

can play a committed role. It is not the “Law of the Strongest” (political and economic) that must rule the world, but the “Law of Co-belonging”. What the pope holds out is a message of “Fraternity and Hope” as the medicine for a sick world (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 12.02.2021)

About 4000 years ago, Patriarch Abraham set out from Ur under this mandate: come along with me and “Do what is right” (Gen 17:1). This message echoes in every human heart, even in a person’s weakest moment. May it come alive also when humanity grows prosperous as well!

BOOK REVIEW

[Ed. by Poulouse Mangai, SJ]

The Science of Peace: By Suman Khanna Aggarwal. New Delhi: Shanti Sahayog Center for Peace & Conflict Resolution (SS CPR), 2019. ISBN 978-81-7139-738-9. Pp xxii+170. 1 699/- €15.

Gandhiji has a unique approach to finding serenity of mind and achieving a peaceful living. As one reads this book, one is guided by the author systematically to re-experience the Gandhian method of interior peace experience and peace-building in our social living process. Such an inner experience and the external process of establishing peace in the social realms are not mere sentimental or emotional entities, but have a scientific basis, a systematic approach and an

attainable end. *The Science of Peace* systematically explores Gandhian thoughts at a time when the world is looking for a practical method to attain peaceful co-existence in spite of the strife and warfare that hover over us all the time.

As the author herself acknowledges, this book endeavours to give a ‘self-help manual’ to those who are seeking to have a vivid exposition of Gandhian thoughts and a deeper understanding of his innumerable practical experiments. I would dare to say that the author has succeeded in this endeavour to a great extent.

The book has twelve chapters arranged in four sections. In the first section the author attempts to give

an insightful understanding of conflict, violence and war. Drawing lessons from our own experience, the inevitable nature of conflict and the prevailing atmosphere of violence in its varied forms (physical, structural, cultural, mental, sexual, and even spiritual) are brought to our consciousness. Besides, war and its support mechanisms and innumerable consequences are pictured vividly here. With this background, the author enters into the Gandhian thoughts and techniques of ahimsa and satyagraha in sections two and three respectively. Those who are positively nurturing hatred and anger in their hearts are incapable of seeing the force of truth in their life and in their relationships. For Gandhiji, nonviolence is "The Law" of our species – it is the right thing to do to qualify as being human.

In the fourth and final section, the author develops the people power paradigm and is quite practical in her approach. Clarifying the distinction between 'power over' and 'power to', Gandhiji's concept is correctly identified as 'power to'. He had even envisaged a *Shanti Sena* to preserve peace and harmony. It is reassuring to see

that the author is advocating such a band of peace keepers in a world torn by violence and strife.

The book ends with a note of hope in the 12th and final chapter of a world beyond war, advocating nonviolent resistance and peaceful conflict resolution – to protect and defend non-violently; in other words, practising *Ahimsatmak Raksha*. Thus we see that the author innovatively approaches the Gandhian concepts for a concrete and practical life of peaceful co-existence.

Proposing Gandhi as a role model, this book is advocating a new paradigm to genuinely connect with people and live a life of harmonious co-existence despite our personal, ethnic, cultural, political, and religious differences. If one embraces *satya* and *ahimsa*, this is possible. As an effort to empower the readers through correct understanding and application of Gandhian philosophy, this work has achieved what it proposed to be. The readers will definitely be spending their time fruitfully not only in reading through the pages of book but also in attempting to practise what is proposed in it. Definitely, peace-building is the need of the hour.

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