CHAPTER V
THE RELEVANCE OF J. KRISHNAMURTI’S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL SCENARIO

Introduction

Globalisation has become a buzzword today. In every sphere of life the word has been used and abused in most part of the world. It has become a household phenomena now. In the last few years, ‘Globalisation’ has touched almost all spheres of life in most parts of the world. Globalisation refers to the increasing global interconnectedness, resulting in a new world order characterised by greater movements, linkages, persistent interactions and exchanges. There is an urgent need today for thinking through a new system of national education, commensurate with a globalised world. In most quarters, this is seen in terms of newly available job markets and rising economic opportunities for a mobile work force. It has logically meant the devaluation of traditional systems of knowledge such as the liberal arts, humanities, and social sciences in favour of disciplines seen to drive the newer engines of techno-economic change. In the present chapter an attempt is made to bring out the relevance of Krishnamurti’s philosophy of education from a global perspective.
5.1 Education in an Era of Globalisation

5.1.1 What is globalisation?

To understand the relevance of J. Krishnamurti’s philosophy of education in the global perspective it is important to explicate the concept of globalisation. Globalisation, according to Hudson (2000:63), "refers to the processes which increase the scale of social life, and therefore increasingly involve processes which operate across borders at multiple scales."263

Ruud Lubbers, defines globalisation as a process in which geographic distance becomes a factor of diminishing importance in the establishment and maintenance of cross border economic, political and socio-cultural relations.264

The sociologist, Anthony Giddens, defines globalisation as a decoupling of space and time, emphasising that with instantaneous communications, knowledge and culture can be shared around the world simultaneously.

Globalisation is a process of shrinking the world in terms of time and space, making the world feel smaller and distances shorter.

Initially, globalisation appeared in the economic sphere through the deregulation of financial markets, the rapid expansion of communications technologies, and the development of global financial markets that were hubbed in a limited number of financial centres. This has resulted in the

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264 http://globalize.kub.nl/
depression of the economies in some industrialised countries and in developing countries that provide raw materials for industries\textsuperscript{265}. The economic focus for globalisation has since been expanded to include political, social, cultural and environmental dimensions. To use a maritime metaphor, the world is awash with the flows of money, goods, ideas, services, images, some diseases and pollutants. The universalisation of telecommunications through the World Wide Web has accelerated the process of information transfer and exchange to the extent that even remote geographical regions have global access to information and ideas.

\textbf{5.1.1.1 Positive Aspects}

There are many potentially positive aspects of globalization, if it is pursued for the common good, not just for the benefit of a few. Today globalization has led to the opening up of the national boundaries to international trade and global competition. Developments linked with globalization have opened up boundless possibilities for human development, enormous new opportunities and enhanced the quality of life for many people in the third world countries. For example, the production of goods for consumption on a massive scale has brought not only a better and more varied goods available to every citizen, but also has brought enormous change in people's value system. Those who have and are able to buy the goods have attained greater comfort, speedier communication and faster travel. Information technology has converted the world into a "global village". The events of far-off lands are easily accessible in our living rooms. This process has promoted exchange of ideas and customs between peoples of different countries. Today our ways of thinking and behaving are now

challenged beyond accepted traditional patterns. The horizon of our perspectives has suddenly embraced the 'the global village' beyond the confines of our homes. And this has been reciprocally beneficial. In addition, live communication of facts makes us partake instantaneously in the events of history. It also creates and promotes global concern. We now have the possibility of immediate worldwide attention to global issues, particularly to people in emergency situations. For this reason, it is irrational on our part to reject it outright; an uncritical attitude towards it is unwise. We need to affirm the positive side of this development and make use of the many opportunities it offers for our development.

5.1.1.2 Negative Aspects

While some economists and politicians approve these developments, many people look at this process with much apprehension. They look at the global village as an order or mechanism for greater economic exploitation and political oppression. Globalization has many dimensions: economic, technological, political, cultural, social, environmental, ideological, etc. Each of them affects the local either positively or negatively. Let us see some of its negative aspects:

a) Economic aspect: The world market has emerged as the dominant economic force. While some nations have tremendous economic advantages, others have become more and more dependent. The main players in the present process of globalization are the governments of powerful nations (in particular the G7), transactional cooperation, the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. The development of all third world countries has to be related to the world market. This is so because the overall control of the global
economy is in the hands of the G7 countries. They control the monetary system and international trade. The multinationals and other institutions with the help of the state control all development processes. The foreign debt works as an instrument to control the development process in these countries. Terms and conditions on the loans are imposed on them, which make them almost impossible to develop on their own terms. The role of developing countries is simply to provide cheap labour to attract investors and to provide raw materials, which are at the mercy of fluctuating prices. They are to meet the needs of others as cheaply as possible. This unfettered growth of the multinationals and the emphasis on foreign trade are not conducive to a development pattern that is oriented to the basic needs of the people. The production needs and patterns are often determined by the market forces. It is unfortunate that they seldom take into consideration the basic needs of the people. The production of the goods for export or for the conspicuous consumption of the rich becomes the market force today. In the globalized free market, the only people who count are those who have goods to sell and those who have the money to buy. This in turn drives many to the margins of the economic life. The small entrepreneurs have very little chance of survival in this system. Only the stronger and successful competitors survive and thereby widening the gap between the rich and poor, both between countries and within country. One cannot deny that there has been a worldwide growth in poverty, inequality and the human misery. Social injustice is becoming an accepted reality. It is said that the top 20% has access to 82.7%, while the bottom 20% struggle to survive on 1.4%. [2] The weak, the poor and the inexperienced ones are pushed to the outer rims of the society. Globalization works for the benefits of the rich while the poor become commodities since they are used as cheap labours. It is very clear
that the present economic pattern no longer serves the interest of the majority of the people. It rather destroys the lives of many people due to its unjust distribution of wealth, exploitation and deprivation of basic needs. Indeed, it has created a situation of marginalization, exclusion and social disintegration.

b) Political aspect: The development of the third world countries with the help of industrialized countries has many political implications. The process of globalization from the beginning was fraught with competition, conflict, domination and exploitation. The opening up of the national boundaries for free market has led to a neo-colonialism allowing not only economic domination, but also political domination over the poor nations. For example, the policies of liberalisation and withdrawal of subsidies, which are the conditions imposed by the IMF and the World Bank, have resulted in the curtailing of the state's power. Today, globalization is creating a government more committed to the protection of foreign investments and less to the protection of the citizens of the country. Many thirds world are forced to abandon its social responsibilities. This makes many people to ask whether the present process of globalization is compatible with democracy, social justice and the social welfare state. While the state is rendered relatively powerless, it has become a mere tool of the rich and the powerful. Its sole function is to suppress any organized resistance by oppressed people of the unjust system.

c) Social aspect: The market ideology of globalization gives a notion that people who cannot afford goods and live in rural areas are considered uncivilized and backward. They feel isolated from the privileged groups. This wrong notion creates an inferiority complex among the poor rural
masses that urges them to migrate to the cities and towns in search of employment and better living. It encourages migration not only within a country, but also encourages people to migrate to other countries. It is estimated that there are seventy million workers around the world. The migrant workers are the most exploited people. They suffer from insecurity and social exclusion. This social exclusion is deeper than the economic level.

An ever-increasing economic pattern and the expansionary character of globalization leads to lowering of labour costs and wages. In the struggle to be more competitive, labour costs and wages are being driven down. Companies go in for 'restructuring' and 'downsizing' which creates redundancies. Permanent employment and skilled workforce is being replaced by the casual and part-time employment creating immense insecurity among the workers. While wages are being lowered, but working hours have been increased. Yet it is almost impossible for a poor worker to rebel against the company that employs him or her. Powerlessness is one of the consequences of globalization for so many people in the lower brackets of society.[3] All these lead the poor worker to involve in all sorts of anti-social activities.

The profit-oriented free market has also let loose the present day social realities. Consumerism and materialism have overwhelmed modern society affecting every aspect of life. Society has become impersonal, mechanical and inhumane. The present society and its penchant for unprincipled living, selfishness, corruption, opportunism, and violence are the product of consumerism and materialism.
d) **Cultural aspect:** Globalisation means the export and import of cultures. Globalisation involves cultural invasion. Technology is power. It becomes the carrier to those systems and ideologies (values and cultures) within which it has been nurtured. The whole idea of progress and development is decisively shaped by western life-style, worldview and its structures. A monoculture is fast emerging. When we say "mono-culture", it means the undermining of economic, cultural and ecological diversity and the acceptance of a technological culture developed in the West and the adoption of its inherent values. The tendency is to accept the efficiency with productivity without any concern for compassion or justice. In traditional societies, people maintained a very strong practice of community ownership of land and property. The accumulation of wealth by individual was not encouraged, but today wealth is increasingly regarded as belonging to individuals and not to the community. The slow erosion of traditional cultural values leads to lack of cohesion in societies. The indigenous culture and its potential to save human development and the earth from destruction are vastly ignored.

e) **Ecological aspect:** Globalization involves environmental degradation and pollution. The pattern of development that we uphold today is capital-intensive. An ever-increasing economic pattern and the expansionary character of mechanization and massive industrialization of the economic world-order are reducing the non-human segments of creation to mere status of object without any intrinsic value. People simply analyze nature from the viewpoint of its usefulness to humans and they are all set to be exploited according to human's wishes. Forest and fishing resources are depleted for quick profits. Mining companies rape resources with little regard to the...
environmental and social costs. The sustaining power of the earth for nurturing life is being destroyed. The whole planet is at threat. Thus, the ecological catastrophe today is the direct product of modern industrial and technological growth, and the modern lifestyle.

In the name of development, people are forcefully evicted from their ancestral land and the abode of the various spirits they worship using repressive measures and often without proper compensation. They are simply ignored, silenced and despised. For example, in India, 100,000 people are going to be displaced by the Sardar Savovar Project in Gujarat, 60-70% of whom are indigenous people. Around 130,000 are expected to be displaced by the Narmada Sagar Project in Madhya Pradesh of whom 65-70% are indigenous people. Likewise, in the name of development, the indigenous people who are already powerless and exploited are further reduced to powerlessness and bondage. It is disheartening to see that indigenous people are made environmental prisoners in their own land.

f) Religious aspect: Threatened by the forces of globalization and the ideas of secularism, some sections in all religions assert a fundamentalist posture. Under the pretext of an identity struggle, the Fundamentalists, particularly in the majority community, want to achieve their dominance by controlling the political process through the militant organizations. Religion is used for political control. This process distorts both politics and religion. Moreover, the role of religion moves towards mere private affair, without accepting any social responsibility. Indeed, faith has lost its community anchorage. There is a subtle connection between globalization and the revival of religious fundamentalism.
5.1.2 The Impact of Globalisation on Education

In the era of globalisation, education becomes more encompassing, allowing people to learn to deal with social, environmental, economic, political, and equity issues on a global scale in a sensible way. Just how well it can be achieved depends on how committed people become to lifelong and life-broad learning that focuses on global events and issues.

The book *Geography for Life* highlights that the geographically-informed person understands the interactions of these human and physical processes at different scales from the local to the global. It also causes geographers to move away from studies that are based on a limited group of people who interact with their environment, to studies that consider how huge populations of people attempt to sustain their world. Consequently, geography is now being used to focus on new types of organisations that are populating the world and are having a global influence on our lifestyles and behaviours. Such bodies as: the environmental group Greenpeace; the World Trade Organisation; the Coca Cola beverage company, and the Nestle food company, all have changed the way that many populations live and experience their worlds. In the coming years, education will become a force in globalisation that extends far beyond state and national boundaries.

Whether the most effective learning occurs in formal or informal contexts again depends on views on learning that prevail in the local community, educational values that influence what is learned and how it is

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learned, and the opportunities that people have to exercise what they have learned about globalisation in their own lives.

One of the factors that has given a rapid pace to the flow of globalisation is the advent of modern techniques of transportation and communication. The global world today, by means of these modern advancements, has been compressed with respect to both time and space. Globalisation, accompanied by the accelerating economic and social processes, has shrunk the globe in the sense that time and distance are not considered to be the major hindrances in the movement of people, exchange of ideas and cultures. With such a process of time and space compression, face-to-face interaction has given way to a newer form of interaction between people, who are separated from each other miles away. The recent threat of war by America against Iraq has not remained as a matter of local concern to the people of Iraq, rather the repercussions of it has been felt even in smaller towns world over in the form of anti-war campaigns aimed at peace and harmony.267

5.2 Relevance of J. Krishnamurti’s Philosophy of Education Today

5.2.1 Education for Wholeness

Cardinal John Henry Newman in his book *The Idea of University* had said that an ideal university should impart to its students an all-round instruction, which transforms them into perfect gentlemen. Thus education by general agreement is a total development, physical, mental and spiritual, individual as well as social. This total development is the meaning of self-

267 See Deccan Herald, 26 March 2003.
realization. This synthesis of the different aspects of man's development is characteristic of not only idealism but also naturalism, pragmatism and realism. It is again the meaning of perfection, acclaimed as the aim of education by so many thinkers. It is also what is known as complete education. It is again the humanist meaning of education since man is a complex being having several aspects of his personality all of which require full development.

J. Krishnamurti's philosophy of education provided adequate opportunities for the harmonious development of the child. Krishnamurti laid great stress on holistic approach to education. He promoted universal education irrespective of caste and gender.

Krishnamurti was critical of the conventional type of education. He says:

Conventional education makes independent thinking extremely difficult. Conformity leads to mediocrity. To be different from the group or to resist environment is not easy and is often risky as long as we worship success. The urge to be successful, which is the pursuit of reward whether in the material or the in the so-called spiritual sphere, the search for inward or outward security, the desire for comfort - this whole process smothers discontent, puts an end to spontaneity and breeds fear; and fear blocks the intelligent understanding of life. With increasing age, dullness of mind and heart sets in.\footnote{J. Krishnamurti, \textit{Education and the Significance of Life}, pp. 9-10.}
In seeking comfort, we generally find a quiet corner in life where there is a minimum of conflict, and then we are afraid to step out of that seclusion. This fear of life, this fear of struggle and of new experiences, kills in us the spirit of adventure; our whole upbringing and education have made us afraid to be different from our neighbour, afraid to think contrary to the established pattern of society, falsely respectful of authority and tradition.\textsuperscript{269}

Educational studies are a good example of one way in which 'integration' can be conceived; for studies from psychology, sociology, history etc., can be unified in so far as they can contribute to the endeavour to educate people.\textsuperscript{270}

Integrated growth should be an all-round growth. The pupil should grow to feel that is destiny is in his own hands and the kind of person he wants to be is a matter of his own decision. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, education nourishes our reasoning faculties "in order to allow our mind its freedom in the world of truth. Our imagination for the world which belongs to art, and our sympathy for the world of human relationship."\textsuperscript{271}

Children must be directed in their growth towards something worthwhile in personal and social relations. They must grow up to be something admirable models and patterns. Growth must be towards an ideal of human character. One goal should be followed by another. Correct growth should lead to an "adequacy of life," which means setting up standards and ends of living. Integrated growth, we must say, consists in:

\textsuperscript{269} J. Krishnamurti, \textit{Education and the Significance of Life}, p. 75.
\textsuperscript{271} Tagore, Rabindra Nath; A Poet's School, The Visva Bharati Quarterly (October 1926)
Building pupil's physical strength, stamina and endurance.

Sharpening pupil's wits and cultivating his faculties by giving him knowledge about the various recognised branches of instruction. Giving him the realisation of moral and spiritual values. Socialising him to the extent of making him "an acceptable and contributory citizen." 272

5.2.2 Education for World Peace/Global Peace

A technological world view (dominated by technocrats) which reduces men to machines and spiritual problems to the question how to fix things misses the true essence of humanness. The inner life, the real life for Krishnamurti, is not only unrecognised by this world view but, even worse, is hindered in its development. Science and technology strive for a position which only religion in its pure, non denominational, sense is entitled to. "Technical knowledge, however necessary, will in no way resolve our inner, psychological pressures and conflicts; and it is because we have acquired technical knowledge without understanding the total process of life that technology has become a means of destroying ourselves. The man who knows how to split the atom but has not love in his heart becomes a monster." 273

TERRORIST ATTACK ON AMERICA ON 11TH SEPTEMBER 2001:
These were educated young men who knew English well and picked up the modern technocratic skills and learnt to fly planes with accuracy. Unfortunately their education became totally destructive because they had no regard for the sanctity of means and there was no place for love in their

272 V.R. Taneja, Educational Thought and practice, pp. 11-12.
273 Education and the Significance of Life, p.18.
hearts for human beings and no thought for the rights of the innocent and unknown people. EDUCATION WITHOUT SENSE OF VALUES thus becomes dangerous and self-defeating. The GUJARAT INCIDENT of communal outbreak in which thousands were killed and thousands others were injured and rendered homeless, among whom women were in large numbers, for which educated people were responsible underscores the same point, viz, that education can be abused for socially destructive purposes if right values are not imparted and possessed.274

5.2.3 Education and Environment

It can be said that the touchstone of Krishnamurti's many-dimensional teachings was concern for Nature and compassion for fellow beings combined with a global outlook.275

Krishnamurti lived closer to nature than almost any other great mystic of history. He sensed the infinitely deep consciousness of the rocks with their memories of eons; he met the trees with deep respect and, for example, on walks during the Saanen meetings, before he entered he forest, he would ask: "May we enter?" Animals sensed his gentle nature and approached him without shyness. A Langur ape once came to him, looked at him for some time and then gave him his strong but soft hand, despite its calluses, like one friend to the other. In Rishi Valley, he talked to a Hoopoe bird as he would to an old friend. No being was ever too significant for him;276 because all

275 'Relevance of J. Krishnamurti's teachings growing', The Hindu, Sunday, Feb 03, 2002.
276 In this direction, Rodney Fields reported a charming anecdote about Krishnamurti rescuing a beetle (p. 121).
life in nature was part of his own life and his being was part of his own inner spacer (Welteminnenraum).

In Krishnamurti’s view, the problem of people in the industrial age was that they had lost their reverence for nature and the respect for its mysteries. However, only if those qualities could be found again would nature lift the veil of invisibility before its creatures. “A plant wrongly approached, with greed or desire, vanishes and cannot be found. Plants and herbs have to be talked to. Their permission must be taken before touching them, they have to be addressed with humility – ‘Do you permit me to touch you, would you like me to wait?’ They give light and fragrance to those who commune with them.”

They key to the door of the mysterious kingdoms of nature could be found in the hearts of each individual and one of the keys is beauty. His notes in his journal, with some of its deep wordings, give a glimpse on Krishnamurti’s access to nature and reveal his admiration for its beauty. For example, in one of his talks to himself about two lilies: “The two lilies were the delight of the whole garden, even the large trees looked down upon them without shadow; they were delicate, soft and quiet in their point. When you looked at them, all reaction ceased, your thoughts and feelings faded away and only they remained, in their beauty and their quietness; they were intense, like ever living things is, except man who is so everlastingly occupied with himself. As your watched these two, the world was changed, not into some better social order, with less tyranny and more freedom or poverty eliminated, but there was no pain, no sorrow, the coming and going of anxiety and there was not toil of boredom; it was

277 Jayakar, p. 414.
changed because those two were there, blues with golden hearts. It was the miracle of beauty.”

Krishnamurti had special love for the trees. The secluded weeks he spent in the Giant Forest of Sequoia National Park, California, rank among the most beautiful of his life. In the following paragraphs, I quote two of Krishnamurti’s statements about trees. The first quote is taken from a talk he gave in Saanen, the second one is a note from his *Journal* dated October 20, 1973. In my view, there is no better way to distinguish between what I believe to be the ‘official’ and the ‘true’ Krishnamurti. It is not difficult to differentiate which is which. Krishnamurti said during his talk: “One may commune with a tree, for example, or with a mountain, or a river. I do not know if you have ever sat beneath a tree and really tried to commune with it. It is not sentimentality, it is not emotionalism – you are directly in contact with the tree. There is an extraordinary intimacy of relationship. In such communion, there must be silence, there must be a deep sense of quietness; your heart itself almost comes to a stop. There is no interpretation, there is not communication, no knowing. The tree is not you, nor your identified with the true; there is only this sense of intimacy in a great death of silence.”

His note in his Journal refers to the hours he spent in meditative silence beneath one of those gigantic redwood trees. For one who has not experienced the majesty of those exalted beings, it may be difficult to understand what Krishnamurti wants to express in his exposition. But a hint of this magic will touched them nevertheless. “The noisy tourists had not come yet and you could be alone with its great silent one; it soared up to the

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278 Krishnamurti’s *Notebook*, p. 218
heavens as your sat under it, vast and timeless, its very years gave it the dignity of silence and the aloofness of great age. It was as silent as your mind was, as still as your heart, and living without the burden of time. You were aware of compassion that time had never touched and of innocence that had never known hurt and sorrow. You sat there and time passed you by and it would never come back. There was immortality, for death had never been. Nothing existed that immense tree, the clouds and the earth. You went to that tree and sat down with it and every day for many days it was benediction of which you were only aware when you wandered away. You could never come back to it asking for more; there was never more, the more was in the valley Far below because it was to man-made shrine, there was unfathomable sacredness which would never against leave you, for it was not yours.” 280

His concern for every creature is manifested in different ways. He regarded butchering, hunting and vivisection as a perversion of human nature and as the brutal signal for a humanity that has gone astray. Sometimes, he was quite brusque in personal encounters on this topic. “Sir, I know from your breath that you eat meat. Don’t eat it. It is poison!” 281 Unfortunately, Weeraperuma does not write about the reaction of Krishnamurti’s partner in this conversation, which might have given us more insight into this vehement statement.

281 S. Weeraperuma, K. as I Knew him, loc. cit., p. 33. He was more crucial in a conversation with R. Weber; see Dialogues with Scientific and Sages, loc. cit., p. 224.
In one of his Letters to the Schools, dated February 1, 1980, Krishnamurti writes about cruelty: "In western countries you see birds carefully nurtured and later in the season shot for sport and then eaten. The currently of hunting, killing small animals, has become part of our civilization, like war, like torture, and the acts of terrorists and kidnappers. In our intimate personal relationships there is also a great deal of cruelty, anger, hurting each other. The world has become a dangerous place in which to live and in our schools any form of coercion, threat, anger must be totally and completely avoided for all these harden the heart and mind, and affection cannot coexist with cruelty."\(^{282}\) Again, it becomes clear that Krishnamurti viewed life as a unity and that the treatment of one species by another was the reflection of a detail that exists in the whole. Cruelty cannot be parcelled out, it is either apparent in the whole, indivisible, or it is totally overcome. Human endeavour should only be concerned with total overcoming.

The depth of Krishnamurti’s concern with this rift in the attitude of men regarding nature and the animal kingdom becomes even more clear with the words he wrote on the topic at the very beginning of his Last Journal. Those sentences, written in an almost meditative consciousness, do not attack but rather touch the innermost being of every human. Those few sentences, reminiscent in character of the Sermon of the Mount, no only call upon the individual of act but they also include a social manifesto. Words that should be heard and understood in silence. "It is odd that we have so little relationship with nature, with the insects and the leaping frog and the owl that hoots among the hills calling for his mate. We never seem to have a

feeling for all living things on earth. If we could establish a deep abiding relationship with nature we would never kill an animal for our appetite, we would never harm, vivisect, a monkey, a dog, a guinea pig for our benefit. We would find other ways to heal our wounds, heal our bodies. But the healing for the mind is something totally different. That healing gradually takes place if you are with nature, with that orange on the tree, and the blade of grass that pushes through cement, and the hills covered, hidden, by the clouds.”

“We love to kill each other. This killing of other human beings has never stopped throughout the history of man’s life on this earth. If we could, and we must, establish a deep long abiding relationship with nature, with the actual trees, the bushes, the flowers, the grass and the fast moving clouds, than we would never slaughter another human being for any reason whatsoever. Organized murder is war, and though we demonstrate against a particular war, the nuclear, or any other kind of war, we have never demonstrated against war. We have never said that to kill another human being is the greatest sin on earth.”

Krishnamurti lived through the most tumultuous part of a century that saw two world wars, the splitting of the atom, the breakdown of ideologies, the savage destruction of the earth, and the degeneration of every aspect of human life. It was also a century that could claim phenomenal progress in various technological fields. Krishnamurti’s prophetic vision warned us of coming events far ahead of time. Decades before we became aware of the peril to the planet, he was already exhorting children at school to take care of

283 Krishnamurti to Himself, p. 10. See also Early Writings, Vol. III, p. 103
284 Ibid., p.10.
the earth and to tread lightly on it. By the 1970s he was to ask: 'What would happen to the human being when the computer takes over all the functions of the brain?'

Education is not only learning from books, memorising some facts, but also learning how to look, how to listen to what the books are saying whether they are saying something true or false. All that is part of education. Education is not just to pass examinations, take a degree and a job, get married and settle down, but also to be able to listen to the birds, to see the sky, to see the extraordinary beauty of a tree, and the shape of the hills, and to feel with them, to be really, directly in touch with them.

5.2.3 Education and Freedom

The idea of freedom touches the very heart of Krishnamurti's teachings. The boy Krishna was already searching for freedom in the framework of his theosophical education; and the Krishnamurti of the twenties was shaped deeply by the effort to gain spiritual freedom and independence that culminated in the dissolving of the Order of the Star.

In his view, the idea of freedom was the essence of the nature of humanity. "Complete freedom is the only important thing in human life." However, freedom must not be interpreted as a banal expression of arbitrariness or lack of restraints. For Krishnamurti, freedom was not only unique vale, but also a unique virtue. "Freedom requires a great deal of discipline. Freedom implies great humility, innate inward discipline and

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286 Talks and Dialogues in Saanen 1986, (retranslated into English).
work." This statement helps clarify which quality distinguished freedom in Krishnamurti's sense. It is the freedom of the purified consciousness, which has freed itself from personal wishes and desires, and has risen to the clarity of the experience of unity in which inner and outer freedom are one.

Krishnamurti affirmed the outer becoming free — for himself and other — in a unique way during his shattering talk on August 2, 1929, when he dissolved the Order of the Star in Ommen. At both the beginning and at the end of the talk, one finds the remarkable words: "I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect. That is my point of view and I adhere to that absolutely and unconditionally...If you first understand that, then you will see how impossible it is to organize a belief. A belief is purely an individual matter, and you cannot and must not organize it. If you do, it becomes dead, crystallized; it becomes a creed, a sect, a religion, to be imposed on others....

"No Man from outside can make you free; nor can organized worship, nor the immolation of yourselves for a cause, make you free; nor can forming yourselves into an organization, nor throwing yourselves into work, make you free. Your use a typewriter to write letters, but you do not put it on an altar and worship it." For many, those words and the event itself came as a surprise; but they had not listened carefully to Krishnamurti's words, had not paid enough attention to his writings. Otherwise, in one of his early poetic works they would have been able to detect a sketch of that

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288 Mary Lutyens, Life and Death, p. 78, and Mary Lutyens, Awakening, p.296.
which would later burst out so spectacularly. In *The Search* Krishnamurti writes:

The Happiness that knows

Of no loneliness,

Of immense certainty,

Of detachment,

Of love that is free of persons,

That is free from prejudices,

That is not bound by tradition,

That is not bound authority,

That is not bound by superstitions,

That is of no religion.

The Happiness

That is not at the command of another,

That is of no priest,

That is of no sect,

That requires no labels,

That is bound by no law,...

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In fact, all later calls for freedom are preconceived in these words - his calls towards religions and sects, for example. "It is the division which denies freedom and love, not organization. When organization divides, it leads to war. Belief in any form, ideals, however noble or effective, breed division. Organized religion is the cause of division, just like nationality and power groups."

Also, the statement he made twenty-five years later is in essence a footnote to that early confession: "We are all slaves to tradition and we think we also totally different from each other. We are not. We go through the same great miseries, unhappiness, shed tears, we are all human beings, not Hindus, Muslims, or Russians - those are all labels without meaning. The mind must be totally free; which means that one has to stand completely alone; and we are so frightened to stand alone.

"The mind must be free, utterly still, not controlled. When the mind is completely religious it is not only free but also capable of inquiring into the nature of truth to which there is not guide, no path. It is only the silent mind, the mind that is free, that can come upon that which is beyond time." His words have the greater precision and earth of a mature personality but they still emerge from that clarity of earlier years.

I consider authority is my last example: "No system, outwardly, is going to help man. On the contrary, systems are going to divide people, that is what has always been happening in the world. And inwardly, to accept another as your authority, to accept the authority of system, is to live in

291 *The Flame of Attention*, p. 29.
isolation, in separateness, therefore there not freedom.\textsuperscript{292} Freedom from tradition, authority, religion, sects and personality cult, all central topics for Krishnamurti in the sixty years after 1926 – and all of them already entirely present and ripe in the young man of the twenties. In my view, this continuity is not regarded highly enough. The Krishnamurti of the seventies was not more critical of religion and authority than the Krishnamurti of the year 1926. the young Krishnamurti had already detached himself from outer limitations and religious groups; then when – for him – the perversion of the Holy occurred (Huizen 1925), he put religion in the denominational sense, no mater which one, in the category of a lack of freedom. Only the religion of the heart, which develops in freedom and love, in true humility and compassion, complied with his idea of religion. Freedom could not be the end, the promise of a certain religious salvation, but had to determine the beginning, the middle and the end of the path. “If the end is freedom, the beginning must be free, for the end and the beginning are one. There can be self-knowledge and intelligence only when there is freedom at the very outset; and freedom is denied by the acceptance of authority.”\textsuperscript{293} It will surprise nobody that orthodox communities, form the Roman Catholic clergy to the high – cast Brahman hierarchy, saw in him a dangerous demagogue. His endeavour to set human beings absolutely and unconditionally free robbed those people of any form of influence and power. The free human no longer had any need or a priestly mediator, to ‘reconcile’ with the absolute spirit. One who had found inner freedom finds outer freedom without much difficulty as well. Krishnamurti found a deep

\textsuperscript{292} Talks and Dialogues in Saanen 1968, p.24.
\textsuperscript{293} Education and the Significance of Life, p. 59; see also Mary Lutyens, Life and Death, p. 149.
meaning even in the opposite idea: "Independence without freedom is meaningless. If you have freedom you don't need independence."  

Freedom may be treated as the rendering of the world 'liberation' but liberation here is not annihilation but positive regeneration of life. It is not the 'antithesis of worldliness', 'not a static goal', but a way to look at life, 'not the disappearance of the droplet into the ocean of Nirvana', but a fulfilment of what is creative in man'. It is experience, not a gift', 'a consummation, not an escape'.

5.2.4 Education and Postmodernism

Postmodernism is not just a philosophical movement: it is found also, for example, in architecture, the graphic arts, dance, music, literature, and literary theory.  

As a general cultural phenomenon, it has such features as the challenging of convention, the mixing of styles, tolerance of ambiguity, emphasis on diversity, acceptance (indeed celebration) of innovation and change, and stress on the constructed ness of reality.

The names most often associated with postmodernism are those of Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Richard Rorty. Theoretical approaches most commonly seen as postmodernist are deconstruction(ism), poststructuralism, and neopragmatism. However, a case could be made for adding other names, e.g., Nietzsche, the later

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294 Mary Lutyens, Life and Death, p. 191.
295 Linda Hutcheon, The Politics of Postmodernism (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 1. In recent years, philosophers of education have been paying a great deal of attention to trends within philosophy, which may be loosely referred to as "postmodernist." See http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/93_docs/BECK.HTM
Wittgenstein, Winch, Heidegger, Gadamer, and Kuhn; and other theoretical approaches, e.g., perspectivalism, postanalytic philosophy, and hermeneutics. Even the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas, with its affinity with hermeneutics and its communicative ethics, has clear postmodern elements, despite Habermas's insistence that he is furthering the project of modernity rather than rejecting it. I mention all these names and movements not to impress or confuse, but to show the great overlap between different schools of thought and the pervasiveness of the postmodernist outlook. I feel that in discussing postmodernism we have often spent too much time searching for a neat central core. What is needed rather is to expose ourselves to and respond to a whole family of related outlooks and approaches.297

Postmodernism is often seen by its proponents as bringing an end to metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, and so forth, on the ground that these types of discourse assume a fixed, universal reality and method of inquiry. However, in my view it is better to shift to a modified conception of these fields rather than do away with them completely. Precisely because we live in a changing, fragmented, "postmodern" world, we need whatever stability we can find. And inquiry into general intellectual, moral, and other patterns — limited and tentative though they may be — is a legitimate form of "metaphysics."

An irony of the postmodernist movement is that, despite itself, it is centrally concerned with what we can say of a general nature about reality. I would even say that it has led to a massive (and salutary) revival of metaphysics. Postmodernists believe they have put an end to metaphysics

297 http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/93_docs/BECK.HTM
and have thrown the ladder away after reaching their foundationless perch. But in fact their writings are full of general assumptions about culture, human nature, values, inquiry. As Landon Beyer and Daniel Liston observe, postmodernist analyses are paradoxical, containing "standpoints without footings" and "talking about nothing." Not that postmodernists always deny that this is what they do — Derrida happily admits that he "crosses out" his own claims; but to admit a fault is different from overcoming it.

The implications of postmodernism on educational philosophy is very obvious today. The postmodern trends are seen in many educational theories. Students of education, like school students, should be helped to see that knowledge is value dependent, culture dependent, and changeable — that we are not searching for a fixed, universal philosophy of life and education. At the same time, however, they should be helped to identify continuities and commonalities that give some stability and direction to their lives and to the practice of teaching.

The philosophy of education classroom, like the school classroom, should also be strongly democratic and dialogical. In this way the energies of students will be engaged, their values respected, and their insights made available to fellow students and to professors. It is surprising how often professors of education advocate democracy for schools and yet do not practice it with their own students. If we believe in a democratic approach to inquiry we should model it ourselves, so that our students understand what we mean and are given the opportunity to develop a democratic pedagogy which they can in turn employ in schools.

http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/93_docs/BECK.HTM

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Like the postmodernists Krishnamurti had been critical of the modern concept of nationalism, being well aware that organised religion could not lead to the truth.

'Krishnamurti was well aware of the destructiveness and potential for conflict inherent in a nationalist identity that was cultivated by organised religion. His thought can be seen as close to the postmodern thinking.