
THE THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY OF GANDHI

Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau, were the three great personalities in the making of Gandhi's thought and philosophy. In spite of these western influences, however, Gandhian thought is typically Indian in the light of this discuss various influences on the thought of MK Gandhi Or Discuss various influences on Gandhian thought and philosophy Mahatma Gandhi, an originator of a new era, was one of the greatest personalities of modern India. He was a deeply religious man. Gandhiji spiritualised politics and liberalised religion. He believed in the close relationship of religion and politics. He was a great political saint. The various sources of inspiration which moulded Gandhi's thought and philosophy are summarized as under Western Influence on Gandhi's Thought and Philosophy: Mahatma Gandhi was influenced not only by western thinkers' but also by Indian heritage. It is said that Gandhi's thought and philosophy was influenced by the three great personalities of the world. **Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau**. He came in close contact with the literature of these personalities in South Africa. The study of this literature left a deep impression on his life. Gandhi's first biographer calls him a disciple of Tolstoy a Russian novelist commonly known as Christian Anarchist. Gandhi also considered himself a devoted admirer of him. To quote him, Tolstoy is one of the three moderns who have exerted the greatest spiritual influence on my life; the third being Ruskin."

TOLSTOY'S INFLUENCE-Gandhi made an intensive study of the works of Tolstoy, especially his **The Kingdom of God is Within You**. I had a profound influence on his thought and life. In his own words. Tolstoy's **Kingdom of God is Within You** overwhelmed me. I left an abiding impression on me.

- Its readings turned me of my scepticism and made me a firm believer in ahimsa. **"He again said, "I made too an intensive study of Tolstoy's books. The Gospel in brief what to do and such other books made impressions on me."** According to Tolstoy, Love is one of the adequate solutions for all human problems. To quote him, The renunciation of all opposition by force.....means the law of love unperverted by sophistries.
- Love, or in other words the striving of men's souls towards unity and the submissive behaviour to one another that results therefrom, represents the highest and indeed the only law of life....any employment of force is incompatible with love as the highest law of life and....as soon as the use of force appears permissible even in a single case, the law its cor is immediately negated."
- Tolstoy condemned the state and its machinery, law courts, police and military, institution of private property, capitalism, schools etc He also opposed the use of force, payment of taxes, compulsory military service etc. He believed in informal co-operation instead of organised society.
- Tolstoy wanted to bring about such co-operation by method of love, non-resistance and non-co-operation. Like him, Gandhi too believed in non-violence. Both were against the modern civilisation as based on force and exploitation.
- Both laid stress on the reform of the individual for his inner self perfection by love Both believed in the purity of means and preached extreme simplicity of life, bread-labour, celibacy etc. However, Gandhi was not a thorough-going Tolstoyan. Infact, as Dr. O.P. Goyal remarks, "it is doubtful whether Gandhi owes the origin of Satyagraha to Tolstoy or not, of course it is obvious that he found in Tolstoy's views a Western confirmation of what he was doing in Transval." Even Gandhi himself admitted that one need not accept all that Tolstoy says. Both differed in their

methods. Tolstoy was a pacifist whereas Gandhiji was a satyagrahi. Gandhi was more practical than Tolstoy.

- Tolstoy was opposed to violence and force in all its forms whereas Gandhi followed the ideal of the Gita, action without attachment. John Ruskin's 'Unto This Last' also influenced Gandhi's thought and philosophy. In the words of Gandhi, "The one book that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was Unto this Last. I translated it later into Gujarati entitling it Sarvodaya (The welfare of all). I believe that I discovered some of my deepest convictions reflected in this great book of Ruskin and that is why it so captured me and made me transform my life." He read this book in South Africa and drew from it three principles namely: That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all
- That the lawyer's work has a same value as the barber much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work
- That Wife of the In our, the life of the tiller of the soil and the bandierasman, is the life worth living Like Ruskin, Gandhi preached the supremacy of the spirit and trust in the nobleness of human nature. Both regarded character as more important than intelligence.
- Both wanted to spiritualise politics: both distrusted machinery. However, Gandhi differed from Ruskin in some spheres. They differed in their Views on the nature and functions of the state. Ruskin, like Gandhi did not accept non-violence in principle. Unlike Gandhi again, Ruskin belied in the extension of the sphere of state interference.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU - Another thinker who influenced the life and thought of Gandhi was Henry David Thoreau, the well known American anarchist who refused to pay his taxes as a protest against slavery system in America, was the first to use the term Civil Disobedience. However, Gandhi did not borrow his idea of Civil Disobedience from the works of Thoreau.

- However, it may be noted as Dr. O.P. Goyal remarks, 'that Gandhi read this essay only when he was in jail as a result of his Satyagraha Campaign. Thus, the essay confirmed, elaborated and provided detailed suggestions for the conduct of his movements, but was not the source of his non-violent techniques.'
- Gandhi was also impressed by Thoreau's ideas on the nature and functions of the state Indian Influences on Gandhi's Thought and Philosophy. Thus, Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau, were the three great influences on the making of Gandhi's thought and philosophy. or the books that have influenced the thought and philosophy of Gandhi, the Gita easily comes the first.
- He read the Bhagavad Gita in England in 1888-1889 and began to regard it a spiritual book. For long, he read the Gita daily and derived inspiration and took guidance from it from time to time. In the words of Gandhi, "...Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfied my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount....when doubt haunts me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me, and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming Sorrow.
- My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita." The central theme of the Gita, according to Gandhi, regarding the way to self-realisation is the ideal of nishkam karma i.e., action without desire for the result. In his autobiography, he recorded his impressions, "Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalayas, the Lokmanya like the ocean. But Gokhale was as the Ganges One could have a refreshing bath in the holy river.

- The Himalayas was unscalable and one could not easily launch forth on the sea, but the Ganges invited one to its bosom. Gandhi regarded Gokhale as his political guru. To quote him. "He was and remains for me the most perfect on the political field. Not, therefore, that we had no differences but that differences mattered neither to him nor to me. Nothing could part us asunder."
- Gandhi was greatly influenced by Gokhale's political ideas: his insistence on purity of means and his spiritualisation of politics. Another influence on Gandhi's thought and philosophy was that of Lokmanya Tilak. Prof D. C. Sharma is of the view that Tilak's mantle that has fallen on Mahatma Gandhi and not of Gokhale, though the Mahatma regards Gokhale as his political guru. For one thing, long before, Gandhiji preached his gospel of non-co-operation, Tilak... had set before the nation the whole programme of non-cooperation.
- There were so many similarities between them. Both of them, Mr. T. L. Sahay remarks, "taught the classical message of 'perfect yourself to the highest aspiration of man, live in truth, live in pure nature, strive for the fulfillment of the purpose of life."
- Their political philosophy was founded on this philosophy of life. Self-reliance, courage and willingness to sacrifice motivated each man and was a part of their message to all men." Above all these, Tilak had set before the nation the whole programme of non-cooperation which later on in the hands of Gandhi assumed the name of Satyagraha.

Conclusion. Thus, Gandhi's thought and philosophy had a number of influences-Indian as well as Western. In spite of the impact of Western writings, Gandhi's ideas of the philosophy of life were deeply rooted in his mind, which had come to him... some by inheritance, some by tradition and some by his own experience which were typically Indian. Gita, Buddhism, Jainism and his own family background had produced a typically Indian saint. The writings of Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau only deepened and strengthened his convictions which had already gained a good place in the mind and heart of Gandhi.

GANDHI ON RELIGION AND GOD

Gandhiji was a firm believer in God and religion. He never separated religion from politics. He treated Truth as God. He said that religion is a part of politics as diplomacy or any other institution. He also said that those who separated politics from religion were mistaken. However, his ideas on religion, God and separation of religion from politics can best be understood under the following headings **GANDHI'S**

FAITH IN GOD Gandhi's belief in God was infinite.

- To him God was Truth and everything else flowed from the Truth. He wrote this: "I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. Then I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. You may chop off my nose but that will not kill me. But blast my belief in God and I am dead."
- "He says further that there is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything I feel it, though I do not see it." Gandhiji said, "It is this unseen power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof, because it is so unlike all that he perceives through his senses."
- It is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within. Such testimony is to be found in the experience of an unbroken line of prophets and sages of all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself." Well, said Gandhi, "it is beyond my power to induce in you a belief in God."

There are some things which are self-proved, and some which are not proved at all. The existence of God is like a geometrical axiom. It may be beyond our heart grasp.

- Gandhiji said that he would not talk of an intellectual grasp. explanation cannot give you the faith in a living God. For, it is a thing beyond the grasp of reason, It transcends reason There are numerous phenomena from which you can reason out the existence of God Gandhiji said, If exist, God exists. With me it is a necessity of my being as it is with millions.
- They may not be able to talk about it, but from their life you can see that it is part of their life. I am only asking you to restore the belief that has been undermined, In order to do so. you have to unlearn a lot that dazzles your intelligence and throws you off your feet Start with the faith which is also a token of humility and an admission that we know nothing that we are less than atoms, I say atom, because the atom obeys the law of its being, whereas intellectual argument to address to those who have no faith insolence of our ignorance deny the Law of nature.

GANDHI ON RELIGION

Gandhiji had complete faith in religion. He said, "I come forward saying that I have complete faith in religion and I do not conceal my deep faith in that." Gandhiji said that Religion was essential for promoting morality.

- He used to say "Most religious men I have met are politician politicians in disguise. I, however Wear the guise of a politician but am at heart & religious man." It was wrong to believe that the life of a man can be divided on one aspect separated from the other.
- Gandhiji said that the whole gamut of man's activities constitutes an indivisible whole ; you cannot divide social, economic political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. There is religion apart from human activities.
- It provides a moral basis to all activities which they would otherwise lack reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing. Gandhiji was of the view that Religion, being the means of communion with God and the sustaining force, is the vital current that should pervade activity.
- He said that the root of religion is That which binds. The root-meaning of its Sanskrit equivalent Dharma is 'That which holds'. It sustains a person, which nothing else does. It is rock bottom, fundamental morality. When morality becomes religion, because it binds, it holds, it sustains him in the hour of trial.
- Man's ultimate aim is the realisation of God, and all his activities social political and religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in Hand be one with it. This can only be done by service of all.

RELIGION AND POLITICS

- Gandhiji did not conceive politics as divorced from religion. He said that religion should pervade everyone of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the Universe. It is not less real because it is unseen.
- This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It does not supersede them. It harmonises them and gives them reality. He said "There is no politics without religion, not the religion of the superstitious and the blind, the religion that hates and fights, but the universal religion of toleration. Politics without morality is a thing to be avoided.

- "Gandhiji is of the view that politics bereft of religion is absolute dirt, evetto be to shunned. Politics concerns nations and that which concerns the welfare of nations must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined.
- Gandhiji is of the firm view that religion cannot be separated from politics. He says that to see the Universal and all pervading spirit of Truth (God) face to face, one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why Gandhiji says, "Devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation and yet in all humility that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics, do not know what religion means.
- "Gandhiji remarks, I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole mankind and that I could not do unless I take part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know religion apart from humans activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing."
- Gandhi attached too much importance to non-violence He preached non violent resistance, named SATYAGRAH to lghout British imperialism from India. Even when Czechoslovakia was invaded by Hitler, be advised Czechs to resort to non-violent not matters for mere individual practice, but for practice resistance He says: We have to make Truth and non-violence practice by groups, communities and nations That, at any rate, is my dream Ahimsa (non-violence) is the attribute of the soul, and, therefore to be practised by everybody in all the affairs of life.
- He further says, that swear by non-violence because I know that it alone conduces to the highest good of mankind, not merely in the nex world but in this also.appears to do good, the good is only temporary, the evil it does I object to violence because when it permanent.Gandhiji attaches utmost importance to non-violence and says that the religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the Rishis and Saints.
- It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute...Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean submission to the will of the evil I but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of tyrant. The ideal society being based on non-violence, the cont of the federation over the units will be purely moral and in way coercive.
- In fact, Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence may be considered as the michtiest force at the disposal of mankind. Gandhi says that non-violence does not admit of running away from danger and leaving dear ones unprotected. Not knowing the stuff of which non-violence is made, many have honestly believed that running away from danger every time was a virtue compared to offering resistance, especially when it was frange with anger to one's life. of non-violence, must, litefor me, guard against snch an unmanly bellef". Teephs that unlets the world adopts non-violence will spelle suleid for mankind.
- Gandhiji preaches non-violence of those belief and action He says that the basic principle on which the practice of non-violence rest is that what holds good in respect of oneself, equally applies to the whole universe. Gandhi out the basic difference between non-violence and cowardice follows you believe that there is only a cowardice and violence, I would advise violence."
- Violence is a comprehensive category and is manifested both at the personal and the institutional levels. Evil thoughts, sentiments of revenge and brutality, verbal pugnacity and

even accumulation of unnecessary things represent examples of personal violence. Falsehood, trickery, intrigues, chicanery and deceitfulness are also forms of violence, according to the comprehensive connotation given to the term by Gandhiji. Physical punishments imprisonment, capital punishment and wars represent examples of violence committed by government. Economic exploitation and strangulation others are also manifestations of violence, Even excess of emulation and competition can become species of violence. Non-violence or ahimsa is, therefore, equally comprehensive and represents the total neutralization of violence in all forms.

GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF SATYAGRAHA

- Gandhiji in his autobiography explained the incidence of the birth of Satyagraha. He says, The principle called Satyagraha came into being before that name was invented. Indeed when it was born, I could not myself say what it was. In Gujarati also we used the English phrase "passive resistance to describe it. When in a meeting of Europeans I found that the term 'passive resistance was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterised by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, I had to demur.....

In 1940, Gandhiji permitted to It was then termed '**Individual Civil Disobedience**. In 1930 and 1932, it was "Mass Civil Disobedience, and finally in 'Quit India movement of 1942 it was 'Complete Civil Disobedience.

- The doctrine of Civil Disobedience was elucidated by Gandhiji in Young India thus: Civil Disobedience is civil breach of immoral statutory enact-ments. The expression was, so far as I am aware, coined Thoreau to signify his Own resistance to the laws of Slave State He has left a masterly treatise on the duty of Civil Disobedience. But Thoreau was not perhaps an out and out champion of non-violence.
- Probably, also Thoreau limited his breach of statutory laws to the revenue law, i.e. payment of taxes. Hijrat Another form of Satyagraha recommended by Gandhi was Hijrat which implied voluntary exile from the permanent place of residence.
- This was to be done by those who feel oppressed and cannot live without loss of self-respect in particular place and lack the strength that comes from trust non-violence or the capacity to defend themselves violently," Hurt was recommended by Gandhiji in 1928 to the people of Dardoll and in 1939 to those of Junagarh, Vithalgad and Limbdi. Fasting.
- When all other means fall. the votary of Ahimsa, takes to fasting. Gandhiji undertook fasting many time as a last resort. He said that fast is the last weapon in the armoury of the votary of AHIMSA When human ingenuity fails the votary fasts. This fasting quickens the spirit of prayer, that is to say, the fasting is a spiritual act and, therefore, adorsed to God.
- The effect of such action on the life of the people is that when the person fasting is at all known to them their sleeping conscience is awakened. But there is the danger that the people through mistaken sympathy may act against their will in order to save the life of the loved one, This danger has got to be faced, One ought not to be deterred from right action when one is sure of rightness.

- It can but promote circumstances. Such a fast undertaken in obedience to the dictates of the inner voice, and therefore, prevents haste. Fasting unto death is an integral part of Satyagraha programme, and, fast is the greatest and most effective weapon in Fasts can be really coercive. Such fasts are to attain selfies Gandhiji maintained, or course, it is not to denied they falling one such personal end would amount to exercise of object.
- A fast undertaken to bring money from a person or coercion or undue influence." Gandhiji says, "I would unhesitant successfully resisted it in the fasts that have been undertaken advocate resistance of such undue influence. I have myself between a selfish and unselfish end is often very thin, I would threatened against me. And if it is argued that the dividing line urge that a person who regards the end of a fast to be selfish or otherwise base should absolutely refuse to yield to it, even though the refusal may result in the death of the fasting person.
- The people will cultivate the habit of disregarding fasts which in their opinion are taken for unworthy ends, such fasts will be robbed of the taint of coercion and undue influence. Like all human institutions, fastings can be both legitimately and illegitimate. Strike. Strike was another important method advocated by Gandhiji. According to him strike was a voluntary, purificatory suffering undertaken to convert the erring opponent.
- Gandhiji did not believe in the theory of class war. He did not subscribe to the proposition that labour and capital must remain in the opposite camps. His view was that industry was a joint enterprise of labour and capital, and both of them were trustees. The strikers were required to put forward their demands in very clear terms. The strikers were required to learn some manual craft so that during the strike period they may not have to depend upon strike fund. Rules for Satyagrah. According to Gandhiji to make satyagraha effective certain psychological and sociological conditioners required. A Satyagrahi has to follow certain rules which are as under:

1. The satyagrahi will not harbour any hatred within his heart against the opponent.
2. The issue for which Satyagraha is launched should be true and substantial.
3. The Satyagrahi should make himself ready to undergo all MK Gandhi de or humiliation and suffering. He must prepare himself even to sacrifice his life if occasion demands. Gandhiji also gives some important rules for Satyagrahis
 1. 'A Satyagrahi will harbour no anger.
 2. He will tolerate the anger of the opponent. In so doing he will put up with assault from the opponent, never retaliate, but he will never submit, out of fear of punishment to any order given in anger.
 4. He should voluntarily submit to arrest if an order has been given by proper authority.
 5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he may lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.
 6. Non retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.
 7. A civil resister will never insult his opponent and also not take part in any of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of Ahimsa.

GANDHISM AND COMMUNISM

- K.G. Mashruwala notes that it has been often said that Gandhiji was a communist minus violence. Indeed it is possible to quote Gandhiji himself in regard to this proposition. Gandhiji

was not in the habit of rejecting descriptions of him or his principles if they were meant as compliments, and if they helped his main mission. But in a careful examination of principles, such descriptions should not be regarded as very accurate and must not be used as handy definitions.

- The error of such descriptions lies in their capacity to conceal the full implications of the differential factor. When it is said that Gandhism is Communism minus violence, the impression created is that the minus violence factor in Communism is humiliation and suffering. He must prepare himself even to sacrifice his life if occasion demands. Gandhiji also gives some important rules for Satyagrahis.

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capacity to conceal the full implications of the differential factor. When it is said that Gandhism is Communism minus violence, the impression created is that the minus violence factor in Communism history. (Communism holds that the real cause of human conflict throughout history has been property. Engels stated that Marx maintained that every fundamental historical development, regardless of the character on the surface, was the result of changes in methods of production property relations of the particular time and that the economy motive was the main, if not the sole, explanation of human behaviour. Gandhi, on the other hand, was of the view that the main force which has built and pushed forward the human race was the instinct of love for fellow human beings. Conflicts had been generally resolved by this love-force. Non-violence was another name for love, and Gandhiji said that if we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record down to our own time. we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards Ahimsa (non-violence). If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards Ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further

2. The state withers away. The final aim of Communism was Stateless Society. Engels said that the proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into State Property. But in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat. It abolishes the State as State Society thus far based on class antagonism had need of the State: when at last it becomes the real representative of the

whole society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive state is no longer necessary. State interference in social relations becomes in one domain after another superfluous, and then it dies out of itself. The State is not abolished, it dies out. Gandhi, on the other hand, held that creation of a stateless society through violence is not possible. Such stateless society requires highly developed spiritual values. Communism being built on violence was short-lived and bound to perish. Gandhi held, "Bolshevism (Communism) does not preclude the use of force, but freely sanctions it for expropriation of private property and maintaining the collective state ownership of the same. And if that is so, the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long, for it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence."

3. Class war. Another important assumption of Communism is the theory of 'Class War'. In the 'Communist Manifesto' (1848) Marx and Engels stated: "History hitherto existing is the history of class struggles and every form of society has been based on the antagonist of oppressive and oppressed classes. Violent revolution. From proceeds to violent 'Revolution'. Marx said that force was the

midwife of every old society pregnant with new one. According to him, revolution springs from a revolutionary situation. Chronic discontent, dissensions amongst the members of ruling class, recurrence of crisis, depression, strikes, riots, demonstrations, and ultimate breakdown of the old order, create this situation. Mao preaches naked violence and war to estate Communism

He says, "Every communist must grasp the truth; political power grows out of the barrel of a gun, and according to the Marxist Theory of the State, army is the chief component the political power of the State. Whoever wants to seize political power of the State and to maintain it, must have a strong army. Some people have ridiculed us as advocates of the potency of war. Yes we are, which is not bad at all, but is good and is Marxist.

"Communism of the 'Russian type, that is Communism which is imposed on a people, would be repugnant to India,"

5. Economic order. Prof. Dikshit has well summarised the difference of economic order between Communism and Gandhism. He states that in a Communist State, first there has to be socialisation of means of production, distribution and exchange. The State owns and controls all industry, agriculture, trade and commerce. Citizen owns nothing, and is paid worker by force of arms. The State science and retains total hold of economy and compels the individual to work to order. The Communist Party under the command of the economic life of political life is limited to members of the Communist Party. The party members have a privileged position over the non-party masses. Secondly, a Communist State stands for centralised industrialism and materialism. The intellect and resources have to be pooled for these achievements alone.

Regarding Gandhism, Dikshit says that Gandhian economic set-up devises an order where individual ownership and individual management of economic means is maintained, with social restraint. This order nourishes individual initiative and enthusiasm for production, and yet empowers the State to checkmate misuse

by an individual through legislation. The target is a balanced adjustment between spiritualism and materialism, craze for over production is deprecated, and centralised industrialism is rejected. 6 Religion

The Communists do not believe in religion. Marx writes "Religion is the opium of the people." Engels also says that all religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. However, atheism has become a dogma with the Communists and with the government manned by them.

To Gandhiji God is Truth and everything else flows from that

Truth. He wrote thus : "I am surer of his existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. Then I can also testify that I may live with out air and water, but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill one. You may chop off my nose, but that will not kill me But blast my belief in God and I am dead" Materialism and Spiritualism. Communism pinned faith in materialism alone and Gandhi stood by an adjustment of spiritualism and materialism. According to Engels, necesito nature is primary. while human will and mind are secondary. Thelatter must adapt themselves to the former. According to Gandhi on the other hand, spiritual happiness and growth of man is the essence, and necessity of Nature has to be adjusted to spiritual needs. Gandhi denounces Russian materialism. He says that Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilization. It 1st wop of matter has given rise to school. which has been brought up to look upon material advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the final things of life Individual Freedom.

According to Prof. Dîk shit, 'Individual freedom is totally absent in a communist state.

The state is totalitarian and authoritarian and the citizen is compulsorily to conform his conduct and expression to the dictates of the commu post party There is no freedom of expression, assembly, or of the

press. The society is drilled and dragooned, where only one opinion is allowed Private property is non-existent, and the individual has to take up the work allotted to him by the party. As a citizen he cannot claim the right to enter the party. Recruitment to the party depends on the sweet will of the High Command Gandhiji said that if individual liberty go 28, then surely all is lost, for if the individual ceases to count, what is left to Society ? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the servi

GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF IDEAL STATE

Gandhi's social ideals is the classless and stateless society a state of self regulated enlightened anarchy. But as this ideal not realizable, he has an attainable middle ideal also, the predomartly non-violent state."

FREE ELECTION

Gandhi advocated adult suffrage in elections He says, "am wedded to adult suffrage...adult suffrage is necessary form reasons than one, and one of the decisive reasons to me is that enables me to satisfy all the reasonable aspirations, not only of the Musalmans, but also of the so-called untouchables, of Christian oflabourers and all kinds of classes" By Swaraj Gandhiji means the government by the consent

of the people as ascertained by the vote of the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native born domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service the state and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters.

ROLE OF LEGISLATION IN A STATE

A legislator in a true democracy has to conform his conduct to truth and non-violence. Gandhiji says that members of Assemblies, whether as members or ministers or speakers, have in every act of theirs to bear in mind the fact they have to conform to truth and non-violence.

- Thus the conduct of a member of the Assembly would have to be that of strictest honesty and courtesy in dealing with his opponents. He will not resort to shabby politics, will not hit below the belt, will never take a mean advantage of his adversary.
- The greater his position in the Assembly, the greater his responsibility in these matters. A member in the Assembly no longer represents his constituency and his party, but also represents the whole of his province. A minister no doubt advances his own party, but never at the expense of the nation as a whole. "If fighting for the legislatures meant sacrifice of truth and non-violence, democracy would not be worth a moment's purchase. The voice of the people is the voice of God, and it is the voice of millions that we have to represent. Is it not possible to do so with truth and non-violence?"

PEOPLE AS REAL POWER IN A STATE

Gandhiji says that under a Free Government, the real power will be held by the people... The mightiest government, will be rendered absolutely impotent if the people realising their power use it in a disciplined manner and for the common good... It must be remembered that only an infinitesimal proportion of the people can hold positions of responsibility and power in a country's government. Experience all the world over shows that real power and wealth are possessed by people: the group that holds the reins of government. "Gandhiji says that it is an illusion to think that M.L.As are the guides of voters. Voters do not send representatives to the Assemblies in order to be guided by them. On the contrary, they are sent their loyalty to carry out the people's wishes. The people are, therefore, the guides, not the M.L.As. The latter are servants the former masters. Gandhiji further remarks that if we look around, the world we shall find that the best guidance is given by those outside. If that were not so, a rot would set in all governments, because the field for guidance is vast and the Assembly is a very small thing. Parliaments are, after all, a mere drop in the ocean of national life."

PARLIAMENT AS INSTRUMENT OF TYRANNY

Gandhiji says that it is very difficult to get rid of your fondness for Parliament.

- It was no doubt barbarous when people tore off the skin, burned persons alive and cut off their ears or nose, but the tyranny of Parliament is much greater than that of Changis Khan, Tamerlane and others.
- Modern tyranny is a trap of temptation and, therefore, does great mischief. One can withstand atrocities committed by one individual as such but it is difficult to cope with the tyranny

perpetrated upon people in the name of the people. Even an extraordinarily intelligent man, caught in the meshes of this civilization, loses his sanity in Parliament.

- There is no human institution but has its danger. The greater the institution the greater are the chances of abuse. Democracy is a great institution and, therefore, it is liable to be greatly abused, The remedy, therefore, is not avoidance of democracy but reduction of abuse to a minimum.

SPHERE OF STATE

According to Gandhi, the state was to perform its functions with the minimum use of coercion. It was to rule 'through its moral authority based upon the greatest goodwill of the people. Most of the functions of the state were to be transferred to the voluntary associations. Gandhiji says that self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign or whether it is national. Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life.

- He remarks, "I admit that there are certain things which cannot be done without political power, but there are numerous other things which do not at all depend upon political power. That is why a thinker like Thoreau says that government is the best which governs the least.
- This means that when people come into possession of political power, the interference with the freedom of the people is reduced to a minimum. In other words, a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much state interference is truly democratic. Where such a condition is absent, the form of government is democratic in name."

Conclusion To those who reject the Gandhian way of life as utopian and impracticable we may say that Gandhiji always first put into practice what he preached to others. Tagore expressed this aspect of Gandhi's life in the following words: 'If he (Gandhiji) proposes an experiment in society, he must first subject himself to its ordeal. If he calls for sacrifice, he must pay its price himself. While many socialists wait for all to be deprived of their privilege before they would part with theirs, this man first renounces before he ventures to make any claims on the renunciation of others.'

GANDHI ON VILLAGE REPUBLICS

- The Gandhi's idea of village Swaraj is that it is complete republic, Independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependency is necessary.
- Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food and cotton. It should have reserved piece of land for its cattle, and playgrounds for adults and children. Then, if there is more land available it should grow useful money crops, excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like, Gandhi said that the village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall.
- It will have its own waterworks ensuring clean water supply, This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory upto the final Basic Courses. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on co-operative basis.

- Gandhiji says that non violence with its technique of Satyagraha and non-co-operation will have the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village.
- The government of the village will be conducted by a Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Here is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom.
- The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village honour.
- Gandhiji says that to model such a village may be the work of a lifetime. Any lover of democracy and village life can take up a village, treat it as his world and sole work, and he will find good results. He begins by being the village scavenger, spinner, water shaman, medicine man and school master all at once.
- If nobody comes near him he will be satisfied with scavenging and spinning. Gandhiji holds that independent life must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a Republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world.
- It will be trained and prepared to perish in its attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world.
- It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured, in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants, and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.
- In this structure composed of innumerable villages there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of village, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference, Gandhiji writes, will not wield power to crush the inner circle but give strength to all within and derive its own from the centre.
- I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian, and therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture, has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realisable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want before we can have something approaching it. If there is ever to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verily for my picture in which the last is equal to the first. or in other words, none is to be first and none the last.

- Gandhiji remarks that when Panchayat Raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the Zamindars, the capitalists and the Rajas can hold sway so long as the common people do not realise their own strength. If the people non-co-operate with the evil of Zamindari or capitalism, it must die of inanition. In Panchayat Raj only the Panchayat will be obeyed, and Panchayats can only work through the law of their making. The greater the power of the Panchayats, the better for the people. Moreover for Panchayats to be effective and efficient, the level of people's education has to be considerably raised. I do not conceive increase in the power of the people in military terms but in moral realms."The Panchayats should also see to an increase in quality of foodstuffs grown in their village. That is to be accomplished by properly manuring the soil. Then, they must see to the cleanliness of their village and its inhabitants.

ECONOMIC IDEAS OF GANDHIJI

Ans. Gandhian economic set-up, writes Prof. Dikshit, devises an order where individual ownership and individual management of economic means is maintained with social restraint. This order nourishes individual initiative and enthusiasm for production, and yet empowers the state to checkmate misuse by an individual through legislation. The target being a balanced adjustment between spiritualism and materialism and materialism craze for over-production is deprecated, and centralised industrialism is rejected. Gandhiji said that the economic constitution of India and for the matter of that the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing.

- In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet, and this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization, by any country, nation, or group of persons would be unjust.
- The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the constitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but in other parts of the world too. Gandhi's economic ideas can be broken down as under :

On Industrialisation.

Gandhiji opposed the craze for industrialism and production, and stood for limiting human needs on the principle of "plain living and high thinking. Opposing craze for industrialism and large scale production, he wrote thus "Industrialism, is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for all time.

- Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit foreign markets open to you, and on the absence of competitors, it has brought in its wake the recent world wars. This second world war is not still over, and even if it comes to an end, we are hearing of a Third World War. Gandhiji said that the mania for mass production is responsible for the world crisis.
- Granting for the moment that machine may supply all the needs of humanity, still it would concentrate production in particular areas, so that you would have to go about in a roundabout way to regulate distribution, but in respective areas where things are required, it is automatically regulated, and there is less chance for fraud, not for speculation.

- In his own words "Dead machinery must not be pitted against the millions of living machines represented by the villagers scattered in the seven hundred thousand villages of India. Machinery to be well used is to help an easy human effort.
- The present use of machinery tends more and more to concentrate within the hands of a few in total disregard of millions of men and women whose bread is snatched by it out of their mouths." On Bread Labour In formulating Bread Labour as philosophy of life, Gandhiji received inspiration from various sources. He wrote, "The law, that to live man must work, first came home to me from reading Tolstoy's writing on Bread Labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage

to it after reading **Ruskin's UNTO THIS LAST**. The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by Russian writer named T. M. Bondaref.

- Tolstoy advertised it, and gave it wider publicity. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the Gita, where we are told that he who eats without offering sacrifice, eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean bread labour. Sacrifices may be of many kinds. One of them may well be

Bread Labour.

- If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery as we see around. Such labour will be the highest form of sacrifice.
- Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds but all this will be labour of love for the common good. There will then be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable. This may be an unattainable ideal But we need not,

On Khadi

- According to Gandhiji Khadi (hand-spun and hand-woven cloth) marks the beginning of economic and equality. Khadi is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and, therefore, ultimately in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, "the livery of Indians freedom.
- Moreover Khadi mentality needs decentralization of production and distribution of necessities of life Gandhiji holds that the message of the spinning wheel is much wider than its circumference.
- Its message is one of simplicity service of mankind, living so as not to hate others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. I can only think, writes Gandhiji, of spinning as the fittest and most acceptable sacrificial body-labour. I cannot imagine anything nobler or more nations than that, for say one hour in the day, we should all do the labour that the poor must do, and thus identify ourselves with them and through them with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than the labour done in His name. I should labour for the poor even as they do.
- The spinning wheel spells a more equitable distribution of the riches of the earth. In his opinion, Swadeshi, without khaddar, was a body without life Swadeshi use the air we breathe. The test of Swadeshi is not the universality of the use of an article which sox under the name of Swadeshi. but the universality of participation in the production or manufacturing of such an article.
- Thus considered mill-made cloth is Swadeshi only in a restricted sense for in manufacturing only an infinitesimal number of Indian millions can part take part, but in the manufacture of khaddar

millions can take According to Gandhiji Kabaddi must have an important place in the India in so far as it represents a way of life based on non violence.

- In the Harijan, dated 21.12.47, he wrote as under : have no doubt that spinning and weaving of Khadi are more important than ever if we are to have freedom that is to be instinctively felt by the masses of the villages of India. That is the kingdom of God on earth.
- Through Khadi we are striving for equality of all men and women in the place of the gross inequality to be witnessed today We are striving to attain subservience of capital under labour in the place of the insolent triumph of capital over labour. Unless, therefore, all the effort made during the past thirty years in India was a retrograde step, hand-spinning and all it implies must be prosecuted with much greater vigour and far greater intelligence than hitherto."

On Capital Labour Relations.

- Prof. Dikshit writes : Gandhi believed in resolving conflicts between industrialists and labour by way of settlement with a view to achieving co-operation between the two. When persuasion failed, he advised recourse to the technique of non-violent non-cooperation.
- Gandhiji remarked, "By the non-violent methods we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist, to regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Not need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work.
- Either power On Swadeshi, In the Harijan Gandhiji defines Swadeshi as, the exclusion of any other spirit which dictates man to serve his next door neighbour to the according to Gandhiji one who serves his immediate neighbour for service has obvious limits but one who serves the world as a whole. He says that our capacity We can serve even our neighbours with some difficulty.
- If everyone of us duly performs his duty to his neighbour, no one in the world who needs assistance will be attended to. Therefore, one who serves his neighbours serves the world. As most attractive and ideal conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive is an alternative. Addressing the young communists some of whom were disturbed at the labour meeting at which he was speaking, he said "I tell you that I have been trying my best to live upto the ideal communism in the best sense of the term Gandhiji denounced communism and propounded his own theory of non-violent socialism

Conclusion: To conclude we may say that Gandhiji's economic ideas are developed in the social and economic background of India. His ideas are really great. In the words of Allen, it was the merit of Gandhiji that while revealing to us the potentiality of the single human being in an age of organization and machinery and the masses, be put those powers to the highest use. In him we saw what can be accomplished, not by the self-assertive will. but by the will wholly dedicated to God and the good of man. He possessed the only valid kind of authority not that which depresses others that it may rise, but that which lifts others to its own level. He had the rare capacity to make others what he was himself an independent centre of spiritual life. By doing he gave us a new faith in man as the bearer of the inner light and heartened us in our turn to attempt the task of living in freedom and confidence in God's will for us.

SOCIAL IDEAS OF GANDHIJI

- Gandhi's social ideas constitute a challenge [to the main currents of present civilization. According to Lord Boyd Orr, "Is it possible that these great principles, these wonderful ideals. could be applied on a world-wide scale ?
- I think the time has come when they can be applied, they must be applied and they will be (applied, because people realise that there is no other hope, with modern science and the abnormal powers which the scientists have let loose for destruction, And His social ideas can be broken down as under Untouchability Gandhi regarded untouchability & greatest blot on Hinduism Regarding untouchability Gandhi said, "To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves.
- The purification required is, not of the so-called superior castes. There is no special privilege to the untouchables' not even dirt and sanitation our arrogance which blinds the superior Hindus, it blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden brother whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under some Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance grace and revelation are the monopoly of no nation descend equally upon all who wait upon God, That religion that nation will be blotted out from the face of the earth because of its faith on injustice, untruth or violence,"
- Gandhi said ; do not want to be reborn, but if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from the miserable condition, therefore, pray that it should be born again, I should do so not as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra but as an Anti Shudra."
- Gandhiji claimed for the untouchables in Hindu Society the right to enter Hindu temples. About this Gandhi says "Temple entry is the one spiritual act that would constitute the message of freedom to the untouchables and assure them that they are not outcasts before God." It is not a question of Harijans asserting their right of temple entry or claiming it.
- They may or may not want to enter that temple even when it is declared open to them. But it is the Fountain duty of every caste Hindu to secure that open door for Harijans
- Gandhiji says that there is none that is high and none that is low, all are absolutely equal, equal because all are the one true of that Creator And this is not a philosophical thing to be dished out to Brahmanas as Kshatriyas, but it enunciates eternal truth which admits of no reduction, the inequalities are created by humans because one wants to feel superior to others

SARVODYA'S CONCEPT

Sarvodaya is a Gujarati term that roughly translates into "well-being for all," "progress for all," or "universal uplift." It was first coined by Mahatma Gandhi, who altered and combined the Sanskrit root words *sarva* (all) and *udaya* (uplift), creating a concept that would define his political philosophy and, later on, his movement.

Gandhi developed this idea upon reading a book on political economy, *Unto This Last*, by English social thinker John Ruskin. The controversial tract discussed topics of social justice and egalitarianism, and was among the first to introduce the notion of a "social economy" – an economic sector distinct from the public and private sectors – government and business – that included charities, non-governmental organizations, non-profits, and cooperatives.

Gandhi was greatly inspired by it, as he noted in his autobiography: “I determined to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book.” Indeed, the great activist drew from it’s message three central tenets:

- 1. *That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.***
- 2. *That a lawyer’s work has the same value as the barber’s in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.***
- 3. *That a life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handi-craftsman is the life worth living.***

- Gandhi reflected upon these concepts: “The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me. *Unto This Last* made it clear as daylight for me that the second and third were contained in the first. I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice.” He paraphrased and translated the main ideas of the book and titled it Sarvodaya.
- Despite these origins, he eventually developed the concept into his own distinct ideology and philosophy: Sarvodaya was an attempt to develop India into a just and prosperous society, one defined by the dignity and respect of labor, socioeconomic equality, cooperative self-sufficiency, and individual liberty.
- It is often forgotten that Gandhi wasn’t only aiming to free India, but to improve it’s society, a project that was perhaps as every bit as ambitious and crucial.
- Upon his death and the achievement of Indian independence, his followers continued to carry out this social message and promote it’s principles throughout their vibrant new nation: among the more prominent examples were the Bhoodan and Gramdan movements , voluntary land reform projects that sought to convince richer landowners to give tracts of land to the poor. Though they didn’t achieve the intended higher level of impact, they kept alive the tireless effort to continue improving society. In fact, groups drawing from this tradition continue to exist to this day.
- When I first set out to start this blog, I began with searching across the web for a title that was appropriate, idealistic, and – frankly – unique. I was particularly drawn to Sanskrit and other “exotic” terms, due to both my interest in non-Western cultures and my desire to find a more encapsulating term (how else could I communicate “progress for all” in one word?) Given both it’s root meaning, and it’s interesting origins, I figured the term would be appropriate for my blog – though it is by no means comparable in it’s mission to that of Gandhi and his contemporaries.

The term stands for my desire to promote the well-being of humanity as a whole, in keeping with my belief in secular humanism. How we can improve the world is difficult to say, and I frankly don’t have the answer: I don’t think any single person does. Hence my emphasis on discourse, dialectics, freethinking, and open-mindedness. Progress for all is a nice idea, but highly – some would say unrealistically – ambitious. It is not something that can be accomplished, let alone visualized, by a single policy, movement, or belief system. The well-being of all requires the input of all: humanity drawing from it’s collective pool of knowledge, experience, innovation, and revelation.

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- To that end, I'm aiming to play just one small, but hopefully fruitful, part in this grand exercise. I hope my site could grow and learn from the ample amount of human thinking that now permeates the world, through the advent of new technology and media. I hope I could help connect people to new ideas – often one another's – and at the very least get them to start thinking about things. I'm not seeking to convert someone to my way of thinking – I know that would be both arrogant and impractical – but to get them exposed to something that might makes them wonder, reflect, and inquiry.
 - As the world globalizes, and it's diverse factions engage in more exchanges (many of them far from peaceful), it is imperative that we continue the process of humble dialogue. We must bring together as much knowledge and experience as possible. We must seek to converge on ideals that may hold the key to improving the lives of ourselves and our fellow humans, most of whom live in terrible poverty and misery.

