

Chapter 5

A Theory of Education, Enlightenment, and Universal Self-Realisation

In a talk Roy gave to a group of students in India in 2002, we can discern some elements of his theory of education. This is a transcription of it and it is reproduced from Chap. 11, Bhaskar (2002) *From Science to Emancipation: Alienation and the Actuality of Enlightenment*, New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London, Sage.

I suppose you could say what I am going to try to do now is to talk about education and my experiences and your experiences. I want to bear in mind this thought, a very timely thought, that Marx had when he asked—in his third thesis on Feuerbach—who is going to educate the educators, who is going to empower them, who is going to transform them? And when you look at the practice of actually existing communist parties we can see that the leadership had not transformed themselves, that the educators, the so-called educators or the would-be transformers had not educated, transformed and changed themselves. So in a way this is a very good lead into my own talk today because what I want to talk about is a kind of dialectic between self-change, self-transformation which you can say is a typical eastern approach, if you like a typically spiritual approach, in which the emphasis is on self-change, self-development and self-improvement (or perfection), and the western approach, in which the emphasis is on change outside the self, transformation in the rest of the world. It is typically this-worldly rather than other-worldly; it is at its best altruistic, outward going, concerned with doing things for other people rather than the self which remains unexamined and so unchanged.

Now actually I think there is no inconsistency between these two approaches. I think that if you are truly spiritual, if you really have no ego, if you really love other people, then you must be engaged in activities of practical transformation in the world. So real spirituality for me is what I call practical mysticism. That is very down to earth, and that is entirely engaged in putting yourself in the service of the cause of human emancipation, in fact universal self-realisation. That is the only spiritual approach that I can see is truly spiritual, that is of course the

approach of all the great spiritual teachers. If you look at Jesus, Buddha, it does not matter. But it is also interestingly enough the approach which is implicit in western and secular theories of emancipation. Now if you take the ideal from Mallayana Buddhism of the Bodhisattva, he may be the most realised human being but he will postpone his own enlightenment, his own bliss, his own *nirvana* until the realisation of every other being in the world. That is very similar to the standpoint of Marx—and Marx was all atheist—when he said that in a communist society the free development of each would be the condition of the free development of all. In other words, your well being, your flourishing was the condition for my own. It was as important to me as mine. In other words, it is no good my being free, it is no good my being the most fantastically improved and perfect person, if you are still miserable and unhappy. That is also precisely the standpoint of Buddhism. And if you go into it deeply enough, at some level, this is the standpoint of all great religious and also even political inspirations and aspirations. So that is where I am coming from, that really there is no contradiction between spirituality and radical social change. No contradiction between self-improvement and therefore education in the broad sense and commitment to transformation of social structures and the emancipation of all.

Once you get to that point where you feel that you are really oriented in your life to collective human emancipation, ultimately universal self-realisation, then you want to know, where does this outcome come from, how do we bring it about? The thing is, the really important thing to understand is, that you can never emancipate anyone else. Emancipation cannot be imposed from without, emancipation always comes from within. So you are going to go through a dialectic. How does this exactly work out? Starting say from a spiritual inspiration, you want to have a polite experience, you want to be in this consciousness that will take you to commitment to radical social change. Then when you are committed to radical social change you will ask yourself, how do you change people, and you will find that any attempt to force emancipation from outside is false, it is heteronomous and it will not work. Only individuals themselves can free themselves, emancipation cannot be imposed from without. All the failures of utopian projects, secular projects of emancipation come down to not taking seriously enough the principle of self-referentiality. This is very important for education, to sketch out this dialectic of spiritual development and radical social transformation.

Let us come back to the point that nothing happens without the individual. We are all involved in education, most of you are teachers or counsellors, so how do you actually teach someone something. Have you thought about this? Supposing I write a proof in logic or mathematics on the board and I say, well, you see it implies q and p therefore q , do people understand that? If you do not understand that then you have to invoke a meta-theory, all you have to deduce that theory from another theory: if you do not understand what I am saying then my effort at teaching is hopeless, useless. At the end of the day teaching, which is a dialogical relationship, always depends on the subject gaining a new perspective, just at the point he/she gets it, 'ah, now I see how you do it'. This is true even of applied skills like learning to drive a car. A lot of people who start to drive do not know

how to reverse, they do not know which way to turn the wheel. It is difficult, but suddenly you get the hang of it, or suddenly you get the hang of how you speak French. If you are looking at a painting, ah now, I thought it was a duck now I can see it as a rabbit. This is the gestalt involved in all acts of learning and education. Without that you cannot teach anyone anything at all. So it is always the self, the subject who has to understand. You cannot impose understanding on them, they have to bring from within.

You have to say for example, if P implies Q, and P then Q; and P therefore (because if P implies Q and P then Q) Q. Does this help? So what is the condition of this, it is an extraordinary condition. The condition is it means they must already know it. Because if it comes from within they must already have the knowledge and this is in fact nothing other than Plato's theory that all education is anamnesis, that what you are doing is bringing out something that was implicit, enfolded, potential within them, you are actualising it, making it explicit, but unless it was there, you could not have that 'ah', that 'I see it', that *coming together* when the pupil understands what the teacher is trying to say. So the primacy of the standpoint of self-referentiality is not only important for emancipation, it is just as important for education, which is our main theme today.

Once you see how important it is, then you can say how do I get these people who are just where they are, who are maybe concerned with the little things, nothing to do with collective emancipation, nothing to do with making the world a better place, how do we get them there. So we come to another level of our dialectic, at this level you can see that any objective, it does not matter how stuck a person is in life, if they want to fulfil that objective there is only one route. The one route is single-pointedness or clarity; coherence and purity. Most failures in life at any level stem from confusion, stem from not being clear about what you want. So supposing a robber wants to rob a bank, and you are his counsellor. The first thing to tell him is to be clear about what he wants to do; tell me, what do you want to do; rob a bank, then if he is single-minded about it, fine; but then you might want to say to him, why do you want to rob a bank, do you think it will really make you rich. Then you can take it back a step further, at whatever point you take it to, the criterion for successful action, the criterion for achieving your goal in life is single-pointedness, clarity, coherence and purity.

Now wherever you start, as you become more coherent, dear, pure in your mental, emotional and physical being, then you will find you start to manifest some beautiful qualities. These are the qualities that Lakshmi referred to, which I call the ground state qualities of human beings. These are qualities of freedom, qualities of endless creativity, these are qualities of love, right action, these are qualities that fulfil intentionality and with these qualities the extraordinary thing is that we *could* not do anything at all. And you might say this is very extraordinary: are you telling me that under all this mess, and tremendous confusion, all this sort of bundle of compromises that we are, there is nothing other than pure creativity; pure energy, love, freedom and even knowingness? Yes, that is what I am claiming.

Let us first of all make this consistent with some themes in secular thought and then let us look at it in our own way. Just to say this is not my idea, if you look

deep enough every theory of emancipation, every theory of realisation makes this claim, that ultimately human beings are fine, they are absolutely fine, there is nothing wrong with them, they are beautiful. Even in their individuality; especially in their individuality—for no two human beings are the same. We all have a unique *dharma*; we are all very special. But we are all absolutely fine. Some people have even said that we are all enlightened already. It is only this mess that we have on top of it which stops us from realising our enlightenment.

Anyway, coming from the west, Rousseau said, we are born free but everywhere are in chains. What he meant was that the human essence is such that we are free, that we imprison ourselves, or rather the society which we sustain (and are ultimately responsible for) imprisons us. Chomsky, the great contemporary linguist, says that we have at birth the innate capacity to learn any language, the capacity to generate an infinite number of sentences, no matter how few sentence most people may actually generate. We have the capacity of endless creativity. If we were sitting here in Japan we would not be talking in English, we would not be talking in Hindi, we would not be talking in Marathi, we would be talking in Japanese. We all have that gift, that capacity at birth. What I would say is you take a social phenomenon, say drudgery in the office or on the shop floor, these are male examples, we will come to typical female examples—on the factory floor, how could a production line, the most uncreative, the most alienating, how could that keep going for a moment without the spontaneous ingenuity of the workers on the production line. Even an office could not keep functioning if you only observed the rules. You have to show spontaneity, ingenuity to keep even the most mechanical systems going. How do you get your computer going? You give it a little kick: if it gets naughty, then you just have to put it in its place.

Or if you take a social development like war, what could be more horrendous than war, but how is a war sustained? At the end of the day, it is sustained by the selfless solidarity of soldiers at the front, the support, sustenance and love of their sisters, wives, daughters, back home. How is even that bank robbed: without that solidarity, that trust between the robbers, the action would not be successful. But there is also a further point. How could you do anything in life unless you did something right. Whatever I am doing, whether I am convincing you of my argument or not, I am at least uttering some words correctly, that is a right action. So what I would do is challenge you to find any human situation which does not repose on these ground state qualities of freedom, creativity, love, right action or fulfilment of intentionality. These are the bedrock qualities of human beings.

What I want to say is that the project of education, the project of enlightenment, and the project of universal self-realisation are the same, or all turn on a single matter, and this turns on eliminating the heteronomy, eliminating everything which is not essentially you. And in that process of eliminating everything which is not essentially you, you will automatically be working towards the elimination of everything which is not essentially everyone else. This is not an individualistic approach, because it presupposes what I call, and this is one of the few technical concepts I will use here, four-planar social being. It presupposes that every

event in social life has to be understood in terms of four dimensions. In terms of our natural exchanges; our material transactions with nature; in terms of our social interactions with others; then in terms of our relationships with the social structure. What is the social structure? Social structures are things like languages, economies, political forms. Clearly we do not create them at birth, we inherit them, but we play a vital role in their reproduction. Because what we do, and what they could not exist without, is our intentional activity. And it is in virtue of our conscious intentional activity that social structures, unwittingly, are more or less reproduced or transformed. For example, take the social structures of capitalism, or commercialism, call it what you like. How could this function for a moment without greed, without desires. You go to the west, to America, go to Europe, England, it is not sufficient to have one car, you have to have one car per person—it is not sufficient to have one car, you have to have two or three, or as many as four, five and six! And the result is that where I live, or mainly live, around England and south-east England the roads are congested. Two people, next-door neighbours, will both drive a car to work, instead of doing the sensible thing which is to share. They may work in next-door offices, and may even park their cars next to each other—though they will have tremendous trouble parking and it will take them a long time.

Now let us consider the impact of the social structure on the fourth dimension of four-planar social being, which is the stratification of our personalities. What is it doing, it is making us irritable, bad tempered, this reproducing of a structure which can only produce more and more of the same. Radical innovation, innovation for qualitative change, innovation which takes into account internal relationships, external economies, qualitative, non-quantitative considerations which pay attention to the environment—this kind of innovation our social system knows nothing about. Then consider its impact on the second dimension of four-planar social being, it is spoiling our relations with each other. Because after you have spent ten or twelve hours in your office and in your car and then go back home and there is your wife or husband whom you immediately have a row with and then your children get upset and then you hit your children or something even worse and then you feel terrible, then you sulk, and then you wake up with a headache and the endless cycle repeats itself. So all these four dimensions of social life interact.

The question really is not where do we start, because what most people who do not really understand this kind of spiritual approach properly think that the spiritual being is not doing anything. Now this may have been appropriate in a different time and age, and perhaps there is still a role for some beings to not be in society, but I would argue that we have to say that today everyone has to be in society because we are globally inter-connected, we are in global crisis. We are fast reaching a point of no return. We are like a car that has lost control and heading towards a cliff, we are 5 feet away from the cliff, we are travelling at 50 mph and we have got 5 seconds to make the change. It is like that. The height of Bangladesh is 4 feet above sea level. This is a terrible thing for in 25–30 years it will not be there, nor will any of the islands in the world and England too will look very different. The

rate at which global warming is proceeding is so rapid that we have to do something about it now. But not just that, take our interactions with each other, and the way we reproduce the surface structure. And without going into rights and wrongs, we now know, after the events of 11 September, how the actions of a few people could destabilise the whole of the world. And then a few actions of politicians and political leaders who accentuate this destabilising. At a political level we are in a terrible state. At an economic level there is chronic debt, chronic Third World debt, chronic crisis, and yet we are living on a planet of abundance. We have potentially everything we need. So whatever the merits of going to a retreat, or going into a monastery the old days, today to be a spiritual being, to be concerned with the realisation of the divine on earth, you have to be a practical being, and you have to participate in society. And that means willy-nilly, that whatever you do, you will be acting on all these four fronts simultaneously. Whether you like it or not you will be engaged in a process of social change, either repetition and reproduction or transformation and change. Because everything that happens in society happens only in virtue of intentional agency. Intentionality is irreducible; agency is irreducible; agency at all these four dimensions of planes and effects is irreducible; so whatever you do is going to affect the world in this multi-dimensional way. But then also, you cannot not act. You must act. If you abstain from acting, that too is an action is it not? That is an action, that is a choice. Also at the end of the day you will have to act spontaneously, at some point you will act spontaneously. This is very important. If you just imagine that you are trying to do something. Supposing I am trying to pick up this glass of water. Well, I might drink what is the most elegant way to do this. I can do it this way or should I pick it up this way, and so on. But at some point I just have to pick it up. And then I think well I wonder how I should follow the argument, I wonder what I should say next, but at some point I just have to say it. It is the same when cooking a meal. This is the spontaneity of human action. At some point we just have to act. When we act spontaneously, our thought does not come into it, we are not thinking. It is something that flows from our innermost being, we do not plan it, we do not premeditate it. Of course we can learn it and acquire it, that is skill, but when it happens it is just spontaneous, it is unconditional, it is a gift. It is a gift, we are not asking for anything.

Now we will move on from men in a way to women. This is a double-edged sword. If we look at women's domestic labour, it is not respected or recognised by the capitalist economy, it is not paid, it is not part of the commodified role; with domestic labour the woman does not sign a contract with her children, it is unconditional, non-contractual, it is a spontaneous gift. In a way that is a beautiful thing. If we are to have this vision, this vision in Buddhism, in Marxism (only of course the best, that is true of everything), if we are to realise this vision, we have got to have these qualities, unconditional spontaneous behaviour, unthought behaviour but effortless behaviour, exhausting but still effortless and joyous. Not only that but holistic as well, because the women typically will know how to balance the interests of one child against another, when the husband is coming home, when the neighbours will pop in. There was a UN report produced a couple of months ago which basically argued that if men carried on 'husbanding' those resources, being

in charge of resources, then there was no future for the planet. It would be down the spout in fifteen to twenty years. But if women took their modes of domestic economy and employed them globally, nationally, in power, then there was a real future. This asymmetry between women's typical, unconditional, spontaneous behaviour, this asymmetry and the reified alienated world of men is, to repeat, a very double-edged one. But the asymmetry is there and in the characteristics of women's domestic labour there is what you could call a kind of punctuated prefiguration of what we must have universally in the future. But it is not only something we must have universally in the future, we also do have and must have it, at least partially, now. And, men to be men must in this respect be as women, and they are women. When the wife is not there, the man will parent spontaneously and joyously and in a well balanced and sharing household, then the male will actually take joy in discovering the women within and being it.

And of course women, for their part, will engage in long chains of mental reasoning. You may think you are not good at arithmetic, but come on, it's fine. You can enjoy it. There is even room for chess. When you think of chess (there is room for chess, and room for what I am talking about in chess; in fact there couldn't be chess without it) or the labour of Newton in working his way towards his great discovery of gravity or of Einstein working his way towards the discovery of space-time. Well what happens? When it comes, it comes from nowhere, this flash, out of the blue, it is something which cannot be induced or deduced, it comes from the transcendent, from the beyond. Take the most refined, exceptional, take the most quotidian, ordinary, acts. In either case these are spontaneous, these are gifts. The gift of discovering gravity was a gift from nature, which the universe, god (you can call it what you like), the cosmos, gave to Newton. But it was a gift given to a specially prepared mind, because the mind had toiled ardently, arduously, prepared itself exhaustively. You can say that mind, Newton's mind, was so in accordance with the area of gravity, the whole physical field that we now know as gravity, that when the moment came, the moment when the creative inspiration came, he was gravity, he was one, in that 'eureka' he *became* gravity. This was a non-dual or transcendental moment.

Just before we go back to this, let us follow this example of the child who is learning something. So it seems in a way the child must already know it to learn anything. Now when he has this eureka, this, 'I get it, I see it', it is very similar to what the scientists or the artists have when suddenly they know they have done it. Everyone has it. When you have mastered a skill, when you have built the skill into yourself and just clinch it, it is a new gesture. So in all processes of learning or creativity you will find there are four characteristic moments. First the emergence of something out of the blue, somewhere, somehow the child suddenly sees it, or Newton sees it and gets it. Or you understand a picture, or understand how to interpret a book or understand what a philosopher is saying. Now I see what he is doing. That is the basis. Then with this understanding, the knowledge is heteronomous and you have to continually keep it in mind. Actually, as a philosopher, as a poet, or as a writer of any sort, you often find that you get an idea and then it's gone. So the thing is you have got to write it down, externalise it. That is the

second step. And then of course when a child or anyone else is learning something they have to gradually make it part of themselves. And this is an extraordinary arduous process but also a process that can be very enjoyable. This is a process of formation, of shaping, planning, you apply; you get to see how the computer works, what you can do with a car, what you can do with a language, and then at some point you just know it. Then you have in built the knowledge.

So it is a dialectic. The knowledge was there implicitly already. Then it was awakened by something from outside, came to consciousness, but you were not in control of it, so you gradually had to master it, make it one with yourself. Then when it is one with yourself, it is not outside you anymore. At this stage you can be spontaneous. Then you can engage in objectification, that is action, that is making things in the world. So every cycle of creativity has these characteristic moments, the lightning flash, the inspiration; then the creation itself, involving externalisation; then the shaping, formation, the gradual deep re-internalisation; then the making, the production of objectification of something new. The fifth component of the cycle of creation is seeing whether what you have made reflects your intentionality. Does that express the internal impulse that I had, or not. When it reflects your intentionality then the cycle of creation is perfectly complete.

Now this is in fact the cycle of cosmic creation. All cosmologies have the same characteristic formula, from nowhere, out of the blue, there may be seeds, it may be something which comes and goes but something emerges. Then there is the phase of creation, it stabilises. Then the phase of shaping, formation. Then it is objectified. And then it fulfils or fails to fulfil the intentionality of the creator. Every human act mirrors these five phases of the cycle of creation. So every human act, including especially every act of learning, mirrors if you like the creation of the universe. And at the end of the day what we want to do is to fulfil ourselves. Find our reflection in the outside world. When will this be? This will be when we are fulfilled and that will only be when every human being is fulfilled and then that would be finally fulfilling or completing the initial impulse.

So corresponding to these five phases of the cycle of creation, critical realism, or the philosophy that Lakshmi mentioned, has engaged in the re-thematisation with western philosophy of ontology, that is the theory of being. Because I was invited to share my experiences at school and at college, and I will if we have time, I can tell you that when I was an undergraduate you could not say anything about the world as such in western philosophy; it was a prohibited, a taboo subject. That was the first step in critical realism which was just thinking being. The second step was thinking being as a process. The third step was thinking being as a process and as a totality; as a whole, holistically. The fourth step was the linking it as all those things and as incorporating transformative, self-conscious, potentiality, self-conscious transformative human agency and reflexivity—that is our capacity for the unity of theory and practice. And the fifth stage was to think being as in some way fulfilled, as in some way free, as in some way realised. This is the stage that I am now developing, in which I would like to bring in new spiritual concepts, or put them in a slightly different light. But let us see how we can apply them to education. So just going through those five phases in the cycle of creation you can

see that they correspond to five moments of human action, a moment of will, a moment of thought, a moment of feeling, objectification and the moment of finding fulfilment in your objectification or not. They correspond to those five domains of the successive enrichment of being and they correspond to various ground state properties. These are fundamental characteristics of human beings. So the first would be freedom, the second would be creativity, the third would be love, the fourth would be right action and the fifth would be the capacity to fulfil intentionality. Now most people think that the spiritual is something very far removed from ordinary life. And they would associate the spiritual quite rightly with concepts like transcendence with non-duality. What I want to say is transcendence and non-duality is the underpinning, is the ground level of human beings and we are all familiar with it, in fact it is going on here all the time. Philosophers have had a wrong concept of being and of agency, not only materialist philosophers, but even spiritual philosophers have had a wrong concept of non-duality and transcendence.

So let us go into this a little bit because I want to argue that our goal as educators, self-educators, is to be a party to a process of being and creating and helping beings help create themselves to be non-dual beings in a world of duality. Let us look at transcendence. Something which is involved is obviously identification. There are two terms which are separate, so there is me and you, or there is a state of consciousness you are in and a state of consciousness that you seek to get into. In fact these exemplify two very simple paradigms of transcendental identification. One is when you lose your sense of objectivity, you lose the object in a subject-object duality and just become one with yourself, deep into one with yourself, then that lovely bundle of creative energy or bliss or contentment or peace. That is one paradigm. The other is when you lose your sense of subjectivity and go completely into something outside yourself. This is when you become engulfed in a picture, inspired by music, you lose any sense of separation between yourself and the notes.

Now the extraordinary thing is that transcendental identification is essential for any human communication or act at all. Unless you were at one with my words in the simple sense that you understood at some level what I was saying, then I would not be communicating to you. If you say hello how are you, then the other person has to understand 'hello, how are you', and that moment of understanding, there is transcendental identification. If you are watching a film, you lose yourself, if you concentrate, focus on the film, you lose your sense of separateness from the film. When you are reading a newspaper, how could you understand a sentence in it unless you were one with that sentence? You couldn't. The moment you cease to be one with the sentence you are not reading it, you are not listening. You become completely one with the act. So this transcendental identification, or transcendence in the sense of breaking down the duality between subject and object, is something we are familiar with in every aspect of our social life.

However, it is not only that; non-duality is not only a characteristic of states of consciousness; it is a characteristic of action because when you spontaneously know how to drive a car you do not think about it you just drive it. When you spontaneously know how to drive or to speak, you just drive or speak, you just

spontaneously express yourself. When a baby is crawling by you just pick it up, you do not think about it, you just do it, in a non-dual way. Everything in life, every action you perform has an element, and is sustained by that element of non-duality. That element you touch something with is your ground state or something which is consistent with it. So we are all very familiar with who we essentially are. Then there is a fourth aspect to transcendence. This fourth form of transcendence is when two people work so perfectly together as a team that there is no sense of separation. You can find two people who cook together, one anticipates the move of the other, or two footballers or two cricket players in perfect unity. Again, a group of musicians must be in this state to produce anything. Have you ever thought how odd it is how so few people actually bump into each other on the streets in India, or anywhere else for that matter. There are so many people, so little space, there is so little calculation. This is magical, the synchronicity that stops people from bumping into each other. So this is the fourth kind of transcendental non-dual state we must be in to do anything. So this state of non-duality that spiritual philosophers have talked so much about is something that we are very familiar with in our everyday experience.

Now a lot of philosophers think that because it is spontaneous it is not structured. Now that is not true. Because when you have unity with a whole, a picture, then of course that unity is structured. When you listen to the music, the music has an holistic structure, you are at one with a whole. Our concept of unity, of oneness, is far too simple, oneness is not punctiform, is not a point. Oneness is a whole. When you have oneness with oneness it is a whole with a whole. It's two wholes, meshed. To have transcendental identification is consistent with *do just come in and everyone just join the whole*—see how nice, how beautiful synchronicous, coherent, timely nature is because this leads into my second point that transcendental unity is not only consistent with non-punctiform, differentiated wholes, is the way in which a beautiful picture or sequence of music is differentiated, but it is consistent with development, so you can expand and grow. Supposing you are perfectly realised, perfectly enlightened: that does not mean that you know every skill. If no one has taught you Japanese, how are you expected to know it; if you decide to learn it, you might learn it faster than other people or you may not. So you go and acquire it and you build that skill into your unity. In the process of building that skill which is external to you into yourself, you remain whole all the time and you embed, you recursively embed, that new development into yourself and so expand. So we can be non-dual and growing beings. People have always thought that when you reach the absolute then that is the end. Actually the absolute is only the beginning, all the rest is free development, growth, expansion. It is important also to appreciate that saying that I am in a state of non-duality is not to say we are the same; we can have uniquely differentiated properties, this is very important for education. Actually when you approach enlightenment then you have no sense of a personal ego, so this point really does not matter very much to the enlightened being. But it is worth noting that every *avatar* is the most uniquely defined being, every Buddha is different, every enlightened being is uniquely different, the more creative, the more of a

genius you are, the more expanded you are, the more unique you are. But you do not have a sense of your uniqueness because you do not attribute your uniqueness to an ego, you do not 'own' your uniqueness any more than someone can 'own' the truth. Your uniqueness is a manifestation of the cosmos, you are just happy, privileged to be a point at which the cosmos can fulfil itself.

The really important point is that each of us in our ground state is unique. And understanding this uniqueness and respecting difference is consistent with non-duality because I can become one with you. Supposing we are arguing about which team plays better at hockey, you may say Holland I may say Germany. We may understand what the other is saying so we have transcendental identity as a condition for the argument, but he has his point of view and I have my point of view. This is a way in which two people can be non-dual, one can be a gifted artist, the other can be a gifted scientist. One can be and esteem, love their identity as an Indian, as a woman; as a Maarashtrian, as a hockey player, and the other can love their prowess as a basketball player, as Jewish or whatever. And they can both be non-dual beings. So we have non-duality consistent with the holism, differentiation, with development, with identity-in-difference.

The last point to appreciate is that non-duality does not mean that you stop fighting. The best warrior has total identity with the enemy, completely understands the enemy. I know as a philosopher, we could go (as Lakshmi was suggesting) into my battles at school and so on—but I know as a philosopher that I cannot really critique a false and mystified system of beliefs until I totally absorb it, am totally at one with it. So the best general is the one who has done his reconnaissance, the one who completely understands his enemy, he is totally at one with his enemy. But he is not only at one with the enemy because he is going to fight back and kill and remove his enemy. We become one with the other, not in order necessarily to agree with the other or to be the other permanently; but in order to eliminate the other. So we have to understand what are the blocks, the constraints, the checks on our own emancipation, what are the blocks, the constraints, the checks on the emancipation of all people, all beings everywhere. We have to become one with them. We have to totally understand them to eliminate them, that is these blocks, constraints, forces. This means that the spiritual being is also a warrior, but he is a warrior at peace with himself. This is the beautiful thing, and when Krishna said to Arjuna, do not be upset at your *dharma*, what you have to do, for you have to understand the soul is immortal, and it is your *dharma* for you to kill your enemies, you just focus on your action, do not worry about the consequence—he was telling him, you can be a man of god and fight. That is what we have to do. The extraordinary feature of action is that at a first level it is at once a gift from the universe and an offering to the divine or to nature, to our fellow human beings, whatever it is that we love. At a second level, it is a transformation of the world. And at the third, it is a struggle, part of a process, the practice of emancipation.

At this point I will end up and say that all this really is possible because of some very beautiful features of our ground state and our connectedness in it. Which means that in a real sense, a sense which is very difficult for most people to

comprehend, you are not really different from me, but you actually are me. Sure, you are different as an embodied personality from me, but you are also enfolded within me, you are part of me and I am part of you and therefore your pain is as much my pain. When I fully understand this, raise my sensitivity to a level that I can feel it as my pain then your unfreedom is as much a curse, a blight on me as my unfreedom. Then I cannot stop struggling until everyone is free. This is the ideal. The freer I become the more my action will move in the right direction.

I think that experience is a double-edged sword. On the one hand it is a window on the world, so we learn from it. And then at the same time, as and when we learn, we have to let go. It is a very extraordinary thing to have to say but it is true. As long as you cling to something, someone you have had a bad experience with, it will imprison, impede and hurt you. Then what should you do? Imagine that you have a lovely jewel box there and this bad experience is something like a rock coming at you, you pluck the jewel from the rock and put it in that jewel box; that is the learning, the rest you let go of. Suppose someone has done something terrible to you, you just let it go. Of course you will be wary of, you will be sensible about that person. When I say that love is a ground state quality and that we should—and (to an extent) do—love unconditionally, that is not expecting anything in exchange for it, I am not saying that you should go up and embrace everyone. No, you would not go and embrace someone who was going to put a dagger in your heart, so that is the learning, that is the jewel from that person. What you throwaway is that you do not feel that everyone who comes up to you is going to try and throttle or suffocate or abuse you. It is very sensible for women not to go out in the streets in New York at night, or sometimes in London. It is a terrible condition, but it is very sensible. What you do is you learn from that, you do not have a feeling of paranoia haunting you the whole time, you do not dwell on it. You just know it, you build it in, you let go, you are free, you feel it and then you work to transform the situation that makes that action necessary. So you work to get rid not of that rock but the source of all rocks. That is the teaching, the diamond, the jewel that you plucked from that rock, that has been given to you. Everything in life is like a gift, you say thank you, yes, thank you for teaching me, now I have got to be really careful where I go in Brixton, I have got to be really careful and I have got to work very hard to make it safe for women to walk in the streets in New York and London at night. It is terrible, that is the learning but you do not hold it within yourself. Our minds should be completely free. Actually there should be nothing in our minds. If there is something in our minds, then we are not free to do what we need to do, what is best to do. You cannot learn. It is an extraordinary thing but if you have something in your mind you cannot learn. If something is fixed in your mind, if there is anything in fact in your mind, you cannot learn; your mind at the moment of learning has to be a *tabula rasa*. If there is a preconception there, if there is any fixation, if there is an attachment, if there is anything that clings to or binds you, then this imprisons you as someone who can learn, and it imprisons you as an agent because you are always going to act under a fixed idea. Moreover it *karmically* binds you. It binds you because until you have

cleared that, while you have that within yourself, you are never going to be free and you are not going to be a free agent of change.

This is a difficult one. I was talking about war and fighting and us being at peace, this is the really important thing, we are at peace. But actually all the stories of war, in the scriptures, in the Bhagavad Gita, even the Islamic conception of *jihad*, the holy war is another war, when you are at peace with yourself and only when we are at peace with ourselves will we be at peace with each other. And that peace with ourselves means clearing all the rubbish from ourselves. When we have all cleared the rubbish from ourselves we cut off the supply lines to oppression, servitude and unfreedom. Everything in the social world subsists on our love, our creativity, it could not exist for a moment without them. But oppression is real. These are real structures and real systems but we have the capacity to cut off their supply lines. It is a difficult thing to do but we can do it.

Education then is about challenging oppression, servitude and unfreedom. These fragments specifically about education and learning are all that Roy provided us with.