CHAPTER-IV.

The practical importance of Gandhian, Krishnamurtian and Galtung’s concept of non-violence and peace.

We have discussed the concepts of Non-Violence, Peace and Conflict from the standpoints of Gandhi, Krishnamurti and Johan Galtung in the previous chapters. Question remains as to the practical significance of their views in the present societies, i.e. in the present crisis of the world. Are their concepts able to teach us the ethical value, need and justification for a reorientation of our being i.e. moral being and transformation of our societal aspects of existence? Are we able to adopt their method living in the present crisis of the world?

For this we need to identify the crisis and its basic nature. From Gandhi’s point of view, the crisis consists in non-realization and non-perception of our perfectibility in terms of our ability to transcend the ‘brute force’ within ourselves. At present the crisis has percolated into almost all sectors of human life. Violence in domestic, public, socio-cultural and political spheres has become rampant and limitless in various shapes. Greed for power is another important component of it. Egotism has gone beyond all limits in individual domain of life the removal of which would have been possible by self-correction through individual moral spiritual practice; it has now become the essence of national, social, ethno-cultural and ethno-national life of men and women. Gandhian way suggests a holistic insight into it. It also speaks for moral practice of \textit{ahimsa} in an integrated sense that bridges the gulf between individual and collective lives. Non-perception of the ‘soul force’ within us is the chief characteristic of the crisis today.

For Krishnamurti, the crisis is essentially a crisis of fragmentation of our existence. Fragmentation is generated out of individual’s subscription to
institutionalized version of his self and ego. Institutionalized version is transmitted to and instilled into the mind of the individual by various external sources like tradition, culture, ideology, religion etc. to such an extent that it conceals and apparently replaces the real self of the individual. This concocted self or me is the unreal self and whatever problem it speaks of is not seen by the real self who may be or is responsible for the perpetuation of the problem. Thought becomes mechanical when there is no live relationship between experience and existence. The Me' or concocted self is operative under the spell of and in accordance with ideas, rules, laws and an overall dictation of the institutionalized version of the individual man. As a result there is hardly any actualization of ideals like peace and non-violence. As Malik points out, “That man has enough weapon to kill his kind fifty times over- as if once were not enough –is a comment on the state of affairs. It underlines the domination of idea and ideology at the cost of man himself. In other words, mechanical thought- as described- rides man.”¹ The crisis is quite apparent. But the crisis at the deeper psychic level is more serious in the sense that we do not realize that its diagnosis is possible within ourselves and cure only by getting rid of the fragmented self.

From Galtung’s point of view the crisis, in addition to non-perception and non-realization of the ‘perfectbility’ within ourselves to go beyond violence, lies in a serious methodological lacuna in peace research and peace making process. The lacuna lies in non-cognizance of the social structural root of conflict and violence. We have not so far been able to develop peace strategy and a philosophy of peace out of a perception of the distinction between direct and structural violence and explicate the concept of peace binarily and contrastingly with opposite characteristics of violence. We normally look at only direct violence. But, according to Galtung, the history of direct violence paves the way to structural violence: “The massive direct violence over centuries seeps down
and sediments as massive structural violence, with whites as the master top dogs and blacks are the slave underdogs, producing and reproducing massive cultural violence with racist ideas every where. After some time, direct violence is forgotten, slavery is forgotten, and only two labels show up, pale enough for college textbooks: 'discrimination' for massive structural violence and 'prejudice' for massive cultural violence. Sanitation of Language: itself cultural violence.

Crises, crises due to apparent ignorance of indirect structural–cum-cultural violence continue to perpetuate human misery further and further.

We know that Gandhi was the fore runner of non-violence, though the concept had already existed in our system. In Gandhi’s discourses, the concept gathered certain new nuances because of some specific conditions. Firstly, the period was a sensitive period to Indians as India was under British rule, and every one was eager to gain freedom. And Gandhi was a successful person to understand the feelings of Indians. Hence his concept of non-violence, though fundamentally based upon moral corrections of one’s own self, was also internally related to the indian socio-political upheaval for national freedom. His philosophy of non-violence could not be separated from the nationalist discourse. For developing this nationalist discourse traditional and cultural identity of Indians as Indians was an important theme for Gandhi.

Further, Gandhi adopted the concept of swadeshi, swaraj and the Dandy March which directly won the heart of the Indians. Indians, at that time had felt that it was a vital issue that Gandhiji emphasized. For that reason the Indians were ready to adopt non-violent method. Besides Gandhiji’s significant political achievement through these ethico-political measures in non-violent way, the prudence dimension of political non-violence was also apparent. It was convincing that countering British Raj with arms and ammunition was a well-high impossibility. In this sense Gandhi’s emphasis on non-violence for India’s Swaraj owes more to his fore-thought. The deeper philosophy in the explication
of swaraj and non-violence did not surface in that context. The practicality of *ahimsa* is to be understood more in a pure mundane sense. Of course, we may legitimately hold that this mundane practicality is important as it corroborates the ‘practical’ in the sense of ‘moral’ essence of non-violence. The ‘practical’ in its mundane sense thus can not be segregated from ‘practical’ in its moral sense for understanding practicality of non-violence. One may also point out that mundane practicality of non-violence reveals the constructive aspect of non-violence in its moral sense. While it means transcendence from the ‘brute force’ to ‘soul force’, it does not mean transcendence through destruction because that would contradict the very meaning of or essence of non-violence; destruction without violence is contradiction in terms. Hence this transcendence is transcendence through construction and conservation of the love-force. For this reason only as Dennis Dalton points out, Gandhiji, in one point of time of his political activist career, started disliking the term ‘passive resistance’. Satyagraha movement was called ‘Passive resistance’ in its initial stage. Hence Gandhi said, “I call the ‘passive resistance’ to be offered by the Indian community ‘so-called’, because, in my opinion, it is really not resistance, but a policy of ‘communal suffering’.”³ While recalling events of 1906-1907 in South Africa, Gandhiji said, “As the struggle advanced, the phrase ‘passive resistance’ gave rise to certain confusion....... I thus began to call the Indian movement ‘Satyagraha’, that is to say the force which is born of truth and love or non-violence”⁴. As ‘passive resistance’ was too often and narrowly conceived as ‘weapon of the weak’, it could also be characterized by hatred, and, Gandhi remarked, “it could finally manifest itself as violence.”⁵ Hence prudence dimension of non-violence founded upon the military inadequacy of Indians does not really hold. In and through his experiment with truth, Gandhi ultimately disowned the prudence dimension of Satyagraha and ahimsa, and fused his political activism with all the positive moral meanings of non-violence. A
combination or synthesis of *ahimsa* as a creed and *ahimsa* as a policy adds another dimension to the practicality of the concept from Gandhian point of view. In fact, it shows that there is basically no cleavage between Gandhi’s conception of *ahimsa* as his creed or as he would describe it as “the breath of my life” and his recommendation for adopting non-violence on prudential ground. To put it in the words of Raghavan Iyer: “*Ahimsa* as a creed represented for Gandhi an ideal to be reached, a fact of life as well as an act of faith. As it is the law of life, there is no credit for observing it in obvious ways or for recognizing its underlying principle of the sanctity and kinship of all life. Our actions are undoubtedly inconsistent with this belief, but human life is an aspiration, a continual striving after perfection and the ideal must not be lowered because of our weaknesses. *Himsa* proceeds from fear and the casting out of fear is no intellectual fact but a fact of the heart, requiring faith. Gandhi pointed out that there is a philosophy behind the modern worship of brute force with a history to break it, but the microscopic non-militant minority has nothing to fear from it if only it has immovable faith behind it.……. *Ahimsa* as a policy was regarded by Gandhi as the next best thing to *ahimsa* as a creed rather than a mere rationalization of physical weakness or an expression of mere expediency. Although he stressed moral necessity of *ahimsa*, he also wished to point out its political necessity.”

It is to be noted that the practical importance of non-violence, for Gandhi, lies both in individual moral self-correction for sharpening one’s own ‘perfectibility’ and in forming socio-cultural and political will untainted by violence. Unless there is a function of socio-cultural and political will on the foundation of non-violence, there cannot be any progress and development of humanity in the truest sense of the term because what distinguishes humanity from non-human animals is non-violence. To speak of human history is to speak of the progress of man in manifesting ‘non-violence’ or ‘non-injury’ in every aspect of his life.
Thus the most vulnerable field, the field of politics where the common place idea is to rule over other needs to be purified. The political theory has been for ages turning round the question of violence in politics. There is almost unanimous agreement that violence is an evil and it is avoidable. The central idea of politics is to rule over person, and where there is politics there is violence. Gandhi rejected such type of compromise and demonstrated its practical unworthiness. Before Gandhi, a taken-for-granted view of politics prevailed according to which human being seek dominance over others, and make the pursuit of power limitless. Within this spell of power peace can be established in society only through force or violence. Force is thus a necessary pre-requisite for establishing peace and order in society. Hence no political change can be possible without violence. Gandhi’s non-violence questions all these presuppositions. Gandhi was largely influential in questioning the rigid view about the immutability of human nature. He proved that these pre-suppositions were false and only through non-violence one could restore peace in society: violence breeds violence and non-violence breeds peace in society. Thus, we can say that the Gandhian concept of non-violence brings a revolution in political and social thought. At the same time the programmatic vision that Gandhi had in chalking out his political actions also speaks of the practical importance of Gandhian version of non-violence because it was non-violence which remained the key-concept of Gandhi in all his actions, decisions and choices.

From Gandhi’s social philosophical and ethico-political perspective a new concept of autonomy (swaraj) and its sustenance through non-violent measures have been envisaged. The power of non-violence is basically internal and moral an extension of which to societal, cultural and political spheres is possible instead of taking recourse to oppressive, hegemony and annihilationistic violent method for designing and protecting peace in inter-ethnic, inter-communal and international contexts. Violence cannot be stopped or contained in terms of
power that lies outside ourselves in modern technological innovations of arms and ammunition. In the midst of many violent incidents and activities, the ideas of democratic power-sharing, respect for other cultures and cultural identities, tolerance for differences have now considered to be values forming a unitary value perspective in handling issues related to national and international exchange, communication and debates. A lion’s share of the credit, if not the whole credit, surely goes to Gandhi. Krishnamurti’s critical analysis of individual psyche for the purpose of healing up its ego-generated ailments and terminating its violent engagements cannot perhaps be completely cut off from Gandhian perspective of non-violence minus its involvement with social and political reform.

J. Krishnamurti thought that the practice of non-violence or non-injury founded upon one’s own uninterfered self-perception will have an automatic effect on the world out there.

Gandhi sometimes in December 1947, when violence, killings became the order of the day said, “If India has no further use for non-violence, then can she have any for me”. Today we can gain everything through non-violent means instead of this life taking process. By adopting violent means we are destroying our (national) property, we are taking lives of others. But instead of this if we be able to adopt slightly the method of non-violence we would be able to fulfill our demand. Now, though we have passed already 60 years of independence, we are not in a peaceful society. Insurgent groups are taking the lives of people everyday; people are being kidnapped by these groups everyday.

Krishnamurti’s concept teaches us a lesson of humanism. Repeatedly he tells us that it is violence when we identify ourselves as an Indian, as a Pakistani or a Hindu, a Muslim or a Christian because this very identification isolates ourselves from others, from the citizens of other countries or a person of other religion. He tells us that our identity is primarily the identity as human being, not as
Christians or Indians. In this sense, his concept teaches us the lesson of
humanism. In the present day world we are identifying ourselves as Hindus or
Muslims or as Indians, Americans etc. and this very identity breeds conflict in
society. Krishnamurthi holds that conflict among nations is not only due to
ideological differences. Even within the same social spectrum nations are
fighting against each other because their identity is separate and for this reason
any strong nation tries to colonize, suppress and keep backward the weak
nations. As presently the U.S.A. is trying to rule over the other countries and due
to identity differences we are facing nation to nation conflict e.g. India vs.
Pakistan, Ecuador vs. Peru and South Korea vs. North Korea etc. So, it is the
right time when we should identify ourselves as human beings, otherwise the
world will continue to remain fragmented and the process of domination of one
country over another will also prevail.

Krishnamurti holds that life is a series of conflict and understanding of conflict
in relationship is of primary importance. Conflict arises because we fail to
understand the relationship. Understanding of relationship is of primary
importance in society. It is responding to the movement of life and life is a
constant challenge; when the response is inadequate conflict arises. Hence, it is
of primary importance that one knows the relationship rather than what one
thinks it to be. In knowing relationship one discovers what one is. For
understanding oneself relationship is of great significance. If we be able to
understand the relationship, the urge for domination, whether in society or in
family or at national level, we have a clear self-perception. This will minimize
contest and conflict will cease. Because the root cause of conflict is the urge for
domination upon the other. In the present day world, people fail or refuse to
understand the relationship for the fear of losing their secure ground of masked
selves. Understanding of relationship un masks one's own self, takes it out of its
images that really do not pertain to the self. The self becomes almost in the state
of vacuity without any support of any external source, tradition or sastras. Understanding a relationship means understanding one's own fear, violence, pride, prejudice. It means understanding the cleavage between what one wants the other and the reality to be and what actually the other is and the reality is. Cessation of conflict and violence is impossible without this understanding. Today we are following only one pattern. And this very pattern creates conflict, because there is always a contradiction between what one actually is and the pattern.

The pattern is imbibed from system. The pattern, mostly because is based on virtues, sermons and ideals recorded in scriptures and manuals, does not speak openly the negative structure or aspect of human mind. It normally projects only that part of individual human and social psyche which is acceptable in moral and aesthetic sense. But the real mind of the individual is beset with envy, violence and selfishness and all other so-called negative qualities again articulately and publicly disowned and abhorred by this pattern. Hence there is a contradiction and all human relationships become conflictual. Conflicts and violence that we experience outwardly in society and polity arise out of this deeper contradiction in individual psyche and victory of the violent mind concealed under this pattern. Apparently we refuse to take such negative qualities on ourselves, but we readily ascribe them to others, - other individuals, other people, other cultures and societies, and other nations. We hardly try to understand an other as he/she is, dispassionately without relating him/her to our wishes, desires and cravings. Krishnamurti says, “I wonder if we realize that, not theoretically, not intellectually, but actually realize how deeply we are in conflict with each other, and not only with each other but in ourselves. We have accepted conflict as our way of life, externally as war, which is the glorification of tribalism, destroying millions and millions of people. Though the religions talk about peace on earth, they have all, except perhaps Buddhism and Hinduism, killed people. There is
competition, aggression, each one seeking his own success, his own fulfillment. Externally we are in conflict and also internally. That’s a fact; it is not a theory.”

Krishnamurti observed that conflict arises due to relationship; we do not know how to meet with others how to talk with others i.e. how to behave. Hence, the problem of violence and conflict is not the problem of nation or society; it is the problem of individual. If every individual tries to know how to behave with others, if one is able to understand the relationship, the problem of violence and conflict will automatically vanish from the society. Because individual is the molecule of society or we can say that society is the projection of individual. So to eradicate violence from society it is necessary to rectify oneself, and enter into the domain of freedom by consciously disowning the domination of the pattern. For this one needs to have a ‘psychological mutation’.

Psychological revolution is of prime importance to eradicate these social evils. And in the present crisis of society it is of prime importance. Psychological mutation or revolution can bring peace and order in society, and it also can eradicate the sufferings of humanity. Krishnamurti holds that what is important to establish a nonviolent society is not to know how to act, what pattern to follow or to understand which ideology is the best, but the understanding of ones relationship with other. Any thought that produces a pattern of action will only lead to further ignorance and confusion. So, to understand the problem of violence in society one has to understand the problem of individuality, for that understanding of relationship has utmost importance. The prime problem of society is relationship i.e. how one establishes his relations with others and how one behaves with others. So one has to understand himself that what problems lie in his behaviors and within his psyche. The moment he is able to discover his lack he will be able to rectify himself and he will not blame his counter party for conflict and automatically the problem of conflict will cease to exist. And for
understanding the problem we should not follow any leader or boss because they hypnotize people with their sweet utterances. Due to external conditioning over a considerable period of time, self gets fragmented. With our fragmented psyche, we, as individuals, do not look at ourselves from holistic viewpoint nor do we experience the world in a holistic way. When thought is entirely or even partially divorced from the real self and follows blindly the pattern it becomes mechanical and fragmentary. It adds further thoughts of its own kind to itself. Hence a return to one’s owns real self is an imperative without any option.

The remedial measures that Krishnamurti speaks of are surely of practical importance to a reasonable extent not withstanding the difficulty they have. The first measure, as one can glean from his writings, is to free oneself from all conceptual categories, schooling and evaluative judgments on one’s self not by reaction or by producing counter judgments and evaluation but by simply looking inwardly. It is like bracketing oneself from all presuppositions in a phenomenological sense. To react or produce counter-judgment would also be in a way under the influence of prevailing judgments and pre-suppositions. The second measures would be to discover one’s real self bereft of all presuppositions and judgments. The third step would be to rise to a level of alertness and intelligence that is completely free. The fourth measure from which the practical importance of Krishnamurti’s thesis becomes rather manifest and visible would be to form a value perspective a fresh, creatively from a state of mind that is free. This value perspective is formed on the basis of and enterprise of alert, extremely awakened and creative self. We have outlined these measures in a schematic manner which Krishnamurti himself would not perhaps like. For him all such measures drawn schematically step-wise should come all in one. But in our context we have done it for our convenience for discursive clarity. For Krishnamurti, self-realization as such involves all these steps in one go. There cannot be any end to violence as long as we are not aware of our escapism and
sense of insecurity. He said, “Do observe what is actually taking place within
yourself and outside yourself in the competitive culture in which you live with
its desire for power, position, prestige, name, success and all the rest of it-
observe the achievements of which you are so proud, this whole field you call
living in which there is conflict in every form of relationship, breeding hatred,
antagonism, brutality and endless wars. This field, this life is all we know, and
being unable to understand the enormous battle of existence we are naturally
afraid of it and find escape from it in all sorts of subtle ways.”

Conflict leads to violence or, one may say, conflict contains the possibility of
violence within itself. For Krishnamurti, conflict and violence are mostly due to
our foresuffering and our imagining that our potentiality is not fully realized and
for this the other is responsible. If all of us are in the midst of this foresuffering,
a social paranoia is created and none of us can make or think or write freely,
creatively and with self-awareness. The actual impediments to realization of
potentialities of different individuals in society are due to this imagination and
their keeping themselves hierarchically above others. What Galtung calls
‘Structural Violence’ has its root in individual psyche.

He stated that all outward forms of change brought about by wars, revolutions,
transformations, laws and ideologies have failed completely to change the basic
nature of man and of society. The changes can happen only if each one of us
recognizes the fact that we as individuals as human beings in whatever part of
the world we happen to be, are totally responsible for the whole state of the
world. Each one of us is responsible for every war because of the aggressiveness
of our own lives, because of our nationalism, our selfishness, our Gods, our
prejudices, our ideals, all of which divide us. Only when we realize, not
intellectually but actually, actually as we would recognize that we are hungry or
in pain, that you and me are responsible for all the existing chaos, for all the
miseries throughout the entire world because we have contributed to it in our
daily lives and are part of this monstrous society with its wars, divisions, its ugliness, its brutality and greed, only then a non-violent state of affairs is possible.

So we find that Krishnamurti stresses on individual reformation and which has utmost importance in present crisis of world. Today we feel pleasure while blaming others. We are blaming our bureaucrats, our govt. for our present situation.

But we are hardly ready to go for this individual reformation. The measures that we have outlined above demand a thorough psychological mutation, but surely they are not absolutely unreachable for attaining peace and non-violence in individual and collective life.

For Galtung, peace is the absence of violence. And violence has six dimensions viz. –

(1) The distinction between physical and psychological violence.
(2) The distinction between positive and negative influence.
(3) The existence or non-existence of the object that is hurt.
(4) The existence or non-existence of the subjects who acts.
(5) The distinction between intended and unintended violence and
(6) The distinction between manifest and latent violence.

Galtung holds that if peace action can be rated as highly significant it is because it is an action against violence. He stresses on potential and actual realizations of psycho-somatic existence of human beings. Galtung finds that there are two major types of violence viz. direct violence and indirect violence. Direct violence is personal violence, indirect violence is structural violence. Indirect violence comes from the structure itself between human beings, between sets of human societies in the world. And inside human beings there is the indirect, non Intended, inner violence that comes out of the personality structure. Structural violence does not show, it is silent. According to Galtung, every unit has a
structure whether it is a nation or a society. And for understanding of the mechanism of the structure there is necessity of some ideas. And the most fundamental ideas are the ideas of the actor, system, structure, rank and level. Actor seeks goals, and he is organized in to a system as these goals interact with each other. When two nations interchange their cultures, trade their goods they are interacting with each other for a set of actors, and then this set can be referred to as a structure. In that structure there are differences of degree. One nation may have high rank; one may have low and so on. Whatever their structures are, there is inequality. Inequality aroused shows in different unhealthy rates among individuals in districts, the state in a nation, the nation in an international organization etc. So to go beyond violence we have to eradicate the inequalities lying in that structure.

This concept of Galtung has a practical importance in the present day. As the world is in a fragmented shape, the present world is divided into many divisions viz. country, state, district, village, society etc. With these divisions there is always an urge for domination, one wants to go high by dominating the lower and weaker structure. From this inequality conflict or violence arises. So to overcome this inequality it is necessary to know the indirect violence or structural violence.

Galtung holds that for sustaining peace in society there is need for designing peace process. Galtung suggests eight steps to frame the peace process. We have already mentioned them in previous chapter. Galtung’s eight steps have significance in modern day. For sustaining peace process in society we have to constitute a body which can act as a mediator between Govt. and violent groups and it should have previous knowledge in that field. It should study the previous story of success and failure. Otherwise its effort may be in vein. And this group should include the local bodies because the local people clearly know the facts about violent groups. And before forming the facilitator group we need to
identify those who will fit for acting as third party. Also, what is more important is to know the causes of their involvement in certain violent activities.

In Galtung’s Philosophy of peace, there is surely an emphasis on the violence that is latent in psychic structure of the individual. But for Galtung, this cannot be dissociated from indirect or structural violence which is mostly invisible. Hence he puts more emphasis on and highlights the interactive relation between individual psyche and the invisible structural violence. To make the structural or indirect violence surface before one scrutiny is essential for developing practice and programmatic peace process. The search for causes is directed mainly to the structural perspective. Unless the causes of violence are identified it is impossible to find out remedial measures. Such causes are there in individual psyche as well. But, unlike Krishnamurti, Galtung directs our attention move towards the external agencies and social structures. It is not for holding the others and the institutions as solely responsible for perpetuation and prevalence of violent state-of-affairs in the world, but mainly to project the social scientific spirit that should operate at the back of any peace studies programme. The practical importance of Galtung’s thesis lies precisely in that it is more feasible to locate the causes in situations/structures that evade our normal perception but can be revealed in and through a search which is basically of scientific nature.

We may try to envisage an alternative image of man or human reality as it should be on the basis of a consolidated view of non-violence and peace gleaned from the philosophies of Gandhi, Krishnamurti and Galtung. This is not to dilute their individual and unique positions but for attempting an alternative perspective of peace and non-violence in which this alternative human image will work as the principal parameter.
NOTES AND REFERENCES:

4. Ibid P-12.
5. Ibid P-14.
8. FFK, PP.7-8.