In this connection Gandhi would say that the particular and isolated study of different subjects without a reference to their common and universal basis has distorted the meaning of what education really is. An education if it does not discuss the problems of life, society, morality - the 'divergent' problems in general - loses the true connotation of 'Education'.

Our present system of education is based on western ideas (theories) to the almost entire exclusion of ideas generated in our own traditions. The traditional culture of India is entirely ruled out by saying that it is non-scientific and non-modern, so they cannot satisfy modern man's demand and curiosity. Naturally the higher one proceeds in modern education the farther one is removed from one's home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. India's own civilisation, its past with its culture religion and Philosophy is presented to Indians - if not in so many words, but at least in intent - as imbecile, superstitious and useless for practical purposes.

---

The medium of our education still continues largely to be a foreign language. Gandhi says, "Real education is impossible through a foreign medium".<sup>20</sup> "The foreign medium of education has caused 'brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses."<sup>21</sup>

One's thoughts and ideas are most naturally expressed through one's own mother tongue. If a foreign language is used to express one's ideas there is every chance of its being misinterpreted and distorted. The expression of one's ideas through foreign language needs a special training in that language. In India, where a small number of people get the chance to be literate, the use of a foreign language as the medium of education is really a barrier to communication of ideas.

Besides these practical difficulties with a foreign medium of education a philosophical discussion will show that our present attitude towards our own culture (i.e. Indian culture is non-scientific, non-modern, barbarous, imbecile and soon) is a necessary and natural outcome of this foreign medium of education.

---

<sup>20</sup> N.K. Bose, op.cit., p.283.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.285.

According to Wittgenstein the meaning of a word is not contained in the word itself. If we want to understand any concept we must obtain a view of human behaviour, the activities the natural expressions that surround the words for that concept. What really gives life to the utterances or marks which constitute a language - i.e. what makes these utterances and marks a language at all is their intimate connection with the activities of the users of the language in question. In this sense a language is a form of life of a group of people. The rules governing the correct use of a language are necessarily and invariably rules about human activities associated with the use of language. To take an example we can consider the language of greeting. Greeting a person is not just a matter of uttering a particular word or a set of words in his presence and at the same time to cause him to hear it. It is connected with an extremely complex variety of bodily gestures, tones of voice and what one does before and after what may be regarded as the "actual act of greeting". The rules for the language of greeting must be such as to allow for the possibility of such a complex of activities whose connections with one another are subtle, pliable and without any sharp boundaries. This net work of activities is, according to Wittgenstein, a 'form of life'.

---

If a language is a set of activities or practices defined by certain rules, and if the rules governing the correct use of a language are invariably rules about activities of a group of human beings, then it can clearly be said that a particular language - a language which is individuated - encompasses a particular culture. (By culture here is meant the distinct, individuable awareness and self-awareness of a group of people who speak a particular language and are corporately engaged in both the material and spiritual pursuits of life.) The connections between one's own language and one's understanding of oneself, others and of the world around are so intimate and deeply rooted in one that very frequently they are operative without one's being aware of them.

If this view is acceptable "Indian education" is really impossible with a foreign medium of education. If one's culture is invariably and necessarily associated with one's language, our acceptance of western culture as the only culture and our blind imitation of the same are the most natural consequences of our education system. Some of the patrons of Indian culture feel that with the development of western science and Technology Indians are forgetting the importance of their own past tradition and culture which should be revitalised. The question

---

here is - is it ever possible to maintain our Indian culture and tradition through a Western language? When we use English to understand India and Indians, it is either that we use the language without grasping as it were, the "life" of that language, or if we sincerely use the language we cannot maintain the identity of our own culture and tradition.

Another defect in present educational system for Gandhi is that it ignores the culture of the heart and the hand and confines itself simply to the head."<sup>22</sup> Whatever may be true of other countries in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after life."<sup>23</sup> Today, a peasant's son after going to school starts despising labour. He cannot work as an agricultural labourer; he becomes useless to the family and also to the society. Since the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children, according to Gandhi, must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. He says, -

"the introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation

---

<sup>22</sup>N.K.Bose, op.cit., p.283.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p.284.

on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralise the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour."<sup>24</sup>

cheap  
popular

---

<sup>24</sup> N.K. Bose, op.cit., pp, 284-285.

-----  
CHAPTER - V  
-----

MARCUSE AND GANDHI :-  
ON MODERN CIVILIZATION

A work is done with hands involving hard labour and a long period of time, the same work can be done in less time with much less labour with much more efficiency if the workers takes the help of some instruments or tools. Naturally man develops technology by the help of which he can act more skilfully in less time and with less energy. Technology is introduced at first with a view to lightening the burden of work a man has to perform in order to live. Machineries, (instead of human beings) are used to produce things so that man is free enough to use his mind in satisfying creative pursuits. Machineries, thus help to develop a free autonomous life in which a man can fully manifest his creative capacity and develop his own personality. Gradually more and more machineries are introduced to build up a productive system in which machineries work for man. What may be called scientific rationality, thus, aims to develop a productive apparatus which could be organised and directed towards the satisfaction of the vital needs, and its control might well be centralised so that it would facilitate the growth of individual autonomy.

---

But unfortunately a contrary trend operates. The way our science and technology proceed and the direction to which modern industrialisation moves generates many difficulties. The unlimited expansion of science and technology is based on finite and limited capacity of nature. A limitless expansion in a finite environment cannot last long. So the present world shaped by modern technology finds itself in certain crises viz. (a) The nature which supports human life as well as the whole civilisation aches and groans and gives signs of partial breakdown. The fundamental pillar of the modern world is based on world's non-renewable resources particularly those of fossil fuels the exhaustion of which indicates serious bottle necks in the quite foreseeable future. And (b) human nature also revolts against technological, organisational and political patterns which it experiences as suffocating and debilitating.

'Freedom of individual' is the motto with which scientific rationality starts; but the disappearance of that freedom is one of the greatest achievements of modern civilisation. The technological system by pretending to release the individuals' burden, determines the whole social structure. In an advanced industrial society the technical apparatus of production

---

and distribution with an increasing sector of automation functions, not as the sum total of mere instruments which can be isolated from their social and political effects; rather it determines a priori the product of the apparatus as well as the operations of servicing and extending it. In this society the productive apparatus tends to become totalitarian to the extent to which it determines not only the socially needed occupations, skills and attitudes, but also individual needs and aspirations. The technological co-ordination operates through manipulation of needs by vested interests. Individuals feel the necessity of the things produced by the technical apparatus, but they do not realise the fact that their necessities and choices are actually conditioned by the interest of the organisers of the productive system. Since the individuals themselves are the consumers of the products of the productive system, they do not have the courage to go against the productive system.

The productive apparatus guides the political power of the country also. In the present society political power asserts itself through its power over the mechanisation process and the technical organisation of the apparatus. The Government of advanced and advancing industrial societies can maintain and secure

---

itself only when it succeeds in mobilising and organising the technical, scientific and mechanical productivity.

"Democracy has rapidly lost ground as power is increasingly captured by giant managerial institutions and corporations, and decisions are made by experts, specialists and professionals safely insulated from the feelings of the people . . . . .As regulation and administration have grown, liberty has been eroded and bureaucratic discretion has taken the place of the rule of law."<sup>1</sup>

Productivity and technological structure mobilise the society as a whole, above and beyond any particular individual or group interests. It dominates over the society in such a way that the intensity, satisfaction and character of human needs, beyond the biological level is preconditioned. The possibility of doing or leaving, enjoying or destroying, possessing or rejecting something is dependent on whether or not it is desirable and necessary for the prevailing societal institutions and interests. An individuals' interest is determined by the interest of the society. The social structure, thus, has subjected the population to the established social system.

Since the needs and interests of the people are determined by the interest of the productivity, it imposes

---

<sup>1</sup>Charles Reich, The Greening of America, pp.14-15.

upon the individuals certain false needs<sup>2</sup> without which individuals could live, and live in a better way. Gratification of these false needs cannot keep individuals satisfied, on the contrary, their influence upon the people is so much that they are always tempted to keep themselves busy in over hungrier pursuits of the satisfaction of such needs. Since these needs are unsatisfactory by nature, they perpetuate toil, aggressiveness and misery. Hankerings for these false needs keep men so busy that they are entirely unaware of this vicious nature of the whole productive system and make them unable to come out of this and criticise the same. Men are, rather, under the impression that by the developed scientific and technological organisation they can get things of their choice, so they are free to make choices. Thus, in the present society the social needs are so effectively transplanted into individual needs that people cannot differentiate an individual's own need from social needs. People of all status feel the need of same things, and the economy is set up in such a way that it makes the same stuff available to all the members of the society.

---

<sup>2</sup>We can broadly divide our needs into two groups: (i) vital needs, and (ii) False needs.

Vital or true needs consist of the basic and fundamental necessities of man. True needs also mean needs felt by individuals to manifest their potentiality.

False needs, on the other hand, refer to those needs which the society super imposes upon an individual in his repression.

This fact is sometimes claimed to be an illustration of equal distribution of wealth. But a deeper consideration of the fact reveals that even the choices and demands, needs and necessities are pre-determined by the nature of productivity.

"If the worker and his boss enjoy the same television programme and visit the same resort places, if the typist is as attractively made up as the daughter of his employer, if the Negro owns a cadillac, if they all read the same newspaper, then this assimilation indicates not the disappearance of classes but the extent to which the needs and satisfactions that serve the preservation of establishment are shared by the underlying populations!"<sup>3</sup>

All men are, thus, made servile to the whole system of production. The more rational, productive, technical and effective the total repressive administration of society becomes, the more unimaginable the means and ways by which the administered individuals might break their servitude and seize their own liberation. All liberation depends on the consciousness of the servitude, but the emergence of this consciousness is always hampered by the predominance of the false needs and satisfactions which to a certain extent have become the individuals' own. The technological administrative process is organised in such a way that it replaces one system of pre-conditioning by another, so that an

---

<sup>3</sup>Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p.24.

individual's choice cannot go beyond the range of the productive process.

With the increase of production we get a large number of things in several varieties. The range of our choice is broadened. That individuals can decide among a large number of things has been taken as one of the decisive factors of determining human freedom. But Herbert Marcuse points out that the availability of large varieties of things cannot determine the degree of human freedom, it rather, makes individuals the victim of the productivity. Free election of masters does not abolish the masters or the slaves. Free choice among a wide variety of services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over the life of individuals. The spontaneous reproduction of superimposed needs by the individual does not establish autonomy; it only testifies to the efficacy of the controls.

Another feature, which is a natural outcome of the technological process is what Herbert Marcuse calls 'the rational character of its irrationality?' The advanced industrial civilisation --- its productivity, its efficiency, its capacity to increase and spread

---

comforts, to turn waste into need, the extent to which this civilisation transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body it becomes difficult to alienate the human personality from the objects. "The people recognise themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment."<sup>4</sup>

"The productive apparatus and the goods and services which it produces "sell" or impose the social system as a whole. The means of mass transportation and communication, the commodities of lodging, food and clothing, the irresistible output of the entertainment and information industry carry with them prescribed attitudes and habits, certain intellectual and emotional relations which bind the consumers more or less pleasantly to the producers and, through the latter, to the whole. The products indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood. And as these beneficial products became available to more individuals in more social classes, the indoctrination they carry ceases to be publicity; it becomes a way of life."<sup>5</sup>

Man's capacity to be autonomous, to be internally active, his ability to think independently which has to remain beyond all these imposed needs and demands of this advanced civilisation, has been whittled down by the technological reality. Consequently the individual's ability to protest against the whole system is affected

---

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Marcuse, op.cit., p.24.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-27.

at its root. Rather, the workers desire to join actively to make the technical productive system more efficient by applying their own brains. Man from his very childhood prepares to fit himself to the whole social structure. Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual. The intellectual or emotional refusal "to go along" with the whole system is considered neurotic and impotent. The loss of the inner dimension,

"in which the power of negative thinking - the critical power of Reason - is at home, is the ideological counterpart to the very material process in which advanced industrial society silences and reconciles the opposition. The impact of progress turns reason into submission to the facts of life, and to the dynamic capability of producing more and bigger facts of the same sort of life. The efficiency of the system blunts the individual's recognition that it contains no facts which do not communicate the repressive power of the whole. If the individuals find themselves in the things which shape their life, they do so, not by giving, but by accepting the law of things - not the law of Physics by the law of their society."<sup>6</sup>

Advancement of science and technology results in the development of a number of large-scale factories and industries. These industries with the help of machine and experts are able to produce maximum amount of output - in a minimum period of time. Machine becomes the main instrument of production, in the technological

---

<sup>6</sup>Herbert Marcuse, op.cit., p.26.

ensemble, labourers have no control over the productive process. By increasing use of machineries the machine itself becomes a system of mechanical tools and relations and extends far beyond individual work process. Men have to be there only as a supervisor and help the machine to run in its own way.

People are given special trainings to help the machine to do the actual work of production. The man mechanically performs his task according to the rules taught in the training without using his own creative capacity. Such kind of work becomes the life-long occupation of a very efficient and intelligent worker. This kind of job, for which our efficient engineers having most intelligent brains are destined in the society, pays no importance to a man's creative capacity. Such kinds of work, says Herbert Marcuse, are inhuman, exhausting, and stupefying. This kind of masterly enslavement is not essentially different from that of the typist, the high-pressure sales man or woman, or the television announcer who just mechanically perform their job. The present system, while it looks for more and more advancement in production and distribution through vitalising the machineries denies human capacity. This is why it has been said 'from the factory, dead matter goes out improved, whereas men there are corrupted

---

and degraded."<sup>7</sup>

The technological process asserts its larger dominion by reducing the "professional autonomy" of the labourer. In order to bring efficiency to the system and to increase the amount of output there are divisions of labour in which an individual has to perform a very small part of the whole work. Since the work is divided and sub-divided into several parts, and machine dominates over the whole system we cannot measure the work of an individual or a group of individuals, nor can an individual claim a work to be his work. Thus an individual is removed far away from his performance.

Man's creative activities, his artistic works express his natural attitudes and abilities which differentiate one person from another. But in our present productive system man's creative power has no role to play at all.

A creative or an artistic work, according to Freud, offers a high degree of libidinal satisfaction. A genuine kind of artistic creation grows out of "a non-repressive instinctual constellation" and envisage non-repressive aims. But unfortunately the

---

<sup>7</sup>E.F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful, p.140.

type of work which modern technology is most successful in reducing or even eliminating is skillful and artistic work of human hands. In an advanced industrial society such work has become exceedingly rare, and to make a decent living by doing such work has become virtually impossible. The kind of efficiency that our present social system demands is something which a man has to acquire in order to fit himself to the society. Agreeing with Freud, Herbert Marcuse says that this kind of work is non-libidinal - unpleasurable and painful. The social system is organised in such a way that man has to suppress his primary instincts in order to satisfy the demands of the society. In our society, to quote from Herbert Marcuse,

"....enjoyment is separated from labour, the means from the end, exertion from recompense. Eternally fettered only to a single little fragment of the whole, man fashions himself only as a fragment; over hearing only the monotonous whirl of the wheel which he turns, he never develops the harmony of his being, and instead of shaping the humanity that lies in his nature, he becomes a mere imprint of his occupation, his science."<sup>8</sup>

Thus an individual is systematically stripped of his natural imagination, his personal uniqueness, in order to style himself into a productive unit for a mass technological society. Natural feelings and spontaneity

---

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Marcuse, Eros & Civilization, p.151,

are repressed by overwhelming forces. Eventually men virtually become their professions, roles, occupations and thenceforth strangers to themselves. Technology has thus turned into an inhuman chore which does not enrich man but empties him.

Man's unfreedom, his servitude and enslavement in the sense of his subjection to the productive apparatus is not only concealed by the social system rather it is perpetuated and intensified in the form of many liberties and comforts. Advancement in technology results in increasing surplus-product which when distributed allows an increased consumption, which, again, results in a higher standard of living. Once the standard of living goes up, and man is reduced to mere consumer, there is increasing demand for the product, so increasing servitude to the productive process.

The system keeps a man so involved as a consumer that he is unable to realise the kind of enslavement or servitude which prevails upon him. The instinctual drives and aspirations are so deeply pre-conditioned that it obscures the difference between false and true consciousness. As a result the members of the society are not in living contradiction to the established social system.

---

These are, according to Herbert Marcuse, some of the faults and failings of the modern industrial civilisation. He attempts to propose a certain alternative which could change the form of society and our life. For him the supreme consideration is man, and so the utmost importance should be given to the development of human personality. He says that a man can manifest himself in the best possible way if he can freely express and satisfy his instinctual demands. But the main role of individuals in our society has been to co-ordinate themselves with the whole system which imposes upon the individuals its own laws, demands and needs. Living in the present society necessitates a repressive modification of our instincts. He says,

"at the height of its progressive achievements domination corrupts and liquidates the opposition against domination. What remains is the negativity of reason, which impels wealth and power and generates a climate in which the instinctual roots of the performance principle are drying up."<sup>9</sup>

Aggressive development of technological system, intensified exploitation; dehumanisation, must not, any longer, be allowed to go on at the present rate. He tries to find an alternative through a redirection in the aim of scientific and technological development.

---

<sup>9</sup> Herbert Marcuse, op.cit., p.90.

Science and technology must be regulated with a limit which consists in planned utilisation of resources for the satisfaction of vital needs with a minimum of toil, there should be appropriate distribution of wealth and power; individuals should be free from both physical and mental burdens. The distinction between true and false consciousness, real and immediate interest, true and false needs are to be validated and made meaningful. Men must realise it, and should be able to find their way from false to true consciousness, from the immediate to their real interests. The society must not dominate over individuals. Individuals should be free to express and satisfy their instinctual needs and should be able to manifest their creative capacity in the best possible way.

But it is to be noticed that the facts about contemporary civilisation and the alternative, suggested above, are there like fragments which do not connect. More technology, the reproduction, bigger and better come to mean, ever more clearly, the closing of those other possible ways of life which could do away with the serfs and the masters, with the productivity of repression. Union of freedom and servitude has become "natural" and a vehicle of progress. More production

---

makes servitude increasingly rewarding and palatable. The image of human freedom with which civilisation began is dislocated by enhancement of so called modern civilisation.

The point to be noted is that science and technology make progress with newer inventions and achievements. It is quite natural that there will be a tendency to use scientific and technological achievements in our life. And increasing use of machineries results, as has been pointed out, in disastrous transformation of human life, destroying even the hope of the possibility of ever again being able to live free.

Not only Herbert Marcuse, many others like Ivan Illich, Charles Reich, Roszak realise this nature of modern scientific civilisation, and they all look for an alternative model.

It is said that we need machinery but there should be a limit to the enhancement of mechanisation. The vital question is - how can we make a limited use of machineries while we know that they have much more capacity? Once we accept scientific justification as the ultimate basis of things how can we stop scientific inventions while human brains will come up with newer

---

and better capacities? We cannot stop scientific inventions and technological achievements.

It is to be noticed that with the use of more and more machineries man gets more money and the peculiar thing about money is that man feels an unsatisfiable and ever-increasing greed for money, while his demand for other things is diminished if we can acquire the same.<sup>10</sup> The more we are able to make money the more we run for it. Science and technology which are used to make more and more money encourage our greed, and greed gives rise to envy, jealousy, continuous exploitation, mutual misunderstandings, constant fear of war which are necessary features of human relations today.

The point, all the above mentioned thinkers stress on, is that the motive behind the use of machineries must be changed. Technology must not be turned into an instrument of making money (the desire for which knows no bounds), but to satisfy the necessities of life,

These thinkers, while denouncing modern civilisation, do not accuse science and technology as such. They,

---

<sup>10</sup> Utility of a thing may be diminished if we get the same but it is only for a time being (law of Diminishing marginal Utility). In general material needs are unending and ever-increasing in nature.

rather, think that scientific and technological achievements are the ladders to happiness and prosperity of humanity. Their denunciations and even rejection of modern civilisation remain within the framework of the pseudo - metaphysics on which modern civilisation is founded. In seeking for an alternative they try for the renewal of Western civilisation for which they do not go beyond this pseudo metaphysics. But the problem is material satisfaction has been the metaphysics on which the pillars of modern civilisation stand, and since material needs are unending, it is an impossible task to bring a limitation to the enhancement of mechanisation. Rejection of enhancement of scientific development while accepting scientific knowledge as the ultimate knowledge of things is something contradictory in itself. Modern technology is based on the belief that material things contribute to our well being and happiness - if it is so, then how is a limitation in the production of those things desirable?

In the analysis of the history of modern culture Marcuse establishes a relation between freedom and happiness. According to him freedom and happiness are intimately connected "Happiness, as the fulfilment of

---

all potentialities of the individual presupposes freedom - at root".<sup>11</sup> By freedom he means (i) freedom from the economic exploitation and political domination which the modern social system imposes upon the individuals, and (ii) freedom from social domination which obliterates a free development of human instincts and personalities. He says that there is a lack of sufficient means and resources for integral painless gratification of instinctual needs in the present established society.

One may, here, ask:- is this kind of freedom necessarily related to the happiness of mankind?

It is a fact that there is a class of people in our society who are dominated by others - that is why they are not free, so not happy. But what about the people who are dominating and exploiting but not exploited by anyone? If freedom consists in freedom from exploitation, the exploiters themselves are free. And if this freedom contributes happiness, the exploiters are supposed to be the happiest persons in the world. But is it really the case? Can a rich exploiter claim to be truly happy and peaceful?

It may be said that the attainment of universal

---

<sup>11</sup>Alasdair MacIntyre, Marcuse, p.15.

prosperity in which there is no exploitation, no domination leads to peace and happiness of humanity. The point is that the foundation of happiness cannot be laid by universal prosperity. Because such prosperity, if attainable at all, is attainable only by cultivating such drives of human nature as greed and envy which destroy serenity, happiness and peace of mind. Prosperity depends on inordinately large demands which disturb one's mind, whereas happiness presupposes a tranquil and quiet mind which has transcended the hankerings for material things. Freedom, from this point of view, would mean freedom of mind from the hankerings of material things, and this freedom is necessarily connected with peace and happiness.

The other feature of modern society according to Herbert Marcuse, is that it sublimates man's basic instincts - and so obstructs his happiness. He says that in a non-repressive form of civilisation a man can freely and self-consciously act for his own satisfaction and this gives him happiness.

But happiness cannot be an outcome of mere development of man's basic instincts. Absolute instinctual freedom without a moral guidance would result in a

---

complete chaos. Development of one's potentiality without a proper direction of its use gives rise to evils in the society.

The ultimate end in Marcuse's view is to guide our present practice towards the goal of a new form of social life which would provide "the real fulfilment of everything that man desires to be when he understands himself in terms of his potentialities". Question would arise, like - what is the real fulfilment of human desire? What is the real desire of a man? If desire means material desires - can they ever be really fulfilled? What are the potentialities of man? Do they consist of mere instinctive and artistic creation?

In spite of all this we might accept Herbert Marcuse and agree to say that our life today should aim at forming a social system in which a man's desires are satisfied. But there would still remain problems like - once we attain that social system in which all our desires are satisfied, and potentialities manifested - what would be the goal of our life at that time? What would our life strive for?

M.K. Gandhi's 'Hind Swaraj' is an uncompromising critique and rejection of modern civilisation. But his

---

critique of modern Western civilisation is altogether a different story. It is peripheral to his thinking. For him the metaphysics of life cannot be based on the ultimacy of science, but it has its basis in the transcendental core of man. In criticising the modern civilisation while Herbert Marcuse finds faults in the socio-economic structure within modernisation, Gandhi strives to discover a centre wholly beyond the modern western civilisation.

Gandhi agrees with Herbert Marcuse in saying that man's needs are dominated by the productive system. Increased productive capacity of the apparatus supplies things beyond necessities which results in the use of luxuries. Gandhi says that in India where most of the people are villagers and cultivators production of luxuries does not suit the economy. The western civilisation builds up a society in which people produce material things by mutilating their own nature. Money is considered to be all-powerful. It is thought that, if only there were more and more wealth everything else would fall into place. So-called non-material values have no importance; people think that, money could circumvent the need for them. The development of production and the acquisition of wealth have thus become the highest goals of the present civilisation

---

"-----they are enslaved by the temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy."<sup>12</sup> People living in modern society "make bodily welfare the object of life."<sup>13</sup> "This civilisation takes note neither of morality nor of religion. It votaries calmly state that their business is not to teach religion."<sup>14</sup> For him morality is the basis of things. A man's life is nothing but a relentless endeavour towards the realisation of the moral - religious core of his own nature. Man in his essential being is rooted in the transcendent; man's moral endeavour consists in regaining this awareness. A civilisation, in this sense, has to develop that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. The present civilisation which does not take account either of religion or of morality "is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed."<sup>15</sup>

Herbert Marcuse does not criticise the "Western civilisation" as a whole. He accepts technology and mechanisation as the foundation of civilisation while he rejects particular expressions of it. He criticises the present way of using the machineries. On the

---

<sup>12</sup> M.K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p.36.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.35.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

other hand Gandhi's rejection of modern civilisation is based not only on deeply-felt dissatisfaction with modern western civilisation but is also, at the same time, a striving towards a return to tradition, which gives an inner direction of search for a return to the centre of man. Schumacher also emphasises upon the same point in his writings. He says - "every where people ask: "What can I actually do?" The answer is as simple as it is disconcerting; we can each of us, work to put our own inner house in order. The guidance we need for this work cannot be found in science and technology, the value of which utterly depends on the ends they serve; but it can still be found in the traditional wisdom of mankind."<sup>16</sup>

The so-called modern civilisation diverts one's attention from within to outside. Man identifies himself with his body, his intellect, his earthly ambitions and so on - that stands in the way of the unfoldment of his knowledge of his root.

---

<sup>16</sup> E.F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful, p. 279.

-----  
**CONCLUSION**  
-----

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion I wish to make a few general remarks about science, modern civilisation and the idea of the moral life. Science has been a willing partner in the generation of what Gandhi calls the "evils" of modern civilisation, so much so that it is important now to ask ourselves the question whether there isn't something quite radically lacking in the pursuit of knowledge within the framework which modern science has acquired. This, of course, is a very large question to ask at the end of this and, needless to say, I shall not attempt anything like an answer to this question. However, I feel that it might still be worthwhile to make a few remarks about the relationship between scientific knowledge and moral pursuit.

The framework of empirical science is such that the latter is fairly useless in one's effort to understand the central concepts of morality. As we have seen in Chapters I - III, any empiricist attempt at understanding morality ends up - is bound to end up - in a radical distortion of moral ideas. Both

Behaviorism and the so-called ordinary language Philosophy (which is after all the old British Empiricism in a new garb) can provide only either an extremely superficial grasp of moral ideas or leave the most crucial questions of morality virtually unanswered. These are questions such as - how is it possible for me, limited as I am by my ego and its overwhelming demands and by my special circumstances, to achieve even the rudiments of a truly moral life? And what must I do to avoid deceiving myself as well as others and to achieve true knowledge of another person in moral matters? Science and the scientific method cannot help me answer these questions. This is because moral knowledge is possible only within an already given moral framework. For instance, self-deception in moral matters is unavoidable except when the attempt to know oneself is also accompanied by a genuine and ultimately successful act of self-transcendence. And this idea of self-transcendence is primarily a moral idea. Quite naturally also the same idea is involved in a genuine attempt at knowing another person morally. Finally, of course, moral knowledge in this sense is possible at all only against the background of a framework which can give the idea of the reality of moral qualities a resolute and unshakable place. No merely

empiricist account can have such a place for the idea of reality in the moral context.

For Gandhi the reality of moral virtues and therefore the seriousness of the moral endeavour are guaranteed by the framework in which the basic concepts are God, Truth, Goodness and Love (Non-violence). For him all truth is ultimately moral truth and therefore also truth before God and any genuine pursuit of knowledge is also a pursuit of self-transcendence. The idea of self-transcendence for him is the same or nearly the same as the idea of non-violence or love. Non-violence is not just a disparate moral ideal, but it is this idea that, as it were, sets up the world in which one can at all pursue morality. Moral action follows automatically upon moral knowledge motivated by completely unselfish, therefore, non-violent, concern for the other.

It is my conviction, therefore, that Gandhian ideas are capable of being philosophically integrated into a system which would enable us to understand the significance of a moral life and therefore of the true uniqueness of man in a radically different and rewarding way. I hope in my thesis I have atleast been able to make this point somewhat clear.

-----  
**BIBLIOGRAPHY**  
-----

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ACTON, H.B., Kant's Moral Philosophy,  
London, Macmillan, 1970.
- AUGSBURGER, MYRON S., Faith for a Secular World,  
Waco, World Books, 1968.
- AYER, A.J., Language, Truth and Logic,  
Victor Gollancz, 1936.
- BENNET, JONATHAN <sup>n</sup>  
Rationality: an essay towards  
an analysis, London, Routledge  
& Kegan Paul, 1971.
- , Kant's Analytic, Cambridge  
University Press, 1966.
- BOSE, N.K., Selections from Gandhi,  
Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing  
House, 1948 (Reprint 1972)
- , Culture and Society in India,  
Bombay, Asia Publishing House,  
1967.
- BOWNSMA, O.K., "Naturalism", p.12.  
Journal of Philosophy, vol.45,  
1948.
- DELFGAAUW, BERNARD, Twentieth Century Philosophy,  
Gill and Macmillan, 1969.
- DEWEY, JOHN, SIDNEY HOOK, "Are Naturalists Materialist",  
EARNEST NAGEL p.315, vol. 42, 1945.
- FANON, FRANL The Wretched of the Earth,  
Francois Maspero editeur, 1961.
- FOOT, PHILLIPA (ed). Theories of Ethics, Oxford  
University Press, 1967.
- FRANKENA, WILLIAM K., Ethics, Englewood,  
CLIFFS, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1973.

- GANDHI, M.K., An Autobiography, Ahmedabad Navajivan, 1940 (reprinted-1972)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hindu Dharma, N.Delhi, Orient Paper backs, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Industrialise and Perish, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-violence in Peace and War, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1942.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Violence, Orient Paper books.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hind Swaraj, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1939.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Village Industries, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God and Truth, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Voice of Truth, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Self-Restraint and self-Indulgence, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Collected Works of M.K.Gandhi New Delhi, Publication Division.
- GARNETT, A.C., "Naturalistic Interpretation of Mind" p, 589, Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 45, 1948.
- GOTSHALK, D.W., "A Suggestion for Naturalists" p.5. Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 45, 1948.
- HANS BAKKER, J.I., "Gandhian values, Human Rights and Developments: towards a just civilisation," p.204, Gandhi Marg, Vol. 16, July 1980.
- HUDSON, W.D., Modern Moral Philosophy, Macmillan & Co., 1970.

- ILLICH, IVAN D., Energy and Equity, Rupa & Co., 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Tools for conviviality, Fontana, Collins, 1973.
- IRWIN, T., Plato's Moral Theory, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1977.
- KANT, I., Critique of Pure Reason, Trans. N.K. Smith, London, Macmillan Press, 1929 (reprinted with correction 1933).
- KORNER, S., Kant, Penguin Books, 1955.
- KRIPALANI J.B., Gandhi: his life and thought, New Delhi, Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India - 1978.
- KRISHNAMURTI, The Impossible Question, Victor Gollancz, 1972.
- MACINTYER, ALASDAIR, Marcuse, Fontana, 1970.
- MAHADEVAN, T.K.(ed) Truth and Non-violence: report of the UNESCO Symposium on truth and non-violence in Gandhi's humanism, Paris, 14-17 October, 1969, N.Delhi, Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1970.
- MARCUSE, HERBERT, One Dimensional Man, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Eros & Civilisation, Sphere Books, 1969.
- MARLOWE, C., Tragical history of Doctor Faustus and Goethis Faust, London, Oxford University Press, 1955.
- MASHRUWALA, K.G., Gandhi and Marx, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1951 (reprinted 1971)
- MEHTA VED, Mahatma Gandhi and his Apostles, The Viking Press, 1977.
- MIRI, M., "My Language and Yours"

- MISHRA, R.S., "On Violence",
- MURDOCH, IRIS, Sovereignty of Good, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.
- PATON, H.J., The Moral Law, London, Huchlison University Library, 1948.
- PHILLIPS, D.D., Death and Immortality, London Macmillan, 1970.
- REICH, CHARLES Greening of America, London, The Penguin, 1971.
- SAMPSON RONALD "Religion and Science", Gandhi Mark - p.74, Vol. 14, May, 1980.
- SARAN, A.K., "Gandhi and the concept of Politics: Towards a Normal Civilisation," Gandhi Marg, Vol. II, Feb. 1980.
- SARTRE, JEAN PAUL Existentialism & Humanism, Methuen & Co., London, 1948.
- SCHUMACHER, E.F., Small is Beautiful, London, Blond and Briggs, 1973.
- SHOURIE, A., "Gandhi minus Truth and God", Gandhi Marg.
- TOLSTOY, L., What is Art? and essays on art, London, Oxford University Press, 1930 (reprinted 1975).
- UBERQI, J.P.S., Science and Culture, Oxford University Press, 1978.
- URMSON, J.O., Philosophical Analysis, Oxford University Press, 1967.
- VLASTOS, G., Plato : A collection of Critical essays, London, Macmillan, 1972.
- WARNOCK, G.J., Contemporary Moral Philosophy, London, Macmillan, 1967.
- Object of Morality, London, Methuen, 1971.

- WARNOCK, MARY                    Existentialism, London, Oxford  
University Press, 1970.
- WESTON, MICHAEL                Morality and the Self,  
Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1975.
- WITTGENSTEIN, L.,               Philosophical Investigations,  
Oxford Basil Blackwell, 1974.
- ,                      Lectures and Conversations on  
Aesthetics, Psychology and  
religious belief - Oxford, Basil  
Blackwell, 1970.
- WOODCOCK, G.,                    Gandhi, Fontana, 1972.

## BIO-DATA

Name - Shephali Panigrahi

Date of Birth- 8th August 1956

Academic - M.A.  
qualification

Publication - "Gandhi on Humility" Indian  
Philosophical Quarterly,  
April, 1981.

MEMO BOOK  
Date No 10/5/84  
Date by  
Date  
Date by  
Date by  
Date by  
Date by