

PHILOSOPHICAL TAOISM, CASTALIA, AND GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY

A SYNOPSIS OF HUMANITY IN SEARCH OF THE SPIRIT

By

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"Although I have my hopes, how can they be attained? Knowing that they cannot be attained, and trying to force them on the world, only adds to the confusion. Therefore, I shall leave it alone and yet when I leave it alone, who will share this sorrow with me?"¹

Humankind's confrontation with its harsh existential reality has been the major motivating and compelling force behind the development of philosophies-of-life. Thinkers with great awareness and sensitivity have searched for ways to make their lives tolerable, or meaningful, or perhaps even pleasant; some have even sought for ways to move all of humanity along such a path. These philosophers were looking for ultimate, absolute purposes for life and answers to timeless questions, either in external supernatural forces or within themselves. They were groping for the Answer, for the true nature of the spirit of God and the spirit of a human being.

Being considered here are three unique ways to approach the spirit: Philosophical Taoism, Hermann Hesse's Castalia, and Gandhian Philosophy. These philosophies are representative of the world view of three distinctly perspectives: the Chinese, the Western European, and the Indian respectively.

The first approach, Taoism, is most basic: it involves spiritual cultivation in isolation from society, The second, Castalia, adds to this base the idea of intellectual cultivation. The last, Gandhian Philosophy, combines spirit and intellect with service, which it stresses. These three philosophies can be seen as building upon each other, forming at last a more complete structure which has the potential to attain humankind's timeless hopes of tolerable, meaningful and pleasant lifetimes on the earth.

Philosophical Taoism

The concept of the Tao existed in ancient China long before any philosophies were organized and written down. Tao, literally, means "way", "channel" of a river, or "path". The full scope of the meaning of the word is difficult to express,

[...] Tao is the mother of all things; it cannot be named or predicated; it manifests itself in form and disappears again in formlessness; it does not act; it does not talk; it is the fathomless and inexhaustible source of all life; it is strictly impersonal [...] it is impartial [...] it is immanent [...] and it operates in cycles by the principle of reversion, which causes the leveling of all opposites, making alike success and failure, strength and weakness, life and death, etc. ²

¹ Lin Yutang, trans. and ed. *The Wisdom of Lao-tse* (New York: Modern Library, 1948), pp. 130-16

² *Ibid.*, p.69.

When not interfered with, the Tao leads naturally to peace, health, and prosperity.³ The Tao is so quiet that its existence may go undetected, except by intuition.⁴

During the "Golden Age of Chinese Philosophy," in the middle of the Chou Dynasty (c. 500 B.C.), Philosophical Taoism (as distinguished from Religious Taoism, which developed many centuries later) was formulated and expounded upon by Lao tzu⁵ (c. 600 B.C.) and Chuang tzu (c. 300 B.C.). It is said in legend that Lao tzu left his job as curator of the imperial archives in the capital city, Loyang, feeling that the search for mere knowledge was futile because it distorted the natural simplicity of the Tao. Believing that China was too chaotic for just one person to initiate real change, he withdrew from society to cultivate his own personal life as the only truly good thing he could do.⁶

Taoism [...] is a philosophy of the essential unity of the universe (monism), of reversion, polarization (yin and yang), and eternal cycles, of the leveling of all differences, the relativity of all standards, and the return of all to the Primeval One, the divine intelligence, and the source of all things.

It involves a lack of desire for strife or struggle for the advantage. In this way, meekness and humility "find a rational basis" and a peaceable temperament is instilled in people.⁷ "Confucians worship culture and reason; Taoists reject them in favor of nature and intuition [...]."⁸

Taoism therefore advocates realizing "the simple self":

*Banish wisdom, discard knowledge,
And the people will profit a hundredfold; [...]
Banish cunning, discard "utility", [...]
Reveal thy simple self,
Embrace thy original nature,
Check thy selfishness,
Curtail thy desires.⁹*

Although "few modern readers can be in sympathy with Lao tzu's nihilistic rejection of knowledge and his teachings of 'keeping the people ignorant' [...]"

It should be remembered that the whole Laotsean philosophy was against overdevelopment of knowledge and learning, and insisted that not only the people should return to primitive simplicity, but the King and the Sage himself also should do so. Furthermore, it was from a period

³ John B. Noss, *Man's Religions* (The Macmillan Co., 4th revised edition, 1969). pp. 130-1

⁴ Ibid., p. 262.

⁵ Lao tzu is possibly only a legendary character, according to many authorities. The name literally means "Old Masters". The book of this name may have been written or compiled by an anonymous author or group of authors,

⁶ Noss, pp. 259-60.

⁷ Lin, p. 14.

⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 119-20.

of political world chaos, in which man's intellectual progress showed no commensurate moral advance, that such nihilistic philosophy developed as a protest.¹⁰

Both philosophers maintained that *"the decline of Tao came with the development of knowledge [...]. With the teaching of conscious virtues came hypocrisy, and with hypocrisy came world chaos."¹¹ They felt that the *"Tao is obscured by our inadequate understanding, and words are obscured by flowery expressions [...]. Each [person or school of thought] denying what the other affirms and affirming what the other denies brings us only confusion."¹² Chuang tzu summarizes:**

Those who rely upon the arc, the line, compasses, and the square to make correct forms injure the natural constitution of things. Those who use cords to bind and glue two pieces together interfere with the natural character of things. Those who seek to satisfy the mind of man by hampering it with ceremonies and music and affecting humanity and justice have lost the original nature of man. There is an original nature in things. Things in their original nature are curved without the help of arcs, straight without lines, round without compasses, and rectangular without squares; they are joined together without glue, and hold together without cords. In this manner all things grow with abundant life, without knowing how they do so. They all have a place in the scheme of things without knowing how they come to have their proper place. From time immemorial this has been so, and it may not be tampered with. [...]

People with superfluous keenness of vision put into confusion the five colors, lose themselves in the forms and designs, and in the distinctions of greens and yellows [...]. People with superfluous keenness of hearing put into confusion the five notes, exaggerate the tonic differences of the six pitch-pipes, and the various timbres of metal, stone, string, and bamboo [...]. People who abnormally develop humanity, exalt character and suppress nature in order to gain a reputation, make the world noisy with their discussions and cause it to follow impractical doctrines [...]. People who commit excess in arguments, like piling up bricks and tying knots, analyzing and inquiring into the distinctions of hard and white, identities and differences, wear themselves out over vain, useless terms [...]. All these are superfluous and devious growths of knowledge and are not the correct guide for the world [...]. He who would be the ultimate guide of the world should take care to preserve the original nature of man [...] it would seem that humanity and justice were not a part of human nature.¹³

The ultimate truth of the Tao cannot be discovered either by words or silence, because, as Chuang tzu points out, *"discussion has its limitation",¹⁴*

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 285-6.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 114-5.

¹² Ibid., p. 48.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 58-9.

¹⁴ Laureice G. Thompson, *The Religious Life of Man (Series): The Chinese Way in Religion* (Encino, California: Dickenson Publishing Co., 1973), p. 50.

Art, like the Tao, is ultimately incommunicable. Books are merely the discarded casings of wisdom. If the Taoist speaks or writes, he does so merely to arouse interest in his doctrines, and without any hope of communicating what others cannot be made to feel.¹⁵

*The experience of dwelling in the generality [of a comprehensive view of all things — of blending all into an harmonious whole] is not attainable by the searches of reason, for the reason is too actively concerned with the discrimination of particulars. Real knowing is passive, receptive.*¹⁶

Man must learn to depend on what he does not know to comprehend the meaning of Tao,¹⁷

Taoists advocate withdrawal from society with the realization that *"one has to live, but does not depend on the cunning of the mind."*¹⁸ One sets aside one's own viewpoints, prejudices, abstractions and imagination.¹⁹ One lives knowing humility, *"gentleness, resignation, the futility of contention, the strength of weakness and the tactical advantages of lying low"*, keeping one's spiritual power in reserve through tranquility and inaction.²⁰ Striving for uselessness in the eyes of the world,²¹ the sage adopts a *"cannot-be-helped attitude [of patient condescension]"* towards the material world and the daily problems of existence; at the same time he allows his spirit to roam freely in the immaterial world.²² The man of character *"has plenty of money to spend, and does not know where it comes from."*²³

The idea behind this theory of inaction is that moral standards, being man-made, are superficial and superfluous. They represent a futile search for absolute values. A wise man, therefore, is inactive: all action should be spontaneous and in harmony with the natural order; conscious action on man's part is interference and worsens any situation.²⁴

¹⁵ Arthur Valey, *The Way and Its Power: A Study of the TAO TÊ CHING and Its Place in Chinese Thought* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1934), p. 59.

¹⁶ Noss, p. 268.

¹⁷ Lin, pp. 174-5.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 190.

¹⁹ R. B. Blakney, *The Way of Life: Lao Tzu: Wisdom of Ancient China* (New York: Mentor, 1955), p. 53.

²⁰ Lin, pp. 10-11.

²¹ "A carpenter passed by a huge tree, judging its wood to be without quality, and the tree to be good for nothing. The tree's spirit spoke to him in a dream that night, saying: "What is it you intend to compare me with? Is it with fine-grained wood? Look at the cherry, apple, the pear, the orange, the pumelo, and other fruit bearers. As soon as their fruit ripens they are stripped and treated with indignity. The great boughs are snapped off, the small ones scattered abroad. Thus do these trees by their own value injure their own lives. They cannot fulfil their allotted span of years, but perish prematurely because they destroy themselves for the (admiration of) the world. Thus it is with all things. Moreover, I tried for a long period to be useless. Many times I was in danger of being cut down, but at length I have succeeded, and so have become exceedingly useful to myself. Had I indeed been of use, I should not be able to grow to this height. Moreover, you and I are both created things. Have done then with this criticism of each other. Is a good-for-nothing fellow in imminent danger of death a fit person to talk of a good-for-nothing tree?" The carpenter knew then that "the means it adopts for safety is different from that of others, and to criticize it by ordinary standards would be far wide off the mark." Lin, pp. 137-8.

²² Ibid., p. 77.

²³ Ibid., p. 129.

²⁴ Dun J. Li, *The Ageless Chinese: A History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2nd edition, 1971), p. 87.

*[...] if the gentleman can refrain from disturbing the internal economy of man and glorifying the powers of sight and hearing, [...] the movements of his spirit [call] forth the natural mechanism of Heaven. He can remain calm and leisurely doing nothing, while all things are brought to maturity and thrive [...].*²⁵

Chuang tzu adds, *"Rest in inaction, and the world will be reformed of itself. Forget your body and spit forth intelligence. Ignore all differences and become one with the Infinite."*²⁶ *"Take no heed of time nor of right and wrong. Passing into the realm of the Infinite, take your final rest therein."*²⁷

When one finally reaches the goal of ecstasy of absorption into the quiet and truth of the Tao, one cultivates an air of stupidity to prevent others from interfering with one's aloofness from worldly concerns. *"In a world of rapidly shifting and changing appearances, he knows it is best to be calm and not active, to accept life and not take it seriously."*²⁸

Lao tzu's paradoxical verse provides a concise conclusion to Taoist thought:

*Without stepping outside one's door,
One can know what is happening in the world,
Without looking out of one's windows,
One can see the Tao of Heaven.
The farther one pursues knowledge,
The less one knows,
Therefore the Sage knows without running about,
Understands without seeing,
Accomplishes without doing.*²⁹

*Banish learning, and vexations end [...]
Between "good and "evil"
How much difference is there? [...]
The people of the world are merrymaking [...]
I alone am mild, like one unemployed,
Like a new-born babe that cannot yet smile,
Unattached, like one without a home [...]
The vulgar are knowing, luminous;
I alone am dull, confused.
The vulgar are clever, self-assured;
I alone, depressed,
Patient as the sea,
Adrift, seemingly aimless.*

²⁵ Lin, pp. 61-2.

²⁶ Ibid., p.112.

²⁷ Ibid., p.55.

²⁸ Noss, p.268.

²⁹ Lin, p. 227.

*The people of the world all have a purpose;
I alone appear stubborn and uncouth.
I alone differ from the other people,
And value drawing sustenance from the Mother.*³⁰

II, Hermann Hesse's Castalia

Castalia is a realm where the spirit is cultivated through the intellect. Its ultimate technique to accomplish this cultivation is the Glass Bead Game, "an act of mental synthesis through which the spiritual values of all ages are perceived as simultaneously present and vitally alive."³¹ "The Game was not mere practice and mere recreation; it became a form of concentrated self-awareness for intellectuals [...]. It afforded them a pleasure which somewhat compensated for their renunciation of worldly pleasures and ambitions."³²

The goal of the Game was to develop two opposing themes,

such as law and freedom, individual and community [...] with complete equality and impartiality, to evolve out of thesis and antithesis the purest possible synthesis. Games with discordant, negative, or skeptical conclusions were unpopular and at times actually forbidden [...] the Game [...] represented an elite symbolic form of seeking for perfection, a sublime alchemy, an approach to that mind which beyond all images and multiplicities is one within itself — in other words, to God [...] perfection, pure being, the fullness of reality [...] realizing" [...] a path from Becoming to Being, from potentiality to reality.

For a few players, the game was a form of "worship."³³

The decline of values in the twentieth century caused intellectuals to isolate themselves from reality, resulting in the Castalia described in the year 2400.³⁴ Even Joseph Knecht's "Lives" show a "rejection of life and a devotion to the autonomous spiritual realm from which Joseph Knecht defected."³⁵ Society was viewed with "distrust and hostility" by Castalians.³⁶ The Music Master explained to young Knecht that outside Castalia

freedom exists, but it is limited to the one unique act of choosing a profession. Afterward all freedom is over [...] at the university, the doctor, lawyer, or engineer is forced into an extremely rigid curriculum which ends with [...] examinations. If he passes them, he can pursue his profession in seeming freedom. But in so doing, he becomes the slave of base powers; he is dependent on success, on money, on his ambition, his hunger for fame, on whether or not people

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 128-9.

³¹ Theodore Ziolkowski, *The Novels of Hermann Hesse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. ix.

³² Hermann Hesse, *Magister Ludi: The Glass Bead Game*, Richard and Clara Winston, trans, (New York: Bantam, 1969).

³³ Ibid., pp. 30-1.

³⁴ Ziolkowski, p. 285.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 296-7.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 300.

like him. He must submit to elections, must earn money, must take part in the ruthless competition of castes, families, political parties, newspapers. In return he has the freedom to become successful and well-to-do, and to be hated by the unsuccessful, or vice versa. For the elite pupil and later member of the Order, everything is the other way around. He does not choose any profession. He does not imagine that he is a better judge of his own talents than are his teachers. He accepts the place and function within the hierarchy that his superiors choose for him [...] In the midst of this seeming unfreedom every electus enjoys the greatest imaginable freedom after his early courses. [...] [He] enjoys so much freedom that there are many who all their lives choose the most abstruse and frequently almost foolish studies [...] each, as if of his own accord, finds his way to the place in which he can serve, and in service be free [...] he is saved from that "freedom" of career which means such terrible slave., He knows nothing of the struggle for money, fame, rank: he recognizes no parties, no dichotomy between the individual and the office, between what is private and what is public; he feels no dependence upon success.³⁷

Castalians did not consider themselves to be a part of the world's history. "For us contemplation is more important than action [...]."³⁸

[...] Castalia seeks neither political sway nor influence on peace or war. Indeed, there could be no question of Castalia's having any such purpose [...] because everything Castalian is related to reason and operates within the framework of rationality — which certainly could not be said of world history, [...]. Rather, culture, or mind, or soul, has its own independent history — a second, secret, bloodless, and sanctified history—running parallel to what is generally called world history, by which we mean incessant struggles for material power. Our Order deals only with this sanctified and secret history, not with "real," brutal world history. It can never be our task to be continually taking soundings on political history, let alone to shape it [...], our Order has no right to do anything about it. Our only position must be one of patient waiting to see what comes.³⁹

The young Knecht expressed doubts about the fulfillment possible in an existence that denies part of human nature in a poem called "But Secretly We Thirst [...]":

[...] Our lives appear serene and without stress
A gentle dance around pure nothingness [...]
But deep beneath the tranquil surface burns
Longing for blood, barbarity, and night [...]
We live so playfully,
But secretly we crave reality;
Begetting, birth, and suffering, and death.⁴⁰

He was influenced by his early contact with the outer world in the debates with Plinio Designori, who decided to return to worldly life after graduating from the elite Castalian school because he saw that

³⁷ Hesse, pp. 61-2.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 330-1.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 337.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 399.

"to remain among you [Castalians] would mean escaping. It would be a fine, a noble escape perhaps, but still an escape."⁴¹ He later told Knecht:

There were times when I looked up to you members of the Order and Glass Bead Game players with such reverence, such a sense of inferiority, and such envy that you might have been gods or supermen, forever serene, forever playing, forever enjoying your own existences, forever immune to suffering. At other times you seemed to me either pitiable or contemptible, eunuchs, artificially confined to an eternal childhood, childlike and childish in your cool, tightly fenced, neatly tidied playground and kindergarten, where every nose is carefully wiped and every troublesome emotion is soothed, every dangerous thought repressed, where everyone plays nice, safe, bloodless games for a lifetime and every jagged stirring of life, every strong feeling, every genuine passion, every rapture is promptly checked, deflected, and neutralized by meditation therapy. Isn't it an artificial, sterilized, didactically pruned world, a mere sham world without vices, without passions, without hunger, without sap and salt, without children, almost without women? The instinctual life is tamed by meditation. For generations you have left to others dangerous, daring, and responsible things like economics, law, and politics. Cowardly and well-protected, fed by others, and having few burdensome duties, you lead your drones' lives, and so that they won't be too boring you busy yourselves with all these erudite specialties, count syllables and letters, make music, and play the Glass Bead Game, while outside in the filth of the world poor harried people live real lives and do real work.⁴²

What Knecht learned from Plinio was put into an historical perspective encompassing a broad scope when he spent several years with Father Jacobus at the monastery of Mariafels.

Knecht learned from the Benedictine [Father Jacobus] something he could scarcely have learned in the Castalia of those days. He [...] experienced history not as an intellectual discipline, but as reality, as life; and in keeping with that, the transformation and elevation of his own personal life into history. This was something he could not have learned from a mere scholar. Father Jacobus was not only far more than a scholar, a seer, and a sage: he was also a mover and 'shaper'. He had used the position in which fate had placed him not just to warm himself at the cozy fires of a contemplative existence; he had allowed the winds of the world to blow through his scholar's den and admitted the perils and forebodings of the age into his heart. He had taken action, had shared the blame and the responsibility for the events of his time; he had not contented himself with surveying, arranging, and interpreting the happenings of the distant past. And he had not dealt only with ideas, but with the refractoriness of matter and the obstinacy of men.⁴³

Castalians did not find history an interesting or intellectual study. They eliminated it from their studies and from their minds, forgetting that Castalia, too, was a part of history, a result of growth and changes in humanity that would not be able to survive if it lost the ability to change and grow itself. Knecht began to understand this fully during his term as Magister Ludi, when he discovered the noblest gifts and gravest deficiencies of the Castalian way of life.⁴⁴ He saw "within himself a metaphysical sense of

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 93.

⁴² Ibid., p. 286.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 173-4.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 325.

the transitoriness of all that has evolved and the problematical nature of everything created by the human mind."⁴⁵ He understood that

*"history cannot come into being without the substance and the dynamism of this sinful world of egoism and instinctuality, and that even such sublime creations as the Order were born into this cloudy torrent and sooner or later will be swallowed up by it again."*⁴⁶

The "awakening" which Knecht experienced during his term as Magister Ludi taught him to acknowledge and listen to the non-intellectual part of himself,

"Awakening," it seemed, was not so much concerned with truth and cognition, but with experiencing and proving oneself in the real world.

*When you had such an awakening, you did not penetrate any closer to the core of things, to truth; you grasped, accomplished, or endured only the attitude of your own ego to the momentary situation. You did not find laws, but came to decisions; you did not thrust your way into the center of the world, but into the center of your own individuality. That, too, was why the experience of awakening was so difficult to convey, so curiously hard to formulate, so remote from statement. Language did not seem designed to make communication from this realm of life."*⁴⁷

Knecht re-evaluated Castalian values and found them incomplete, representing only part of reality. He realized "We are ourselves history and share the responsibility for world history and our position in it. But we gravely lack awareness of this responsibility."⁴⁸ The narrator, who is a product of a later Castalia which had learned this from Knecht, points out that

*"[...] if thinking is not kept pure and keen, and if respect for the world of the mind is no longer operative [...] chaos will ensue [...] but] the externals of civilization — technology, industry, commerce, and so on — also require a common basis of intellectual honesty and morality."*⁴⁹

Knecht realized that Castalia, as well as he, himself, could not remain isolated from the rest of humanity: this Isolation was destructive for both worlds.

"Awakening" is Knecht's word for "the existential experience of reality" in contrast to the controlled and detached Castalian vision of life.⁵⁰ It is the process by which humanity grows and develops, however gradually. As such, it is more permanent and more important than any humanly-conceived institutions, which are merely outward manifestations of the present level humanity has reached. Theology, art, and language are bound by time and are merely characteristics of humanity at certain levels of its development, as it strives towards truth and the acknowledgment of the unity of all; each

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 243.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 244-5.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 351-2.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 325.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 25.

⁵⁰ Ziolkowski, p. 316.

discipline someday will be conquered, disappear, and be replaced.⁵¹ "Awakening" bridges the gap between contemplation and action, between analysis and involvement in the moment.⁵² *"Knowledge is action [...] experience. It does not continue. It's duration lasts a moment."*⁵³

Knecht's "awakening" resulted in his defection from his elite community. He felt that *"He would be a coward who withdrew from the challenges, sacrifices, and dangers his people had to endure."*⁵⁴ Out in the world, Castalians had to continue seeking and spreading the truth, but it was now to be the whole truth they sought. *"Teachers are more essential than anything else, men who can give the young the ability to judge and distinguish, who serve them as examples of the honoring of truth [and] obedience to the things of the spirit [...] we must recognize the humble, highly responsible service to the secular schools as the chief and most honorable part of our mission."*⁵⁵

Magister Ludi ends with a plea for engagement and commitment.⁵⁶ Knecht's death represents his commitment to people and to life, and his rejection of the abstraction of Castalia.⁵⁷ The narrator is seen to be living in the ideal Castalia Knecht dreamed of — a combination of "the spirit and intellect committed to the service of mankind."⁵⁸

Hermann Hesse finished *Magister Ludi* as Nazism was gathering strength in Germany. He saw graphically that many intellectuals had failed humanity, and that any effort to wholly isolate the spiritual realm from social reality was futile and even destructive.⁵⁹

The role of the spirit in the modern world is as vital an issue today as it was 2000 years ago. The lesson to be learned from Joseph Knecht is that the "spirit must be given meaning by religion; and it must be given direction by the state (practical life)."⁶⁰ Hesse's "magical thinking" is, ultimately, accepting freedom and moral responsibility in the existential confrontation with reality.⁶¹ Albert Camus put it this way: "There are no longer guilty men [...] only responsible ones."⁶² Hesse believed that in the third stage of the "triadic rhythm of humanization," the pious person and the rational person may together reach a love yet unknown to human experience,⁶³

⁵¹ Hermann Hesse, "A Bit of Theology" (1932), Renate Otzen, trans. (U.C.S.B. German 159-A, Honor's Paper, Fall, 1973, p.3).

⁵² Ziolkowski, p. 316.

⁵³ Hesse, "A Bit of Theology," p. 8.

⁵⁴ Hesse, *Magister Ludi*, p. 332.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 335-6.

⁵⁶ Ziolkowski, p. 307.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 329-30.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

⁵⁹ Hesse, *Magister Ludi*, pp. xiii.

⁶⁰ Ziolkowski, p. 332.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 357.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 356.

⁶³ Hesse, "A Bit of Theology," p. 11.

III. The Gandhian Philosophy

The Gandhian Philosophy encompasses cultivation of spirit, intellect, and service to humanity. These three elements were tightly intertwined in Gandhi's mind. Together they merge to form as close a representation of God's nature as a person is capable of perceiving. Together, if lived with and truly believed in, Gandhi felt they would result in healthy, meaningful, and pleasant lives for all people.

Ten carefully selected quotations from Gandhi's writings follow; they clearly and beautifully illustrate how people may direct their energies toward service of humankind, elaborating upon Joseph Knecht's thoughts,

Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being, Without inter-relation with society he cannot realize his oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism. His social interdependence enables him to test his faith and to prove himself on the touchstone of reality. If man were so placed or could so place himself as to be absolutely above all dependence on his fellow-beings he would become so proud and arrogant as to be a veritable burden and nuisance to the world. Dependence on society teaches him the lesson of humanity. That a man ought to be able to satisfy most of his essential needs himself is obvious; but it is no less obvious to me that when self-sufficiency is carried to the length of isolating oneself from society it almost amounts to sin.⁶⁴

I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of "sound and fury signifying nothing."⁶⁵

The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done except through one's country, I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of the humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbors. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Mohandas K. Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers* (New York: UNESCO: World Without War Publications, 1972 edition), pp. 160-9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

So a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed, if he is prepared to embrace death and renounce his body for the sake of human service.⁶⁷

We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation, and learn to use the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes with us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness and the beatific vision in the fullness of time.⁶⁸

I am endeavouring to see God through service of humanity, for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in every one.⁶⁹

True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as true ethics to be worth its name must, at the same time, be also good economics.⁷⁰

If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors.⁷¹

It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words [...] Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you.⁷²

Life is greater than all art.⁷³

We have somehow accustomed ourselves to the belief that art is independent of the purity of private life. I can say with all the experience at my command that nothing could be more untrue. As I am nearing the end of my earthly life I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice and be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is achieved very rarely.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 115.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 64,

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 54.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 144.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 157.

⁷² Ibid., p. 55.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 163.

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 163-4.

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