

FOREWORD

NON-VIOLENCE – A UTOPIA?

“Man has made enormous progress in science and technology and yet he remains just as he was thousands of years ago: belligerent, greedy, envious, full of hatred and pain.” (Jiddu Krishnamurti)

Is there any way for people who think and act on a non-violent, participatory basis to make themselves heard in an authoritarian or hierarchical society, where they are surrounded by individuals whose actions are egoistic? Living non-violently means banishing every form of contempt and aggression from your daily life. Above all it involves an attitude of respect for other people at all times. Hatred and egocentricity are destructive opposites and have no limits. The work of years can be completely destroyed in a few minutes. Hatred simply abolishes all the rules.

But it is important for the individual to recognise, first of all, what non-violence offers, and then absorb it and turn it into action. The main problem is the difficulty of finding an environment in which it is possible to act in such a way. Problems usually begin in the family. The atmosphere at school is hardly conducive to non-violence. On the contrary, competitiveness there is quite clearly indicative of clashes to come in working life. So an adult who intends to be non-violent will have to start from the beginning again on his own. Before long this ‘abnormal’ individual will hear, and later also sense, that his odd thinking is not welcome, is even out of place. The reactions of those around him who are directly affected vary from a smile of pity to verbal aggression. His social advancement is at risk and soon this utopian, starry-eyed idealist finds himself marginalised.

Along with Samuel Beckett in *‘Waiting for Godot’*, we should all ask ourselves what would happen ‘if Ki came back’. Would things be different from 2000 years ago? We know everything he said then. And despite this, he would still be an oddity today, a starry-eyed idealist, an ecologist or a utopian in our predominantly materialistic world. But we cannot kill him. That would be too conspicuous, and we have no use for a martyr. So we make him impossible, incredible, we declare him insane. Then the problem solves itself.

As long as we systematically refuse to listen to and respect non-aggressive, non-violent people, it will be impossible for a culture of tolerance towards non-violence to emerge and flourish. Is this an intolerant attitude, an indication of a guilty conscience or practised uncertainty? *A vous de juger.*

There are no doubt readers who will find this book theoretical, utopian or unrealistic. My intention was to make the sun shine despite the rain and conjure up a rainbow in the sky. Anyone who wishes to accompany me on my journey of discovery should open up his heart and search for his own self. Mother Nature provides inspiration in abundance.

There are at least two important paths to self-discovery: that of mystical illumination, or renouncing any form of domination over fellow human beings. I have chosen the second. The starting point of the revolutionary journey is respect for every individual as (like me) the manifestation of a divine spark. Those with the desire and ability to do so will understand.