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12. Ibid, p 91
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Appendix

JK and Nature

Any study or discussion of JK’s teachings will be incomplete if we do not take into consideration JK’s views on Nature. Actually, nature is a kind of a backdrop for his teachings. (That he was fond of nature and a natural, peaceful surrounding is very obvious; all the K foundations or centers are situated at beautiful places with lots of trees, open skies, water-bodies or hills close by.)

‘Commentaries on Living (I,II,III)’ and ‘K’s Notebook’ contain wonderful descriptions of nature- trees, flowers, birds, skies, rain, clouds, sunset and sunrise, hills, mountains, rivers, streams, whispering waters, rustling leaves, sweet notes of birds, animals like monkeys, cats etc. are strewn all through his writings. In a very lucid language he paints the picture of a landscape and brings it to life. He talks about listening to a tree. His descriptions are not there for any informative purpose. He held that man is a part of nature and if he is cut off from her, he is lost. For him, observing nature without bringing in one’s likes- dislikes, prejudices etc.is the true observation.

He highly valued man’s relationship with nature which is love and respect for nature. He said that if you cannot have relationship with nature, you cannot have relationship with anybody, anything else. This is how he put it- “If you lose touch with nature, you lose touch with humanity.” (Krishnamurti Journal, 39th, 14.04.1995) JK observed that man has lost this touch with nature; he goes to nature not out of love or respect but for some gain or entertainment or for hunting. Ruthless killing of animals or fish for food, for sport or for medical/ scientific experiments is taking place because man has lost this touch and has become selfish and greedy.

‘Going to nature’ is an activity that has picked up very fast in the recent past. Burdens and monotony of everyday life are put aside for a while and people go to the woods, sanctuaries for camps. According to JK man has built this corrupt society and he ‘escapes’ into nature in this way. Killing of animals for research purposes is accepted as inevitable and is justified. JK says
that we should in fact look for other options if we really love them. And, going by the human intellectual achievements, his question is quite apt. We have lost sensitivity to nature and we treat her harshly, and then we say that we have environmental problems! As he said in some other context, “To live in this world and yet not be of the world is our problem.” (The Collected Works of Krishnamurti, New Delhi, 1st Public talk, 1948) We live in nature and yet we are not of the nature and that is our problem. And it is high time we realized this.

Quite often JK draws our attention to nature and natural order. There is order in the universe, he points out, but man brings disorder to it. His greed and haste make him interfere with the natural order. Abundant, excessive and thoughtless use of the natural resources like water, wood, oars and minerals, of the flora and fauna, killing some species almost to extinction - the examples are ample and there for everyone to see.

What he means by natural order is seen in a beautifully narrated story in ‘Krishnamurti Journal’ (06.04.1975). He was staying at a house in Malibu. A picturesque description of the pacific is followed by what happened there during his stay. The house had a quiet garden, green lawns and flowers. Some rabbits started coming there in the mornings and evenings. In spite of a netted wire, they would eat up the flowers and the saplings. How to stop them and save the flowers and saplings was a big problem; killing them was out of question. But then one day a black cat arrived and started wandering around, a barn owl perched itself on a nearby tree. Soon the rabbits disappeared and order was restored to the garden. There was no need for human interference for the restoration of the natural order.

JK did not consider himself as different or separate from nature. This is how he puts it in words in Krishnamurti Journal, “He (JK refers himself in the third person in the journal) always had this strange lack of distance between himself and trees, rivers and mountains. It wasn’t cultivated; you can’t cultivate a thing like that. There was never a wall between him and another…. He was not withdrawn or aloof was like the waters of a river.” I think this beautifully sums up his meaning of ‘being of nature’.
This sense of naturalness, things happening on their own or taking care of themselves without exerting efforts, without imposition of an external pressure is seen when he says that freedom is something that happens to you, meditation cannot be enforced. Order is falling of things in place and that is something natural. This is also discipline that comes from within. ‘Keep the windows and doors open and let the wind come in’- this is what he says about freedom, meditation and love. This reminds us of Plato’s balance, rhythm and order in connection with beauty. Then there exists love because there is order, which means that there is no conflict and therefore no enemies. This is the state of love and also of peace. Thus we find that JK tells us that there is a lot that we can learn from nature and that will truly enrich our living.
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