GANDHI MARG

Quarterly Journal of the Gandhi Peace Foundation

VOLUME 37 ❑ NUMBER 2 ❑ JULY – SEPTEMBER 2015

Gandhi Marg: 1957-1976 available in microform from

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II ISSN 0016—4437 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CARD NO. 68-475534

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Period	*Individual (Inland)*	*Institutional (Inland)*	*Individual (foreign)*	*Institutional (foreign)*
Single Copy	Rs. 70	Rs. 100	US $ 20	US $ 25
1 year	Rs. 300	Rs. 400	US $ 60	US $ 80
2 years	Rs. 550	Rs. 750	US $ 110	US $ 150
3 years	Rs. 800	Rs. 1000	US $ 160	US $ 220
Life	Rs. 5000	Rs. 6000	US $ 800	N.A.

(including airmail charges)

Remittances by bank drafts or postal or money orders only

Published by Kumar Prashant for the Gandhi Peace Foundation, 221 & 223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi-110 002 (Phones: 23237491, 23237493; Fax: +91-11-23236734), Website: www.gpfindia.org, e-mail: gpf18@rediffmail.com, gandhipeacefoundation18@yahoo.co.in, and printed by him at Gupta Printing and Stationery Service, 275, Pratap Nagar, Street No. 18, Delhi-110 007

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We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance received from the Indian Council of Social Science Research for the production of this journal

Information for Authors

Gandhi Marg is the premier quarterly journal of the Gandhi Peace Foundation having a standing of more than half a century published from New Delhi in the months of March, June, September and December every year. Original contributions on themes of national and international importance falling under the broad area of Gandhian Studies are invited from scholars and practitioners. Articles submitted to Gandhi Marg are refereed. It is presumed that an article submitted to Gandhi Marg is original, and has not been under the consideration of any other journal. In general, the articles should not exceed 8000 words including notes and references. Periodically, we also bring out special issues on selected themes.

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Examples

Books: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p.23.

Articles: Ramashray Roy, "Parameters of Participation", *Gandhi Marg*, 12, 3(October-December 1990), p.276.

Chapters within Books: Pearl S. Buck, "A Way of Living", in S. Radhakrishnan, ed., *Mahatma Gandhi: Essays* and Reflections (Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1956), p.51.

Internet Citations: Apart from name of author and article, include also the URL and date of download. For example: www.un.org accessed on 10 May 2006.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 221-222

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Editorial

THE EXODUS OF REFUGEES and migrants to Europe, exploited to the hilt by unscrupulous traffickers, has brought to light another humanitarian tragedy in the making. With around three thousand people perishing each year in their bid to cross the Mediterranean Sea, migration has become a humanitarian issue of grave proportions. The death of the Syrian toddler Aylan Kurdi on the Turkish beach has stirred the conscience of people everywhere, forcing some European countries to open their borders to the refugees. In the days of multiculturalism, Europe had welcomed migrants and learned to see them with pride as representing the diversity of European countries. The first-generation immigrants were broadly secular, and those who were religious were equally tolerant. There is now a rethinking and the present wave of migration is looked upon with skepticism. The British Prime Minister David Cameron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel have publicly denounced multiculturalism and the dangers that it entailed recently. Migration has also fuelled the success of far-right parties across Europe.

According to multiculturalism's critics, European liberal policies on migration have led to lack of integration and erosion of national identities and trust in its wake. Multiculturalism's proponents do not think that diversity is the problem. They insist that the culprit is racism. Resentment to migration has led to routine attacks on refugee camps in Germany by anti-immigrant groups.

European Union countries have an open-border policy that allows the free movement of people between member states. While Germany, France and other countries are opening their doors to more migrants, reluctantly though, countries such as Hungary and Austria are clamping down on the flow. Although the Gulf countries share with the Syrians a common language and are wealthier than countries like Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, which now accommodate most of the refugees, since the former are not signatories of the 1951 UN

convention on refugees, they do not go beyond providing financial support to the refugees in the latter countries.

The EU refugee crisis needs to be seen against the background of the failure of the international community to share the burden with countries that are currently hosting the bulk of the Syrian refugees. It may be noted that the international refugee system was set up on the basis of the principle that the refugees are an international responsibility, not just the responsibility of the country where they happen to congregate. The UN should take a more proactive policy to ensure that legitimate refugees and asylum seekers are provided protection and the burden of rehabilitating them is shared by the international community.

This issue of Gandhi Marg has eight articles and four notes and comments. The first article by Ektaa Jain discusses the role played by Khadi in shaping the character of the freedom movement. In the second article, Shyam Pakhare elaborates on a new model of masculinity that Gandhi evolved to confront the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity. Chubawalang Jamir examines the role played by the Nagaland Baptist church in the Naga peace process in the following article. Ravi Ranjan analyses the notion of human dignity as reflected in the writings and practices of Gandhi and Ambedkar. Satya Sundar Sethy reinterprets Gandhi's notion of Dharma. Peter Gonsalves explores clothing as a form of non-verbal communication in the Swadeshi Movement, which is a sequel to another article published in the preceding issue of Gandhi Marg. Kumar Rahul attempts to construct an alternative framework for cosmopolitanism based on Gandhi's notion of self-other relationship. The last article by Rana Ravinder examines the materiality of Gandhi's thought from the perspective of economics. In the notes section, we have articles by Anil K Ojha, Thomas Weber, Ravi K Bhatia and a translation by Mangesh Kulkarni. We do hope that the articles carried in this issue will be of interest to the readers.

JOHN S MOOLAKKATTU

Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 223–240

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Khadi: A Cloth and Beyond

Ektaa Jain

ABSTRACT

Clothes have always been integral to human identity. They have defined not only individuals but are often seen as markers of particular groups, communities, towns, and even countries. A potent sign of resistance and change, clothing can be seen as a power changing mechanism. The idea of meaning associated with what we wear is dominant in our society. It is in this light that the paper tries to explore Gandhi's meaning of the fabric 'khadi' in the freedom struggle. It has been referred to as the 'fabric of Indian independence' and had a key role to play in the freedom struggle. The article attempts to explore this role and the meaning that the cloth conveyed during the struggle and after.

Keywords: Gandhi, khadi, commodity, fashion, clothing, freedom

IT IS NO MYSTERY that the clothes we wear have played an essential role throughout history. They reflect the personality of individuals and can be used as a marker of a group, community, family, region and even country. Indian culture is older than history. The building up and casting aside of different identities by means of clothes has been a recurring theme in it. In this essay, it is proposed to examine how these very identities were constructed and used through the medium of a simple yet powerful cloth— *khadi*.[1]

The theory that clothes were necessary due to climatic conditions is not without its opponents. S.N. Dar cites Davies according to whom, "If we turn to study the various societies of primitive savages, we find that in many cases, where the climate is far worse than our own, they do not seem to need the least protection from it."[2]

It is always unsafe to make sweeping statements about customs, for customs are often fossilized results of individual minds. Partial or complete nudity might also be attributed to social taboo or some

religious system. Modesty is an instinct ranging between shame and fear. So, while a Muslim woman would cover her face, a Laotian woman would cover her breasts, a Chinese woman would cover her feet, a Sumatran woman would conceal her knees and in Samoa it would be the navel; modesty in each case is dictated by custom and usage. Anthropology gradually undermined the belief that clothes are needed to shield us from extreme cold or heat. Already in 1831, Thomas Carlyle was writing that the first purpose of fashion is not warmth or decency but ornament.[3]

The fact that hand-spinning as well as hand-weaving were quite prevalent in prehistoric India is quite evident from the oldest Vedas and Manusmriti.[4] In Valmiki's Ramayan and Vyasa's Mahabharat too there is a repeated mention of the colourful textiles and fine weaving. Indian fabrics got further refined with marvellous weaving techniques to produce fascinating designs as is depicted through the Ajanta cave paintings. Travelers like Hiuen Tsang in the 7th century and Marco Polo in the 13th century too speak highly of Indian cotton fabric which looked like 'tissues of the spider's web.'[5]

The subject of cloth in South Asia may seem to have attracted the attention of historians and anthropologists. Bernard Cohn has established the significance of cloth in articulating power and authority in nineteenth century India, arguing that clothing played a central role in establishing the difference between rulers and ruled.[6] Christopher Bayly has considered the importance of cloth in India from the eighteenth century to 1930, arguing that the meaning of cloth was transformed by nationalists who challenged colonial domination with the creation of what Arjun Appadurai describes as a "language of commodity resistance."[7]

It was in the beginning of the seventeenth century that the English first set their foot in India as a company of traders. The Englishmen had never really actively propagated their dress earlier. However, a tendency was noticeable among the younger generation of disposing the flowing cuts of previous eras and adopting a new European style of trousers. Side by side with these changes in Indian fashions, English dresses were themselves being worn commonly. Moreover, according to Dar, when a country like India, with a rich heritage of well-founded traditions, has always been made the hunting ground of many opposing but tempting cultures, it puts on a hide of complacency which makes it insensitive to sudden shocks and incapable of quick reactions.[8] The people then begins to suffer from a sort of an intellectual cowardice which keeps them torn between shyness and desire. They are drawn towards the new, but are afraid to relinquish the old.

Within this dilemma of the new and the old came *khadi.* However, as an effective and powerful symbol of freedom struggle, it came to its fore due to its association with M. K. Gandhi and the indispensable role that he played in elevating it to the status of a national cloth. This is also evident in *khadi* being the result of Gandhi's own sartorial choices of transformation from that of an Englishman to that of one representing India.[9] The choice of *khadi* as a symbol was thus not the result of a whim. It was a well-thought-out decision of Gandhi. This leads to Goffmanian idea of '*presentation of self.*'[10] What is important here is the way in which the individual in ordinary situation presents himself/herself and his/her activity to others. The key to *khadi* becoming a successful tool for the freedom struggle lies in its uniqueness which picked up and re-crafted the then existing politico-economic critiques with its own distinctive qualities. It thus became a material to which people from diverse backgrounds could relate to. To put it simply, '*khadi was the material embodiment of an ideal'* that represented freedom from colonialism on the one hand and a feeling of self-reliance and economic self-sufficiency on the other. It embodied the national integrity of all as well as acted as a marker for communal harmony and spiritual humility. Visvanathan traces the way this cloth became such an important voice for India's freedom.[11]

It is amidst this that one finds Simmel's work on 'fashion' quite interesting. Simmel regarded fashion as a means for social equalization with the desire for individual differentiation and change.[12] *Khadi* has done exactly this in the Indian context. While, on the one hand, it became a tool to blur distinctions and cover all within its canopy, yet, on the other hand, it gave Khadi a distinct identity as a common man's cloth. The supremacy that *khadi* entailed as a national symbol was due to the reason that everybody could wear the same form of clothing without any distinctions of high and low and thus demonstrate responsibility towards the nation and the struggle going through. To opt for *khadi,* therefore, was to emphasise one's being over appearance, substance over form, and 'character over clothing.' The spinning wheel gradually became what can be termed as an innovative tool for attaining *swaraj.* It was thought that Indians could actually regain their lost autonomy by donning the fabric and spinning, which would mean more than just struggling for independence; it would rather be a feeling of being independent totally.

The reasons for Gandhi recognising the humongous potential of the fabric rose both from personal experiences as well as gradual national awakening. One can come across these through his autobiography in which such experiments have been extensively discussed.[13] Gandhi was undoubtedly overwhelmed by the early

nationalist critiques of colonialism that found the stagnation and deterioration of India's textile industry as a major cause for India's growing poverty. The critiques all saw the importing of mill cloth on such large-scale as a hindrance to self-sufficiency. Gandhi's experiments with work, community living and dress became a part of his understanding of the social and political scenario of the country.

Khadi Textiles: Representing India

To quote Gandhi, *"The truest test of civilisation, culture and dignity is character and not clothing."*[14] It is difficult to overlook the semiotics of clothing as envisioned by Gandhi in the public life of today wherein a politician wearing *khadi* is definitely marked out from the rest of the crowd. Gandhi's own gloss on *khadi,* provided in 1921, mobilized all of these meanings and added, in a characteristic nationalist touch, some essential Indianness as well:

> I know that many will find it difficult to replace their foreign cloth all at once.... In order, therefore, to set the example, I propose to discard at least up to the 31st of October my topi (cap) and vest, and to content myself with only a loin cloth and a chaddar (shawl) whenever found necessary for the protection of the body.... I consider the renunciation to be also necessary for me as a sign of mourning, and a bare head and a bare body is such a sign in my part of the country.
>
> — Gandhi (152. Message On Loin-Cloth, Madura September 22, 1921)[15]

Susan Bean has traced the development of Mohandas Gandhi's ideas about *khadi,* a cloth she terms the "fabric of Indian independence," and views *khadi* as both a symbol of India's potential economic self-sufficiency and a medium for communicating to the British the dignity of poverty and the equality of Indian civilization. Bean describes Mahatma Gandhi as a semiotician who used his own appearance in a communicative manner to send across essential messages. This too was done in a way that could be comprehended by one and all through his clothing practices.[16]

Peter Gonsalves has attempted to show how people create symbols through daily interactions taking cue from Goffman. With Gandhi as the focus, the author shows that symbols are not remote, but are spread through cultures and reach masses to both good and bad effect. This, in turn, leads to his Gandhian approach to symbolization. By fashioning himself as a symbol and an example for others to follow, Gandhi created a symmetry and transparency with which others could view him as an exemplar. He spoke wisely, but it was his actions that spoke louder, enabling him to be a more credible leader.[17]

According to Trivedi, "Gandhi regarded visual experience as a neutral and transparent kind of communication that was open to everyone."[18] Gonsalves seems to think on similar lines when he puts forward the argument that Gandhi's experiments with his dress shows his gradual understanding of clothing as a powerful visual discourse in itself, which could be used to influence people and persuade them into the freedom struggle. He could thus bring his audience closer to himself. Bayly too reiterated the moral language behind Gandhi's sartorial changes. He was giving space and thus helping in reviving the earlier beliefs of magic or sacredness that cloth had always signified within the Indian society. Trivedi argues that through this symbolically laden language of *khadi,* one could witness creation of an 'imagined national community' encompassing all, even the non-literati.[19]

For many centuries prior to the nineteenth, India had been a major producer and provider of textiles of all kinds. Textiles were manufactured in large quantities all over the subcontinent to provide for consumption in the domestic as well as the world market. Regional specialization in the subcontinent in the manufacturing of textiles was an important element in the history of the textile sector over the centuries. Coromandel, for instance, had traditionally been the leading manufacturer of relatively inexpensive cotton textiles, which were either plain or patterned on the loom. They were often dyed in bright colours with plant dyes. While both inferior and superior grade cotton textiles were manufactured in large quantities in Gujarat, the region also provided high-grade silk and mixed textiles. Bengal was the other major textile producing region in the subcontinent specializing in the production of luxury cotton, silk and mixed fabrics.[20] Textile production was without any doubt the premier manufacturing industry in early modern Bengal as indeed it was in many other parts of the subcontinent.

From the late eighteenth century onwards, the basis of competitiveness changes as a consequence of technological and institutional changes in British cotton manufacturing.[21] The technological superiority amongst the British textiles emerged at the same time as the rising political power of the East India Company. For years the fate of the Indian textiles and the political authority of the British have been hotly debated. For many nineteenth century historians it is an accepted fact that this rising power led to the wiping out of Indian textiles. The British were seen as the torchbearers of a modern industry. However, for the nationalists, this destruction was a vivid example of the British misrule. The implications have been that if Indians would have ruled India, the industry would have

remained protected and survived. Only from the 1970s was research undertaken on changes in the size and scale of textile industry.[22]

Khadi as Embodying Meaning

There exists a wider issue of the relationship between clothing and its wearer. What do clothes mean to the people who wear them? Why do certain individuals and groups dress in a particular way? What can be the constraints within which they decide the way? And what could be the consequences of choosing one dress over another? Clothes then become central to a person's identity but not in a rigid or deterministic way.[23] The recurrent themes of destruction of 'Indian tradition,' the futility of 'western imitation' and the need for a revival of local textiles were expounded in a number of different forms in India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cohn too emphasises that interestingly one comes across as clothing choices being central to a gamut of issues of conflict between various groups. These issues could be concerning respect, honour, modesty or simply choice.[24] A tiff between different dress codes can thus be read as a sign of some wider dispute between two groups. He goes on to argue that in India clothes have a special meaning, since they are considered capable of retaining the very essence of people who wear them. This point is widely discussed by Cohn who looks at the pre-colonial view of cloth as a thing that can transmit spirit and substance. That cloth could evoke such powerful symbols of community and conduct was due to the important role it played in the Indian society, not merely in fixing and symbolising social and political statuses, but in transmitting holiness, purity and pollution.[25]

From the vantage point of the late eighteenth century, the decline was a long and protracted process, which actually took several decades. There has also been a wide consensus even amongst those who are optimistic about Indian handloom that hand spinning nowhere existed even in the late nineteenth century. Tirthankar Roy has concluded that the "gradual extinction of hand-made yarn" is a point "on which there is not much disputation today."[26]

The basic cotton textile narrative rests on the assumption of the gradual economic decline in the eighteenth century to be linked with the manufacture and trading of the textiles. In fact by nineteenth century, India is no longer seen as the world producer of cotton textiles. It was Britain that then clothed the world.

The English conquest of Bengal in the second half of the eighteenth century was clearly a circumstance of great import from the point of view of the textile industry of the province which later reflected the scenario for the entire country to some extent. The artisans and the

intermediary merchants associated with the industry no longer received their due in the value of the total output of the industry. However, it is only in the second half of the nineteenth century that the impact of British cotton textile industry was felt with its full force by the Indian handloom sector.

When the dhotis re-emerged in Bengal in 1905, it was seen as a sign of protest against the British policies. It signified the incompatibility of Indian and European dressing styles which were symbolic of the incompatibility of Indian and British interests. The clothing dilemmas of Indian elite during this period (19th- 20th centuries) were an expression of a growing discomfort with colonialism.[27] One may conclude that while clothes were thus an important expression against colonialism, they still had not gained a central place in political debate. This was to change with the coming of Gandhi.

The unrestrained weakening of the Indian textile industry and in turn the Indian economy in addition to the vast scale disillusionment of the masses caught the eye of the Indian cognoscenti and patriotic leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Bipin Chandra Pal, Ranade and Tilak.[28] The Indian National Congress at its 7th Session in 1891, passed a resolution urging people to use only Indian goods to the exclusion of imported ones and gave a clarion call for *'Swadeshi'* (use of things made in India only). The *Swadeshi* Movement was gathering momentum gradually with the efforts of Indian National Congress and other smaller organisations and also newspapers like *'Amrita Bazar Patrika*'. This is in line with Goffman when he considers the ways of acting differently with different purposes. As Goffman says: "*Sometimes the individual will act in a thoroughly calculating manner, expressing himself in a given way solely in order to give the kind of impression to others… to evoke from them specific response. Sometimes the individual will be calculating in his activity but relatively unaware that this is the case.*"[29]

With the partition of Bengal (1905), the movement reached its climax leading to boycott of the imported goods particularly English cloth. In spite of this, the movement really went through a sort of mutation only with Gandhi's idea of *swaraj* and a change in politics was evident soon with his coming back in 1915.[30] As suggested earlier too, handspun and handwoven cloth had been common in the Indian cultural fabric since a very long time. However, interestingly enough, only with the decline of production and usage of Indian cloth that the idea of *'khadi'* as more than just a cloth entered the lexicon of nationalism making headway to being the prominent symbol of freedom from the yoke of colonialism.

Khadi, the ever present fabric of the country became part of the

fancies of the Independence struggle because of the way it was popularised by Gandhi. The vocabulary that the leader used was that of denoting the fabric as an entire way of life, a way of life that could symbolise the unity of the vast nation.[31] In this sense, Gandhi can be seen as the first true Indian designer who in a way counselled the people to adorn their bodies with the nation's fabric— *khadi. Khadi* came across as leading India away from the shackles of the British rule for it encompassed the values that had been integral to the identity of the country including first and foremost, simplicity, humanitarian attitude towards all and the virtue of being independent. This was also seen as a way to infuse dedication, discipline and perseverance among all. One of the greatest qualities of *khadi* that made it so popular was its existence as a social equalizer. Though it was meant for the masses and could be worn by the poor, it also caught the eye of the sophisticated, thus bringing all under one canopy.

When Gandhi remarked that *swaraj* in absence of *swadeshi* would literally be a soulless body, it was understood that if *swadeshi* was the soul of *swaraj,* then its essence would definitely lie with *khadi*. The key to self-reliance for a nation was harking upon its indigenous goods of which *khadi* was a very important one. In his words, "I am a salesman of swaraj. I am a devotee of khadi. It is my duty to induce people, by every honest means, to wear khadi."[32] *Khadi* thus became an emblem for the revolution that India was waiting for. Moreover, the revolution led by the emblem soon made *khadi* a part of Indian identity.

The movement for *khadi* began in 1918.[33] The movement was marked with its own changing dynamics. While initially, a clear emphasis could be seen on using *khadi* as a medicine to the masses ridden with poverty due to economic stagnation, from 1934 onwards the fabric became something that the village people could use for themselves. It was no longer seen only as a commodity for sale to bring economic prosperity. The meaning became more humble. It seems that Gandhi used his years of imprisonment (1942 - 43) to think and ponder about the future course of the fabric. One can argue so as right after coming out of the prison, his ideology behind *khadi* became that of making the fabric useful for the villagers themselves. His ideas came out clearly by 1944, when he left no stone unturned to bring this change into effect.[34]

> You have asked me why wearing of Indian mill cloth does not amount to boycott of foreign cloth. This is colossal ignorance. For fulfilling the boycott, it is not enough if we wear mill cloth. The Bengalis even today complain of the exploitation of Bengal by the mill-owners at the time of

> the Partition. Their experience should teach us that boycott cannot be achieved with the help of only mill cloth. The propaganda should, therefore, be in favour of *khadi* only. It is obvious that mill cloth has no place in the house of the Congress.[35]

The uniqueness about Gandhi and his understanding of *khadi* also lies in the fact that he was one of the pioneers to recognise the need of a craft based society in which not only *khadi* but all indigenous arts and crafts could flourish and sustain themselves. *Khadi* could thus help in building up a community that for the first time would include the non-literates in an equal capacity if not more than the literate ones.

Gandhi created a new form of *swadeshi* politics that encouraged the production and exclusive consumption of hand-spun, hand-woven cloth of *khadi*. The campaign to popularize this movement took many forms, including the organization of exhibitions that demonstrated cloth production and sold *khadi* goods. On the occasion of one such exhibition in 1927, Gandhi explained the significance of exhibitions for the movement: "[The exhibition] is designed to be really a study for those who want to understand what this khadi movement stands for, and what it has been able to do. It is not a mere ocular demonstration to be dismissed out of our minds immediately..... It is not a cinema. It is actually a nursery where a student, a lover of humanity, a lover of his own country may come and see things for himself."[36]

Clothing and other consumer goods of the *Swadeshi* Movement were important mediums for creating a national image, as they linked a distinct material culture of nationalism to what were seen as the nation's basic values. Like other revolutionary movements, which similarly used material to suggest a group solidarity, the *Swadeshi* Movement made use of cloth in many forms, including new hats, new flags, and a new style of dress. *Khadi* could then be seen as a popular symbol in the so-called modern sphere of life. The performative tool that it was, it got the urban Indian community together with its widespread display and consumption. Yet, *swadeshi* enthusiasts quickly recognized that the support of urban India was not enough to bring about the economic and social changes that they sought. The All India Spinners' Association (AISA), therefore, set out to bring its ideas to India's rural communities, which were otherwise isolated from India's urban population. *Swadeshi* proponents set out to extend a new common visual vocabulary to those who had traditionally been separated by language, religion, and region. Rather than relying entirely upon a literate culture, the AISA created a body

of visual images to communicate with India's diverse population. The use of lantern-slide shows during *khadi* tours allowed *swadeshi* proponents to convey a series of narratives of the Indian nation to a diverse range of people, regardless of their particular written or spoken language. Proponents of the movement arranged tours and exhibitions based on the assumption that people would see the same thing in a lantern-slide show or experience the same thing when moving through an exhibition, regardless of their language, region, religion, caste, class, or sex.[37] The goods highlighted at *khadi* exhibitions were products of a new, modern political community that was overcoming the limitations of both traditional and colonial India.

Table 1. A Short Chronology of Khadi Set-up[38]

1923	Development of All India Board under the Indian National Congress by Gandhi
1925	Setting up of All India Spinners' Association
1935	All India Village Industries Association
1946	Government of Madras sought the help of Gandhi and set up a Department of Khadi
1948	Government of India recognised the role of Rural Cottage Industries Policy Resolution, 1948. Constituent Assembly included Cottage Industries in Rural Areas among the Directive Principles of the Constitution in Article 43.
1953	Government of India set up All India Khadi and Village Industries Board in January, 1953 (AIKVIB).
1955	It was decided that a statutory body should replace the Board
1956	Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Act 1956 passed
1957	KVIC came into being.

The *khadi* programme was formally established in 1919, but was made clearly distinct from the medieval period's *charkha*. The latter was a symbol of exploitation and helplessness of the spinners while

the wheel of *khadi* was to become a symbol of revolution in thought and action, as well as an embodiment of non-violence. Non-violence itself is seen as a defining characteristic of Gandhi's idea of change, development and growth.[39] The first *khadi* production centre was soon established in 1921 in Kathiawad, Gujarat. It was in the same year that along with *khadi* finding a formal place, *charkha* too found a proud place on the Indian national flag. AISA or the Charkha Sangh was also formed by the Congress in 1925 for implementing *khadi* programme vigorously throughout the country. For Gandhi, *charkha* was the genius with the support of which people could get together and attain an independent state of mind leading to their social, political, moral and economic development.

He further emphasised, "I never suggested that those, who are more lucratively employed should give up their lucrative employment and prefer spinning. I have said repeatedly that only those are expected and should be induced to spin, who have no other paying employment, and that too only during the hours of unemployment."[40] Gandhi was totally convinced with the invincibility of *khadi* that he asserted, "Khadi is the only true economic proposition in terms of millions of villagers until such time, if ever, when a better system of supplying work and adequate wages for every able bodied person above the age of sixteen, male or female, is found for his field, cottage or even factory in every one of the villages in India: or till sufficient cities are built up to displace the villages so as to give the villagers the necessary comforts and amenities that a well regulated life demands and is entitled to. I have only to state the proposition thus fully to show that khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of."[41]

It is an undisputed fact that no nation having its masses unemployed or under-employed, can hope to advance in any appreciable manner, for the contributions by the unemployed would be negligible while they shall actually continue to consume and thus, would add undue strain on the working population. *Charkha* thus was seen as an attempt to put to use this mass of unproductive resource to some use. Richard B. Gregg remarked, "We do not usually think of charkha as a machine, but it really is so. It uses the available mechanical energy of a man, woman or a child for producing material goods. The handloom does likewise… Mr. Gandhi proposes to hitch them to charkhas and thus save a vast existing waste of human energy. If we want to increase the use of mechanical power in India, this is the quickest and cheapest way."[42]

Gandhi fervently appealed to one and all to wear *khadi,* with the intent of satisfying one of the basic needs of mankind. "*Khadi* is meant

for everyone. Even a depraved man, a sinner, a drunkard, a gambler, anybody, can wear it. I would not hesitate to urge them to wear khadi even though I cannot induce them to change their mode of inner life. But the sacred quality of khadi is that it is a symbol of freedom. Those who wish to live in free India ought to wear *khadi."*[43] Despite laying emphasis on the economic dimension of *khadi,* Gandhi's economics had a different connotation and basis. For him it was not based on competition in which patriotism, sentiments, and humanity play little or no part. *Khadi* wholly concerned itself with the 'human.' This finds its counterpart in Appadurai who connotes commodity not with a thing-in-itself but regards it more as a social relationship with the thing. By virtue of its social and cultural context, the thing moves into and out of its commodity status. The potential of anything to become a commodity is only one aspect of its social existence. That humans shape, change, and manipulate the material world is readily apparent and uncontroversial.[44]

Khadi for Gandhi was situated in a larger context in a symbolic manner wherein it was the focal point of regeneration and diversification of rural economy. He remarked, "But khadi is the sun of the village solar system. The planets are the various industries which can support khadi in return for the heat and the sustenance they derive from it. Without it, the other industries cannot grow."[45] Gandhi's emphasis on the villages and *khadi's* role in villages also pointed towards his vision of decentralisation. Non-exploitation is the hallmark of a non-violent society. The former could be ensured only when power in all spheres including economic, social, political, was decentralised, so as to ensure vast participation of the common public. In this context, *charkha* was seen as a mechanism to decentralise the economic dimension. Decentralisation could not be compartmentalised and thus from the economic sphere, this would trickle down also to the political and social domains. *Khadi* mentality was thus equalled to decentralisation of the production and distribution of the necessities of life.

Khadi as discussed earlier too occupied a distinguished place in the pre-independence era and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave the poetic expression to *khadi* as the 'livery of India's freedom.' For Gandhi, wearing *khadi* was symbolic of wearing freedom. *Khadi* thus became an indispensable tool to restore the lost ancient glory of Indian industry and commerce which led to greater confidence amongst the people. This emblem of new patriotism was seen as a bad omen for the British, who then tried to curtail the *khadi* movement. However, the more it was controlled, the more powerful and widespread it became. Gandhi had a larger vision for *charkha* which he saw as not

only being a saviour of India but also as a basis of a new world order. It was claimed that by reviving *khadi* and other village industries, national life could be reorganised on the lines of simplicity. Gandhi saw a potential market for *khadi* among the town. What he wished for was an integration of town and country in a way that would stop the starvation of the peasants, that would include them in the development process fully, and that the profits made from their labour would be beneficial to them.[46]

Khadi had been found to be a unique instrument to promote communal harmony and religious tolerance amongst the artisans easily due to their daily face-to-face interaction. It appeared as a medium to come closer to lakhs of *'harijans'* and provide them a way of living through spinning and weaving. *Khadi* provided a prepared platform and organisational support to launch a movement against untouchability. Also the *charkha* became an unparalleled means to provide gainful employment to a very important segment of the population— women. This was bound to raise their social and economic status and ensured dignity of labour. It was Gandhi's programme of reorientation of education through the Basic Education Programme popularly called as *Nai Talim* which also saw *khadi* (along with agriculture) as a prominent medium of excellence. *Khadi* could bridge the gap between the educated and the uneducated.

The boycott of English cloth was undoubtedly a boon for the cotton *khadi* fabric to prosper. Impetus provided by the patriotic fervour to this universal economic activity and support of nationalistic forces served as an elixir to *khadi* movement. The dying industry too once more came to life with considerable vigour. The emotional appeal of *khadi* compensated to a large extent its qualitative shortcomings in addition to gaining respectability in the circles of the elites and learned people. The fact that hand-spinning and hand-weaving occupies a place of pride in the Indian economy is evident from the popular acceptance of hand-spun cotton yarn as the 'storage of value' and even as a 'medium of exchange.' Gregg mentions, "These (village industries products) do not and cannot command the ready and permanent market that yarn always does. Even today in parts of Bengal and Madras, the old tradition of yarn market continues."[47] Under such circumstances it is no surprise that Indian *khadi* industry survived and continues to be a part of the life of the common people.

Khadi: Tradition and Modern— The Limitations

The journey of *khadi* saw a major struggle for maintaining a balance between tradition and modernity. Both these concepts played a pivotal role in shaping a new national identity for the country. While

tradition was indispensable for the nation to sustain its legitimacy and preserve the culture, modern aspects of life could not be overlooked if the nation had to compete on a global scale. In striking this balance, *khadi* was thus redefined in the following ways by its proponents which made the fabric distinct and also added an element of flexibility to the idea of *khadi* for it to sustain itself:[48]

1. *Khadi* was seen as a presumably traditional product, as it was being produced by traditional means and thus could be envisioned as a material artefact of the nation.
2. Moreover, Gandhian nationalists rendered *khadi* a discursive concept by defining its significance in terms of the contemporary politics and economics of *swadeshi*.
3. Finally and most importantly, *khadi* became a visual symbol in the sense that it gave a distinctiveness to Indian bodies by marking them exclusively in association with their region, religion, class, group etc.

The multiple meanings of *khadi* made it a versatile tool with which nationalists could tailor *swadeshi* to suit different political circumstances.[49]

With independence the status of *khadi* was all of a sudden elevated from being ''livery of freedom' to the 'rulers' costume'' and there was a mushroom growth in the number of wearers of *khadi* overnight. However, this was mainly for political reasons. While the new government had full faith in *khadi* as being a medium to provide employment to the masses, it did not have much faith in the philosophy of non-violence and decentralisation. Gandhi being disappointed by this wrote, "Neither in Kathiawad nor in other parts of India, had people real faith in non-violence or *khadi*. It is true that I deceived myself into the belief that people were being wedded to non-violence with khadi as its symbol."[50]

However, with a vast and diverse country like India, the vision to get every person under a single canopy of *khadi* was most seemingly an ambition quite difficult to be achieved in totality. The clothing practices of the country not only varied from one region to another but also on each and every basis including age, religion, caste etc. Moreover, Gandhi's quest for reorganising India around the idea of self-sufficient villages had not caught the attention of many noteworthy people. These important people included B.R. Ambedkar who associated *khadi* with the means of restricting people to conditions of poverty further by denying them access to modern machinery and development. It was perceived as a way through which the natural growth and progress of the country would be stunted. Another

prominent critic was Tagore himself. The prolific writer opined that a man cannot be stunted by growth of machines. However, Gandhi had a very unique opinion on machinery. According to him, "How can I be (against all machinery) when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery? The spinning wheel is a machine, a little toothpick is a machine… I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all."[51]

The art of spinning was also assumed to be a woman's prerogative which demanded hard labour as well as a good duration of time.[52] These criteria were difficult for the male members of the household. *Khadi* somehow could not succeed in bringing together different religious groups due to the dominant Hindu imagery that it used. Muslims did not support the fabric to a large extent for the Hindu rhetoric of *Kamadhenu* and *Sudarshan Chakra* was something they could not relate to.[53] Others complained that spinning was women's work and that it was a laborious and repetitive activity.

In addition to the above mentioned limitations, *khadi* could not be accessed with much ease by the poor people. This concern always seemed to hover on Gandhi's mind too. As India had already begun to export raw cotton on such a large scale, its shortage within the country led to serious problems of availability to spin the fabric. Obtaining raw cotton with its high price was gradually out of question for the rural Indian. The hand-spun fabric also had to face stiff competition with the much inferior yet cheaper and easily available mill-spun cloth. In fact due to the difficult condition of accessing raw cotton, the rural parts of the country could really not get rid of the cheap and easily available English mill cloth.

Concluding Remarks— The Continuing Journey

Three trends can be seen to have shaped the contemporary fashion: technological development, independence movement, and changing social identities.[54] *Khadi* has always evoked memories of India's great past before the British mills drove weavers out of business and onto impoverished farms. *Khadi* thus serves as an appropriate example of technology, independence and identity.

Khadi shows how customary consumption logic of small communities are intimately tied to larger regimes of value as defined and constructed by large-scale politics.[55] The social history of things and their cultural biography are not separate entities, for it is social history of things over large periods of time that constrains the form, meaning and structure of different trajectories. Gandhi actively encouraged people to interpret one another's clothes as a political or personal belief. The result was that people became increasingly self-

conscious about their public image and found their clothing choices open to close scrutiny. Historians have emphasised the fact that *khadi* brought within its canopy the wealthy and the poor. This was certainly Gandhi's intention and at some level he was successful. However, *khadi* itself had become diversified by the fineness of its weave. We may conclude that if material culture is the primary focus of a study, then human agency becomes the subject, for people manipulate objects such as clothes to define themselves, and *khadi* did exactly this.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 241–260

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Gandhi's Model of Masculinity in the Backdrop of Colonial India

Shyam Pakhare

ABSTRACT

Though few in number, the British were able to rule India for about 200 years, by overpowering the minds of Indians. For years, it was impressed on the minds of the Indians that the Britons and their institutions were far superior to the Indians' and could not be challenged. Gandhi knew it very well that there was a continuous psychological war going on between Indian and British men. The imperialist British had overpowered the Indian men physically and mentally. Indian men had become effeminate as a result of their surrender to hegemonic British imperialist masculinity. Gandhi was the leader of this disarmed army of poor and dumb millions. He had to redesign and redefine the traditional concept of masculinity to suit the condition of India. He presented a new model of masculinity to confront the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity.

Keywords: Masculinity, imperialist, femininity, colonial, Victorian

'HISTORY OF MASCULINITY' is a new field. Many historians and research students of history in Europe, U.S.A., Canada and Australia are working on the history of masculinity. There are several works on Gandhi in different languages. But there is no study that details the masculinity of Gandhi. Gandhi fought against hegemonic British imperialist masculinity and in the course of his struggle, designed his own unique model of masculinity. It found expression in his political, social and economic thought.

DEFINING MASCULINITY

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, masculine means "having

qualities associated with men" that is, masculinity has to do with particular traits and qualities rather than with biology. Collins' Thesaurus has the following equivalents for masculine—'male, manful, manlike, manly, mannish, virile, bold, brave, butch, gallant, hardy, macho, muscular, powerful, red-blooded, resolute, robust, stout-hearted, strapping, strong, vigorous, well built.' This list gives us an idea of the physical and behavioural traits a society expects from men.

Robert Stoller, in his book *Sex and Gender*, defines the relationship between the two as follows, "Gender is a term that has psychological and cultural rather than biological connotations; if the proper terms for sex are 'male' and 'female,' the corresponding terms for gender are masculine and feminine; these latter may be quite independent of sex. Gender denotes the degree of masculinity or femininity found in a person, and, obviously, while there is mix of both in many humans, the normal male has a preponderance of masculinity and the normal female a preponderance of femininity."[1] Men who are gentle are derisively called feminine; on the other hand, women who are strong and in control are called manly or masculine.

Kamala Bhasin says that, masculinity is a social definition given to boys and men by societies. It is a socio-cultural construct. Nature makes us male or female, it gives us our biological definition, but it is society which makes us masculine or feminine. It defines how boys/men should behave, dress, appear; what attitudes and qualities they should have, how they should be treated. Bhasin also thinks that masculinity differs from community to community and time to time. Masculinity is not static—it is constantly reconstructed, it may keep changing in response to changes in economic patterns, natural or man-made disasters, war or migration. This is also why there are different kinds of masculinities; working-class, bourgeois or intellectual masculinity and European masculinity are different from Indian masculinity.[2] Bhasin also thinks that, masculinity is about power, power over others. She writes, "...Those who surrender are feminine; those who dominate are masculine; but this does not mean that the former are always women, and the latter are always men."[3] According to R. W. Connell, "Masculinity is a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture."[4] Masculinity defines relationships among and between men and women. Connell thinks that gender as a social pattern is product of history and also a producer of history.[5]

COLONIAL MASCULINITY

Bipan Chandra defines colonialism as a system of domination, exploitation and underdevelopment of one society by another.[6] According to him, colonial interests, policies, the colonial state and its institutions, social class structure, culture, ideas and ideologies, and historical personalities are to be seen as functioning within the parameters of the colonial structure, which may be defined by the interrelationship of all these aspects as a whole.[7]

The term 'Colonial Masculinity' includes the notions of masculinity of the coloniser and the colonised men. According to R. W. Connell, there is a dimension of masculinity in the culture of imperialism and in the construction of nationalism and national identities.[8] He writes, "Empire was a gendered enterprise from the start, initially an outcome of the segregated men's occupations of soldiering and sea trading."[9] Connell also thinks that state elites are the preserve of men. The state arms men and disarms women and in this way the state both institutionalizes hegemonic masculinity and expends great energy in controlling it.[10]

Basil Mathews writes about the geographical span of white dominance highlighting the British dominance in 1925, "...There are on the earth some fifty-three million square miles of habitable land surface. Of those miles forty-seven million are under white dominance-or nearly nine-tenths of the whole habitable area of the world.....Of all this vast area of forty-seven million square miles controlled by the white races, by far the greater part is under the hand of the English-speaking peoples. Of every seven people in the British Empire six are coloured. That white leadership of the world-and especially the British authority-is the dominating feature in the world's political landscape...."[11]

In the nineteenth century there was a school of thinkers like Treitschke who maintained that right of independent existence belonged only to the better peoples of the world-who had spiritual and cultural values peculiarly worth preserving and disseminating.[12] It rested on the hypothesis that the physically powerful people are the best people.[13] But colonialism is not merely a physical invasion; it is also the invasion of the minds of the subject people.

According to Mrinalini Sinha, "the contours of colonial masculinity were shaped in the context of an imperial social formation that included both Britain and India."[14] Adding to this, Indira Chowdhury says that the Hindu rhetoric of identity formation began as a part of anti colonial struggle.[15] Colonial masculinity includes the idea of masculinity of both colonizers and colonized and its effects on their respective societies.

SUBORDINATION OF INDIAN MASCULINITY

The British rule over India became a reality after defeat of the Marathas in 1818. It was a difficult task for handful of British to dominate a populous and vast country like India only with physical power. It was important to subjugate the minds of the Indians. This subjugation was an interplay of masculinities. Gender and masculinity played a major role in this process.

The British colonial masters launched a 'propaganda' to impress the Indians that they were weak, effeminate and unfit to rule themselves. The British disarmed the Indian men by passing the Arms Act of 1878. They called educated Bengali men who were aspiring for equal treatment as 'effeminate Bengali.' This term was later applied to all educated Indian men. In this context we should take into consideration the following words of Lala Lajpat Rai from his book *Young India*, "This word 'emasculation' affords the key to the situation in India from purely Indian point of view. Political, physical and economic 'emasculation' is the keynote of British rule there...."[16] The imperialist historians like James Mill, V. A. Smith and journalists like Katherine Mayo played a major role in this propaganda. In this background Gandhi's model of masculinity evolved.

MAKING OF GANDHI'S MODEL OF MASCULINITY

Gandhi's life can be classified into three phases. First phase lasted up to 1893 when he was under the influence of late Victorian masculinity and tried to imitate the British gentleman. The second phase between 1893 to 1919 can be considered as a transition phase of his life in which he was in search of self identity. The third phase was the final phase when he lost faith in the British Empire and gave final shape to his own model of masculinity.

The loss of faith in the British Empire came with the passage of Rowlatt Act and massacre at Jalianwalla Bagh in 1919 and unjust convictions of the people in the cases under Punjab Martial Law. He came to the conclusion that co-operation with this empire was a 'sin' and non-cooperation a 'virtue' because people had a right to self-respect and dignity.[17] It was the major turning point and the beginning of the third and final phase of Gandhi's life.

In a letter to his friend H.S.L. Polak on 8th August 1919, Gandhi writes, "…..Rowlatt Act takes away manliness from a nation…."[18] Gandhi thought that Jalianwalla Bagh massacre and martial law atrocities like crawling orders were aimed at emasculation of Punjab. Gandhi said that brave Punjabis consented to crawl like reptiles against their sense of manhood because of the fear of the British.[19] In front of District and Session Judge at Ahmadabad in March, 1922,

Gandhi said, "India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before."[20] We come across the words 'emasculation,' 'manhood' a number of times in Gandhi's writings and speeches on political, social and economic condition of India. Gandhi believed that India was manly under the Mughal and Maratha rule and an orderly humiliation and emasculation of the whole nation was going on under the British Empire.[21]

Gandhi knew it very well that there was a continuous psychological war going on between Indian and British men. The imperialist British had overpowered the Indian men physically and mentally too. Indian men had become effeminate as a result of their surrender to hegemonic British imperialist masculinity. Gandhi believed that compulsory disarmament had made Indians unmanly and the presence of an alien army, employed with deadly effect to crush the spirit of resistance, had made Indians think that they could not defend themselves against foreign aggression.[22] Interestingly, Gandhi raised this demand for the right to carry arms from various platforms. It was one of the major demands presented to the Viceroy before launching the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.[23] Gandhi was the leader of this disarmed army of poor and dumb millions. He had to redesign and redefine the traditional concept of masculinity to suit the condition of India. He presented a new model of masculinity to confront the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity. His model of masculinity found expression in his political, social and economic thought which in terms of gender could be called as body practices and social practices.

Gandhi's model of masculinity was designed combining the best features of Eastern and Western culture after removing their defects. Gandhi knew that it was difficult to compete with the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity with physical power; so he gave emphasis on moral superiority. By presenting this new model of masculinity, Gandhi wanted to remove the inferiority complex from the minds of Indian men.

The local, regional, national and international influences and factors played important role in the making of the masculinity of Gandhi. I have tried to study his model of masculinity in the form of body and social practices. Bryan Turner the author of a famous book *Body and Society,* thinks that bodies are objects over which we labour, such as eating, cleaning, dieting and exercising.[24] Turner calls these labours as 'body practices' which can be both individual or collective.[25] The social codes of being masculine and feminine are defined by the society and its members are expected to oblige it. In this way, masculinity is expressed also through social practices. Connell thinks

that social practice is creative and inventive and responds to particular situations and generated within definite structures of social relations and historical situations.[26]

Body practices will include Gandhi's celibacy, diet and fasting. Social Practices will include Gandhi's thoughts on non-violence, religion, women, economics, hygiene, education – *Nai Talim* and *Satyagraha*.

BODY PRACTICES

(a) CELIBACY: According to Joseph Alter, Gandhi wanted India to become 'a celibate nation' in order to rebuild herself. Celibacy was one of the most important principles to be observed by the *satyagrahi*. Gandhi wrote a number of articles on celibacy in the newspapers. He believed that a celibate *satyagrahi* preserved the vital fluid (semen) and became '*Viryavan*', a man of strength.[27] Gandhi firmly believed in the connection between celibacy and strength. He also believed that semen had to be preserved to gain physical and moral power. He thought that the unchaste man loses stamina, becomes emasculated and cowardly.[28] He also connected sexual pleasures with anger, hatred leading to violence.[29] *Satyagrahi* had to observe marital celibacy and indulge in sex only for procreation and not for carnal pleasures. He expected a *satyagrahi* to postpone the birth of a child till the achievement of independence.[30]

Here we can also find the influence of late Victorian masculinity on Gandhi's thoughts on celibacy. During Victorian age, sexual repression was practised as a need of the British Empire and industrial revolution. Gandhi believed that *satyagraha* was based on soul force. It is my contention that Gandhi tried to discipline the body of *satyagrahi* men by his body practices relating to diet and abstention from sex. He did not want *satyagrahi* men to get distracted by sensory pleasures. He was also against the artificial methods of birth control. For Gandhi, the war for hegemony was being fought between Indian and imperialist British men, more at psychological level than physical level. The victory depended on mental toughness. Indian men were criticized as devoid of character by the British because of practices like child marriage and polygamy. Katherine Mayo projected Indian men as sex maniacs and devoted one full chapter to it in her book *Mother India*. By making celibacy an integral part of *satyagraha*, Gandhi tried to develop a feeling of high moral character, self respect and self confidence among Indian men. When Victorian men were sacrificing their family life for the nation, Gandhi expected *satyagrahi* men also to perform the same sacrifice. He wanted to show the British men that Indian men were not inferior to them in any way.

(b)DIET AND FASTING: "We are a weak people because we do not eat meat. The English are able to rule us, because they are meat eaters…." Influenced by this statement of his friend, Mohandas, who wanted to build a good physique, started eating meat in his childhood.[31] Diet is intimately connected with masculinity. During his childhood, a stanza of the Gujarati poet Narmad was very famous:

'Behold the mighty Englishman
He rules the Indian small,
Because being a meat-eater
He is five cubits tall.'

Non-vegetarian diet has always been considered essential for body building. But in Gandhi's model of masculinity, priority was given to soul power over physical power. Non-violence is inherent in vegetarian diet and has always been considered as morally superior to non-vegetarian diet in India. Gandhi's thoughts on dietetics were aimed at showing moral superiority of *satyagrahi* man over the British. Gandhi also established a connection between dietetics and celibacy, the important vow taken by *satyagrahi*. Gandhi believed that the control of palate was the first essential rule in the observance of the celibacy vow. Gandhi also believed that the food of the celibate should be limited, simple, spiceless and if possible, uncooked.[32] Though Gandhi asked *satyagrahis* to have mastery over the palate, he wanted them to take healthy diet. He had observed the undernourishment of the village population which reduced their immunity and life span. He wrote innumerable articles on simple and healthy diet for the people.[33]

Fasting was also an important aspect of his experiments in dietetics. Fasting was considered as an aid to national progress, to the development of national ideals and to the attainment of restraint over human passions such as hunger.[34] Fasting was also connected with practice of celibacy. Gandhi used fasting as a symbolic gesture in the freedom struggle to demonstrate the moral superiority of *satyagrahi* man over the British.

Selflessness was an important feature of Gandhi's model of masculinity. Gandhi tried to project the *satyagrahi* as a selfless man who had renounced even the basic pleasures of life such as enjoying food. The *satyagrahi* was ready to even renounce food itself for the cause of the nation. If we study Gandhi's thoughts on dietetics, it appears that he wanted *satyagrahi* men to take *sattvik* diet and develop *sattvik* personality. Here again we find that Gandhi was using religious symbolism to make his model of masculinity highly respectable among the Indian masses and in front of the British imperialist men.

SOCIAL PRACTICES

(a)NON-VIOLENCE: Gandhi's definition of non-violence covered not only physical non-violence but also non-violence in thought.[35] For Gandhi, vaccination was also against non-violence because the vaccine serum was obtained by a process which was like a torture to the animals.[36] *Satyagrahi* man had to follow non-violence towards men, birds and animals.[37]

Non-violence practised by *satyagrahi* was the non-violence of a strong man. Gandhi writes, "…I am not pleading for India to practice non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practice non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. No training of arms is required for realization of her strength…"[38] Gandhi believed that the *satyagrahi* who had realized his manhood, feared only God. For Gandhi, Indians were fighting a spiritual war against injustice.[39] He also writes that it would be unmanly for him to obey unjust laws.[40] Gandhi writes in *Harijan* dated 3rd March, 1946, "….I want *Swaraj* in the winning of which even women and children would contribute an equal share with physically the strongest. That can be under *ahimsa* only. I would, therefore, stand for *ahimsa* as the only means for obtaining India's freedom even if I were alone."[41] Gandhi expected *satyagrahis* to imbibe the redefined *'Kshatriya'* spirit. The markers of the new *Kshatriya* spirit were forbearance, readiness to forgive, compassion, nobility, the strength to stand unshaken and fearless under shower of bullets. He would receive blows instead of killing others.[42] Gandhi writes, "When we have really shed the fear of jail, the Government will not care to imprison us. When we have learnt to bear the cruelest outrages with a smiling face rather than crawl on our stomachs, refuse to salute the Union Jack under force and to rub the nose on the ground, when we can stand up to face Dyerism and receive bullets on the chest instead of being shot in the back, *Swaraj* will be ours that very day; for heroism, the true *Kshatriya* spirit, lies in this…."[43]

(b)RELIGION: Gandhi was a deeply religious person. His political, social and economic thought also sprang from spirituality. For him, belief in God was one of the indispensable qualifications of a *satyagrahi*. In 1939, Gandhi plainly stated that socialists and communists could never become *satyagrahi*s because they did not believe in God.[44] According to Romain Rolland, Gandhi's doctrine is like a huge edifice composed of two different floors or grades. Below is the solid groundwork, the basic foundation of religion. On this vast and unshakable foundation is based the political and social campaign.[45]

Gandhi's religion was cosmopolitan in nature. After the comparative study of different religions Gandhi came to the conclusion that Hinduism has an edge over other religions because it is 'most tolerant,' 'most free' of dogmas, gives the 'largest scope' for self-expression and offers the 'highest expression and application' to the principle of universal compassion.[46] But Gandhi was against religious conversion because it assumes that a particular religion represents the final truth.[47]

According to Bhikhu Parekh, Gandhi believed that human society was a product of the spontaneous sacrifices of thousands of men over hundreds of years. Every man inherited a world, to the creation of which he had contributed nothing and as a result every man was 'a born debtor.'[48] That is why Gandhi believed that religion is service to the mankind.[49]

Gandhi believed that the modern age was the age of politics because almost all aspects of individual and social life were directly or indirectly organized and administered by the state. According to Bhikhu Parekh, Gandhi thought that if political life could be spiritualized, it would have a profoundly transformative effect on the rest of society. Gandhi believed that in the modern age and especially in India, political action was therefore the only available path to *moksha*.[50] Parekh thinks that Gandhi profoundly redefined Hinduism by giving it a radically novel orientation. He made it human centric and reduced it to the basic moral principles such as love, truth, *ahimsa* and social service by marginalizing the '*Sastras*' and depriving them of their religious and moral authority.[51]

Religion has always been influencing the life of people in India. Gandhi realized the power of religion in South Africa. In a public meeting called in 1906 to protest against an unjust ordinance which made it compulsory for Indians to carry certificate of registration, one speaker named Haji Habib said that Indians must pass the resolution against the ordinance with God as witness and must never yield a cowardly submission to such degrading legislation.[52] It created sensation among the Hindus and Muslims present in that meeting. In his speech given on this occasion, Gandhi said, "……To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with Him as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man. Personally I hold that a man, who deliberately and intelligently takes a pledge and then breaks it, forfeits his *manhood*…."[53] (Emphasis mine). At the end of the meeting all present, standing with upraised hands, took an oath with God as witness not to submit to the ordinance if passed became law. The community's enthusiasm knew no bounds. After many years

Gandhi wrote about this incident, "….I can never forget the scene, which is present before my mind's eyes as I write."[54]

Later in his life, as a supreme leader of Indian Freedom Struggle, Gandhi always projected the mass struggle against the British colonial masters as a religious duty of Indians and connected it with manhood. Gandhi understood the pulse of the masses and knew the hypnotizing effect of religion on Indians and the ability of religion to make men out of straws. Indians involved in freedom struggle under the leadership of Gandhi gained moral power from their religions in the struggle against the hegemonic imperialist masculinity.

(c)THOUGHTS ON WOMEN: Gandhi had personally observed the condition of women in England and later in South Africa. There were many restrictions on the women in Victorian England also. But still their condition was better than their counterparts in India. Later the women in England started fighting for political rights under the Suffragettes movement. He had all praise for the courage shown by Suffragettes who were fighting for equal political rights for women. For him, the Suffragette women were manly. They were daring and sacrificing. The imperialist historian James Mill had compared the treatment given by Hindu men to their women with the most barbarous nations of the world.[55] According to Mrinalini Sinha, Indian men were considered as effeminate by the imperialist British men because of the bad treatment they gave to their women. This was one of the reasons behind the opposition of the imperialist British men to the Ilbert Bill which aimed at equality between the Indian and the British men.[56] Gandhi understood that the treatment given to women in Indian society was an important criterion to gain respect in the eyes of the colonial masters. The treatment given to the women by Indians especially Hindus was the theme of the two controversial books written by Katherine Mayo –*Mother India* and *Slaves of The Gods*.

Gandhi was against the practice of child marriage.[57] He was in favour of widow remarriage. He said that the widows should be treated with respect in the society and arrangements should be made to educate the widows and some occupation should be provided to them.[58] He also criticized the tradition of veiling the women because it was detrimental to their overall development. He firmly believed that women should have equal status in the society. Gandhi believed that woman should realize her strength and never think of herself as helpless before men. He said that though weaker in physical strength women were morally far superior to men.

Gandhi gave married woman right to practice celibacy. He redefined the traditional concept of masculinity which had denied woman right over her body. He also broke the psychological barrier

imposed on women by the patriarchal society. This was a revolutionary thought because in Victorian British society also women did not have right over their body after marriage.

Women's clothes in Victorian England reflected women's function. Women's fashion during this period became more sexual – the hips, buttocks and breasts were exaggerated with crinolines, hoopskirts and corsets which nipped in the waist and thrust out the breasts. The female body was dressed to emphasize a woman's separation from the world of work. Women became walking symbols of their social function—wife, mother and domestic manager.[59] Gandhi was against this attitude that women should decorate themselves for men. Talking to women on one occasion, Gandhi said: "Woman must cease to consider herself the object of man's lust. The remedy is more in her hands than man's. She must refuse to adorn herself for men, including her husband, if she wants to be an equal partner with man."[60]

Gandhi's model of masculinity was one step ahead of the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity in the field of women's rights. Gandhi had admitted that he had learnt more of passive resistance as a weapon of power from Indian women than anyone else.[61] He asked *satyagrahi* men to incorporate the best feminine qualities and become a complete man. There was influence of feminine qualities like tolerance, suffering and sacrifice on *satyagraha* movement. However, patriarchal control dominated Gandhi's thoughts also. Gandhi believed that women's education should differ from men's as their nature and function differ. He was of the opinion that women should first look after home.[62] He further writes that it is degrading both for men and women that women should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. Gandhi thought that all women could not become warriors like the *Rani* of Jhansi, but all women could emulate the example of Sita whom even the mighty Ravana could not bend to his will. He also thought that *Ranis* of Jhansi could be subdued but not Sita.[63]

(d) GANDHIAN ECONOMICS: Gandhi's model of masculinity found expression in his economic thought also. Gandhi said: "It was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Therefore, I consider it a sin to wear foreign clothes. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral will-being of an individual or a nation are immoral, and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral….."[64] The Western world had been proud of science and technology and the industrial revolution. They used to criticize the Eastern world for its

backwardness in this field. But Gandhi criticized the overdependence of men on machinery in the West. He believed that the people of the West had become slaves of machines and neglected use of their bodily strength.[65] In Gandhi's model of masculinity, importance was given to manual labour and minimum use of machinery. Gandhi believed that it was manly to be self-reliant and independent. He wished that India would become a nation of workers.

Competitiveness is a traditional trait of masculinity. Gandhi criticized the capitalism and the inherent competition in that system. Economic factor played major role in the nineteenth century colonialism and the exploitation of Asia and Africa. He rejected the modern economic structure which was based on exploitation. He put forward the idea of self reliant villages based on cooperation instead of competition. Gandhi criticized centralized industry because it draws its raw materials from different parts of the world and is responsible for politically controlling these places. It leads to the use of violence for colonization of the economy of the simple people. According to Gandhi this is the basis of all imperialism.[66]

Gandhi thought that the modern methods of production and distribution had made people indulgent and deteriorated the moral qualities of the people. Gandhian economy aims at reeducating people to respect the human values and put restraint on desires. Self-discipline and self-control is the foundation of Gandhian economy.[67]

One can find the expression of Gandhi's model of masculinity in his economic thought. One of the important attributes of this model, non-violence, is visible in his economic thought. Gandhi presented his unique model of economy as an antithesis to the capitalist as well as the communist model of economic development. A deep concern for the economic welfare of the weakest section of the society which was neglected by the Western capitalist economic model, raised the moral standing of Gandhi's model of masculinity. By presenting his independent model of economic structure Gandhi showed the way of economic independence to India and developed confidence and self respect among the Indians.

(e) HYGIENE: Hygiene consciousness was one of the features of Victorian masculinity. Teaching the people of the colonies the habits of cleanliness was also part of the civilizing mission of the colonial masters. James Mill in his *The History of British India* called Hindus as the dirtiest people who ignored physical purity.[68] Indians were considered as inferior by the British because of their filthy habits and lack of sense of public hygiene. The filth and squalor of India was a regular issue of discussion in the fictional and non-fictional works of that time. Katherine Mayo also devoted two chapters of

her controversial book *Mother India* on the unhygienic condition of India. In 1890s, Pears' Soap used the theme of the white man's burden and the dirty people of the colonies in its advertisement campaign. The following sentences were written in the advertisement, "The first step towards lightening the White Man's Burden is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness. Pears' soap is a potent factor in brightening the dark corners of the earth as civilization advances…."[69]

Gandhi admitted that he had learnt the value of public hygiene from the British during his stay in England.[70] Gandhi observed the filthy habits of Indians when he travelled throughout India in the third class compartment of the railway. Gandhi agreed with the criticism of Indians by the British for their lack of hygiene. Later, wherever Gandhi went, he made it a point to make people aware of the need for public hygiene. He wrote a number of articles on personal and public hygiene. He made his *ashrams* perfect examples of cleanliness. Giving lessons of hygiene to the people in villages and cities was part of the constructive work programme.[71]

Gandhi's model of masculinity was not based on negation of everything related to hegemonic British imperialist masculinity. He asked Indians to introspect and identify their defects and borrow whatever was worthy of borrowing from the British. Gandhi gave minute attention to every aspect of his model of masculinity and made it strong enough to stand in front of the British. He did not want to give any excuse to the British for considering Indians as inferior. In this way Gandhi connected hygiene consciousness with *Swaraj* and asked Indians to develop this good habit so that they would not be treated as inferior.

(f)THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION – *NAI TALIM*: In the year 1835, Macaulay wrote his famous minutes in favour of adoption of English as the medium of teaching in India. He said: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, — a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."[72]

Education had always remained a major concern for the national leaders since the time of anti-Bengal Partition Movement. National schools and colleges were opened all over India. The national leaders believed that the education given in Government educational institutions developed inferiority complex and slave mentality in the young generation. Gandhi's experiments on education had started when he was in South Africa. He opened a school for the children in the Phoenix farm where importance was also given to manual labour. Gandhi gave much thought to the educational policy since the time

of Non-Cooperation Movement. He said: "…I am firmly of opinion that the Government schools have *unmanned* us, rendered us helpless and Godless. They have filled us with discontent, have made us despondent…."[73] (Emphasis mine).

Gandhi believed that the English education in the manner it had been given had emasculated the English educated Indians.[74] He writes, "….by receiving English education, we have enslaved the nation. Hypocrisy, tyranny, etc., have increased; English knowing Indians have not hesitated to cheat and strike terror into the people….."[75] The British always boasted about the modern Western education given to the Indians as a part of their civilizing mission. But Gandhi believed that the western countries rely on the sword so their children were trained to follow the same pattern and there was no scope for spiritual development.[76] He also believed that devoid of moral values, Western education had failed to build the character of Indian students.

Gandhi believed that education should bring about a harmonious development of all the four aspects of the human personality, viz., body, heart, mind and spirit.[77] He considered the existing system of education in India not only wasteful but positively harmful because most of the boys were lost to the parents and to the occupation to which they were born. They picked up evil habits and urban ways. For Gandhi the remedy lay in vocational or manual training. He was in favour of giving scientific training in useful handicrafts to the student which would lead him to the highest development of mind and soul.[78] In his plan of education, the child at the age of 14, after finishing a seven-year course, would be discharged as an earning unit and he would become master of the craft he had learnt.[79]

According to Gandhi, education should help a student to cultivate character appropriate to become future citizen of society. He must have an opportunity to practice civic virtues at school and learn the art of discipline and self-government to become a member of a democratic state.[80] According to M. S. Patel, Gandhi's educational philosophy had its roots in Indian culture. Gandhi stressed the importance of non-violence in the education of children by opposing corporal punishment. He also believed that boys and girls should be taught together. According to him a boy or a girl of sixteen years should know sewing and cooking. Hindi would be the medium of teaching and English as language of international intercourse would also have a place in the syllabus. After forty years of trials and experiments, Gandhi finalized this scheme of education in 1937 for application on a nationwide scale. The new scheme was called the Wardha Scheme or Basic National Education, also known as *Nai Talim*.

According to Ashis Nandy, following the logic of the language of

civilization, the British justified their rule in educational terms and used pedagogical and tutorial metaphors with great regularity in their descriptions of what they thought they were doing. They were not masters but headmasters; the Indians were their pupils; the whole of India was one big public school.[81] By rejecting the Western educational system and presenting his own unique model of education Gandhi undermined British hegemonic masculinity. Through *Nai Talim*, Gandhi gave institutional foundation to his model of masculinity. *Nai Talim* could have imbibed Gandhi's model of masculinity among the children during their most formative phase of life. It could provide Gandhi a band of new recruits loyal to his model of masculinity in his struggle against hegemonic British imperialist masculinity.

(g) *SATYAGRAHA*: Bhikhu Parekh writes that for Gandhi a system of oppression derived its strength and durability from two interrelated sources; first, the victim's illusion that his oppressor was all-powerful and he himself powerless; and second, his incapacity for action.[82] *satyagraha* was the perfect solution to the dilemma faced by unarmed Indian men who did not know how to fight hegemonic British masculinity. Gandhi rejected the principles of hegemonic British imperialist masculinity such as 'Might is Right' and 'Survival of the Fittest,' as immoral. Gandhi gave the colour of 'Spiritual War' to the freedom struggle and called *satyagraha* as a 'pure Soul-Force.'[83] For him *satyagraha* was not the weapon of the weak. Gandhi said that the aim of the *satyagraha* struggle was to infuse manliness in cowards.[84] Gandhi believed that Indians had become unmanly because they were afraid of death. He said that *satyagrahi* needed more courage than a man who relied on physical strength because a *satyagrahi* continued resistance till the end without fear of death.

Acharya J. B. Kripalani writes, "In addition to bravery and courage, *Satyagraha* claims for itself the great virtue of fearlessness. A violent soldier may be brave and courageous but he is never fearless. He wants to kill, yet does not want to be killed which means that he is afraid of death….The *Satyagrahi* is fearless. His resistance is open. He therefore eschews secrecy. His is an open revolt. He is willing to bear the consequences of his non-violent opposition or revolt. Under certain circumstances he invites these consequences. A *Satyagrahi* abjures the right of self-defence. He is not afraid of death. We have seen how in his trials Gandhiji asked the trying magistrates to award him the highest punishment laid down by law."[85]

Satyagrahi is indifferent to wealth and other comforts of life. He is celibate. He is not chained by any family attachments. He has sacrificed everything for the nation. He has become an ascetic for the cause of nation. He does not inflict pain on the adversary; he does

not seek his destruction. He never resorts to fire arms. He firmly believes that at the end 'truth only triumphs' (the famous mantra from *Mundaka Upanishad*).

According to J. B. Kripalani, "In addition to his two principles of truth and non-violence, Gandhiji enunciates a third principle for the conduct of a *Satyagrahi*. This is the principle of purity of means. He holds that ends and means are convertible terms. Ends are only the end results of the means used. If the latter deviate from the moral law, the end, whatever its outward appearance, will not be the one desired and worked for. If a person is responsible for the ends he keeps before himself, he is equally responsible for the means he uses…"[86]

Satyagraha used several forms of non-violent actions such as non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Judith Brown thinks that despite vagueness about the ultimate goal, Gandhi was clear about the means. His political sense showed him that British rule was based on the active collaboration of some Indians and the acquiescence of the rest, and that if Indians were to force the British into a position where they could no longer inflict intolerable 'wrongs' on their Indian subjects, then those subjects must undermine the foundation of their rule. Non-cooperation was the means he offered, consciously presenting it as the antithesis of collaboration.[87] According to Joan V. Bondurant, in principle, non-cooperation was simply the refusal to cooperate with those responsible for violation of fundamental 'truths.' It might include strike, walkout and resignation of offices and titles. Civil disobedience was the direct contravention of specific laws and included such activities as non-payment of taxes. Jail going was a special non-resistance activity undertaken in a civil disobedience programme.[88]

According to Parekh, the Constructive Programme was an integral part and positive aspect of *satyagraha*. It was 'designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward' and regenerate India's society and economy. It was a mixed bag of such absolutely essential 18 items as Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability, a ban on alcohol, the use of *khadi*, the development of village industries and craft-based education. It also included equality for women, health education, the use of indigenous languages, the adoption of a common national language, economic equality and trusteeship, building up peasants' and workers' organizations, integration of the tribal people into mainstream political and economic life, a detailed code of conduct for students, helping lepers and beggars and cultivating respect for animals.[89]

Satyagraha was a perfect solution on the dilemma faced by Indian

men who wanted to fight against the British injustice but did not know how to do it. This was the dilemma faced by the leaders of Indian National Congress right from 1885 up to 1920. These leaders could not give a concrete agenda to the masses. Indians were chafing for action and Gandhi's *satyagraha* showed them the path. Participation in *satyagraha* could inculcate self-respect among the Indians. It rested on solid philosophical foundations, which also gave sense of manliness with high moral standing to Indian men in their struggle against the hegemonic British imperialist masculinity.

Gandhi's model of masculinity was feasible for the masses. As a result, it appealed to the masses. Even the Pathans of the North West Frontier Province, considered as the most aggressive of all the races, adopted non-violence as a creed under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan.[90] Diplomat Chester Bowles[91] observes, "Everybody on earth has been affected by Gandhi. Because of him the British Empire ceased to exist as such, and when his own people threw Europe off, the rest of Asia and Africa followed. His special teachings and techniques have inspired other struggles for human deliverance, in quarters where armed revolt would have been out of the question. America's Civil Rights campaign was foretold by him, and led by his avowed admirers and imitators. There and elsewhere, the spectacular wave of 'protest' movements has not always displayed the same discipleship, yet without his broadening of horizons it might never have begun to roll."[92] The author of the book *Who Killed the British Empire*, George Woodcock observes, "Undoubtedly, if one had to choose any individual as more responsible than others for the death of the Empire, it would be Gandhi."[93]

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 261–274

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Nagaland Baptist Church Council's (NBCC) Initiative in Naga Peace Process: A Historical Perspective

T. Chubawalang Jamir

ABSTRACT

Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) is a faith-based organization that takes faith seriously in how it defines what it is and does. It has contributed significantly to peace building in Nagaland. The history of the Naga struggle for independence is almost a century long and has left many hearts bleeding. Between the Naga rebels and the Indian army are caught the common people who suffered the most in this clash. It is here that NBCC's work on peace deserves our attention. The paper briefly sums up the history of the initiative of NBCC for promoting peace and bringing about healing and reconciliation in the Naga society. The NBCC is one of the great forces to reckon with in the peace making process there.

Keywords: Faith-based diplomacy, reconciliation, peacemaking, conflict resolution, insurgency.

FAITH-BASED DIPLOMACY is a relatively new concept. It means incorporating religious concerns into the practices of international politics. It involves making religion part of the solution in some of the intractable conflicts that currently plague the international landscape. The approach is often build around the role that religious faith plays in the life of the protagonists, appealing to the moral compass that is presumably inherent in those who are guided by the religious conviction.[1]

Faith-based organizations[2] have a long history of responding to people in need and they play an important role in society by responding

to the emergencies and in conflict situations. More importantly, faith-based organizations have contributed positively to peace building. They have provided emotional and spiritual support to war-affected communities and also mobilized people for peace. They mediate between conflict groups and promote reconciliation. It is said that during 1950s and 60s the NGOs, particularly faith-based organizations, provided extensive relief and were essential to the functioning of the refugee-serving community.[3] The Nagaland Baptist Church Council's (NBCC) work in Nagaland in promoting peace can be seen as an interesting instance of faith-based organizations contributing to peace-building.

The insurgency of the Naga rebels and the counter insurgency of the Indian security force in Nagaland became more dynamic after the creation of the State of Nagaland in 1963. The creation of the state created a complex situation for the Naga rebels. They did not accept the 16-point agreement and they branded the newly created Nagaland State as a puppet state of the Indian government. The moderate Naga leaders appealed to the extremist group to accept the newly created State and thus join the mainstream of the country. But they ignored such an appeal and intensified their activities[4] to convey the message to the Indian government that the creation of the State of Nagaland would not solve the Naga problem. On the other hand, by that time, the Indian security force had become firmer to frustrate the activities of Naga rebels, who were interrupting the newly created democratic political system. In short, despite the creation of Nagaland State, incidents of violence and hostility continued. Thus, by 1964, the day-to-day life of the common people in Nagaland became very difficult and uncertain. At this juncture, the leaders of the Baptist Churches in Nagaland decided not to remain mere spectators, but to do something to bring peace in Nagaland. It was the church leaders who first brought both the Naga underground representatives and the Indian government to the negotiating table. They made efforts to stop violence from both sides.[5] In short, the church had been playing a very significant role in bringing peace in Nagaland in general. In this paper an attempt is made to explain in brief the role of NBCC in Naga politics and peace process.

Origin and Development of NBCC

The inception of NBCC could be traced back to 1935. It was the foreign missionaries like J.E. Tanquist and others who showed the idea of a united Naga Baptist Church for fellowship and solidarity of witness. As per the notes of the 40th annual session of Ao Naga Baptist Association (Ao Mungdang) held at Merangkong from 19th to 20th

November 1936, a few Angamies who attended the session declared that the Nagas would not join Council of Baptist Churches of North East India, but would rather come together as 'one' Naga group. In other words, they did not favour a pan-Christian identity to dilute their Naga identity. Other Naga church leaders also took the same position. On 5th April 1937, some of the Naga church leaders like L. Kijungluba, M. Savino and Longri Ao convened a meeting at Tanquist's bungalow in Kohima and organized the Naga Hill Baptist Church Advisory Council (HBCAC).[6]

In 1953, HBCAC was reorganized and it started functioning as a true organization. After the inauguration of Nagaland as a separate State, the name of the Council got regularized as Nagaland Baptist Church Council as it is used today.[7] The purpose of the NBCC was to unite all the Baptist Churches in Nagaland, lead them and evangelize them; respond to community needs and also to participate in humanitarian works. Today, NBCC is co-member of Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI), the North East Indian Christians Council (NEICC), the Asian Baptist Federation (ABF), the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and it maintains a historical relationship with American Baptist Churches (ABC).[8] NBCC is a dynamic and growing organization. At present it has 20 full fledged associations, four associate members, 15553 churches and 5, 17,000 members. The platinum jubilee celebration in 2012 marked the 75 years of NBCC existence.[9]

NBCC in the Midst of Naga Political Violence

After World War II, the feeling of Naga Nationalism became stronger and stronger among the Nagas and as a result, in 1954, they re-established a political institution which was known as the Naga Hill District Tribal Council (NHDTC). Later, it was renamed as Naga National Council. This Council became an apex body for Naga National Political Organization. They fought for the collective rights of the Nagas and expressed the desire to live together as a family, free from outside interference.[10] As a matter of fact, the government of India did not recognize what the Nagas were demanding or claiming for. As a result, by the middle of 1950, the confrontation between Indian army and Naga armed became imminent and the situation in Naga Hills became precarious. In other words, the Indian government deployed armed forces on a large-scale and the army men began to search intensively houses of all the Naga national leaders. An undeclared war between the Nagas and the Indian security forcs thus began. Naga hill plunged into widespread violence, suffering and bloodshed. Between the two fighting forces, it was the

innocent people who suffered most and many lives were lost that way.[11]

During the 1950s, the Indian occupation of Nagaland reached a strength of 40,000 to 50,000 soldiers to control a civilian population of only about 300,000. In other words, a form of military rule was established with a Nagaland Defence Act, harsher than any measure that had been imposed by the British on Bengal in the past. By such an Act, the Indian government found it easy to isolate the Nagas from the eyes of the world in the inaccessible mountainous territory. Moreover, when the Naga villages were burnt, the people were often driven into the jungle to escape from the Indian army. And in many cases, the villagers were captured in thousands and were dumped in huge army camps enclosed by stockades for many days. It is also said that the elders in the village were beaten up by the Indian army with branches of trees and flogged continuously until they gave away information or lost consciousness. Some other methods used by them to torture the Nagas were, rolling a person on the ground beneath logs with guards seated on either end, rubbing chilli powder into the eyes and between the legs of both men and women to make them talk. Smoke from burning chilli powder was blown into the faces of people hanging by their feet. Some Nagas were forced to dig their grave before being interrogated. One of the blunders made by the forces was the desecration and burning of churches. Even obscene acts were performed on Naga women inside the church while the congregations were forced to remain outside. The intention behind the mayhem created by the military personnel was to suppress the Nagas. From time to time they published pamphlets and accused the Indian army of rape, molestation, beating and torture by electric shocks during interrogations.[12] According to the 1955-56 NNC records:

> Ten thousand Nagas had been beaten and tortured out of which one thousand five hundred and sixty two were women with seven hundred nine of them below the age of twenty years…. Twenty six thousand five hundreds and ninety eight houses were burned… two hundred and four villages were attacked and 8,850,000 mounds of paddy were either burned or destroyed as more than five hundred and fifteen granaries were burned.[13]

At this point of time the churches were the only independent bodies that negotiated with the government of India and Naga freedom fighters for a ceasefire agreement and the initiation of a peace process. In fact, when Naga people lost everything following the incursion of the Indian army, it was Christianity that offered some hope and sense of collective identity.

Formation of Naga Churches Ministers Mission for Peace (NCMMP) 1957

During the 1950s the suffering of the Naga people became inexpressible, since violence broke out everywhere and there were rampages and outright violation of human rights. Seeing such a situation in Nagaland, a few church leaders came together at Kohima and they formed the Naga Church Ministers Mission for Peace in 1957. They acted as mediators between the government of India and the Naga underground leaders. They toured all over Nagaland, visiting different villages and listening to the stories of their tragedies, fears and abuse at the hands of the Indian army. They preached about peace and non-violence. They also met the Naga underground leaders and sought their help to create an atmosphere of peace in the Naga society. It is said that they toured and visited the places with special movement permits obtained from the army. During their touring, they were often caught in the cross-firing between Indian armies and Naga armies. They too were subjected to harassment from both Armies.[14] Mr. Longri Ao, one of the NCMMP members wrote: "We had been this whole year moving about in quest of lasting peace in Nagaland, often in rain and in scorching sun, cutting our way through thick jungles and having meetings and prayer with our underground fighters inside deep forest and with those in prison."[15] The peace work went on and on and with faith in God the team visited many place in Nagaland. During their visits many members were exhausted both physically and emotionally due to constant tension and strain of the journey.[16]

During the 1950s, the peace work of NCMMP was beginning to take shape and the initiative of the Baptist Church was crucial in the peace process in Nagaland. Such an initiative helped the churches to recognize the urgency of having a high level peace mission to act as a third party between Government of India and the Naga underground forces. Further, by seeing the senseless killings and bloodshed, the church leaders reaffirmed the principle of non-violence, forgiveness and reconciliation as the guiding principles for any future peace work for NBCC. As a result of such affirmation, in 1964, under the leadership of Kenneth Kerhuo, Rev. Longri, and Rev. Kijung and many others, NBCC organized a peace mission, where Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, a Gandhian worker, B.P. Chaliha and Rev. Michael Scott, an Anglican priest became the active members of the above Peace Mission.[17] Scott had won the confidence of the underground Nagas because he had been pleading their case from the beginning. The inclusion of Michael Scott in the peace mission was a tremendous

morale booster for the Nagas and the underground Nagas wanted that he was included as an international observer. The efforts of the Baptist church leaders to organize a peace mission received wide support and appreciation from every section of the Naga society, including the political parties in Nagaland (Naga National Organization and Democratic Party).[18]

Nagaland Peace Mission and Declaration of the Ceasefire: September 6, 1964.

The formation of the peace mission showed the resolve of the church to insist that a military solution was not the answer to the Naga political issue and the struggle of Nagas for human dignity. In other words, the purpose of NPM was not to apportion blame for the mistakes, misconception or deception of the past, but to put an end to the resultant war. The peace mission with a mandate given by the NBCC worked relentlessly to bring an end to the fierce armed conflict by meeting both the parties. They worked hard for several months to make both the parties agree to a draft agreement containing the terms and conditions of the ceasefire. As a result of the hard work of the peace mission, on 25 May 1964, at Sakraba Phek, the Federal Government of Nagaland signed and issued a treaty by which a ceasefire could be arranged. After a few months the peace mission tabled a draft proposal, for a ceasefire and this was accepted by both sides and termed as "Ceasefire Agreement." They both signed it on 10th and 14th August 1964. (FGN & GoI). The historic ceasefire between FGN and GoI was officially declared on September 6, 1964. It was one of the most significant achievements of the church organizations.19 On 1st, of October 1964, B.P. Chaliha (one of the active members of the peace mission) stated. "I thank the church leaders for their sincerity without this bands of church leaders the peace mission could have done nothing. We have come at the invitation of the Baptist church leaders to Nagaland. With this authority we will discharge our duties."20

The first Indo-Naga peace talks took place at Chedema Camp near Kohima on September 23, 1964. After signing the ceasefire agreements between GoI and FGN there were 9 rounds of official level peace talks, but no concrete result came from such talks. This was mainly because of the extreme views of both the contending parties; for Nagas, there could be no solution without sovereignty, whereas some others thought of offering autonomy within the union of India. In such a situation, the Peace Mission could do no more than to see that the terms of the ceasefire were adhered to by both the parties.

Dissolution of the Peace Mission and the Failure of 1964 Ceasefire Agreement

In the midst of ministerial talk, a serious misunderstanding cropped up between the underground Nagas and the Peace Mission Members and this led to a rupture in the relationship with the Peace Mission. At first J.P. Narayan resigned from the Peace Mission when a Naga underground leader protested against one of his alleged statements, 'If the government of India desires, she can liquidate the Naga rebels.' He felt that he had forfeited the confidence of the underground Nagas. Secondly, B.P. Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam also resigned from the Peace Mission soon after a serious bomb explosion took place in Assam (Lumding Railway Station) killing 42 persons and injuring 120 people. The Indian officials suspected that the Naga rebels were behind the blast. This caused Mr. Chaliha to resign from the Peace Mission in 1966. After the resignation of the two members from the mission, Rev. Scott was left as the only full time member of the Peace Mission. In such situation, on 15 February 1966, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi suggesting that, an expert commission should examine the history of the Nagas to establish whether India had at any time exercised any authority over them. And also at the request of the Naga Federal Government, he sent a letter to U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nation, asking him for the inclusion of more foreign observer in the Peace Mission. May be such an act aroused waves of indignation throughout India for it was a glaring attempt to internationalize the Naga issue which was a purely domestic affair from the Indian point of view. And finally he (M. Scott) was asked to leave India immediately on May 3, 1966. The Indian security forces seized all the documents and tape recorded materials from him before he was forcefully deported. This was the end of the Peace Mission under the leadership of Rev. Michael Scott.[21] Even after his departure, the peace talks continued, but no positive result was achieved.

The ceasefire was regarded as a great achievement, but the Peace Mission was not in a position to move ahead with their plan, because of the differences in ideology and commitment from both the sides and also because of the exit of the members from the Peace Mission. Also after the signing the ceasefire agreement, the political picture in Nagaland as well as in the ceasefire covered area of the Ukhurl, Mao and Tamenglong was uncertain and insecure due to a fresh armed confrontation. There was frequent breach of the ceasefire agreement by both the parties in the form of fighting, raids and imposing of fines on the villages. Moreover a deep division took place among the

underground leadership.[22] The Naga underground went on reiterating their demand for sovereignty, whereas the Indian government was not ready at all to grant such status. As a result, by 1967 the peace talks between them broke down and the ceasefire pact between them was on the verge of collapsing. The failure of the peace talks brought shock and anxiety to the peace-loving Naga people. Though no official declaration was made by any side for withdrawal of ceasefire, it was understood that both the Naga militants and the Indian security forces would be free to exercise their strength in Nagaland. And finally, Nagaland was plunged into a bloody struggle between the Naga militants and the Indian armed forces.[23]

NBCC Renewed Search for Peace: The Formation of Nagaland Peace Council (1974) and Signing of Shillong Accord (1975)

By the 1970, the ceasefire agreement of 1964 was strongly tested and it was becoming very fragile, with all the political development and shaky relationship happening between Nagaland and Delhi. Clashes between different underground factions and Indian armed forces resulted in bloodshed and large-scale killing. The 1964 ceasefire was abrogated by the Government of India officially on 1st September 1972 and the Naga armies were banned by the Government of India under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.[24] Again on 2nd May 1973, a secret joint directive for a counter-insurgency operation in Nagaland was formulated. In this operation many Naga national workers were hunted down by both Indian armies and Nagaland State government. Many innocent people became the victims of this operation. In many places the Nagas were not allowed to work in their own field or have access to their granaries. Also many relatives of the national workers were tortured and killed. By 1975, the situation in Nagaland became very harsh as President's Rule was imposed followed by the declaration of National Emergency in India.[25]

The government of India was fully aware that beyond the unaffected hill tribes looked the more dangerous neighbor, China, and it was the threat presented by this potential enemy that lent strategic importance to North East insurgency than anything else. Therefore, the government of India was equally interested in bringing about an end to the Naga problem. While all these developments were going on, the NBCC leaders once again decided to work towards bringing both the parties to a conference table for a fresh round of negotiation.[26] So on January 23, 1973, a special peace committee of NBCC had a meeting at Kohima and pledged to work ceaselessly for peace and for this they summoned a general session. As a result of

the session, the Naga Peace Council was formed in March 1974.

In the same year, NPC convened a peace conference and resolved that the unlawful activities of 1967 should not be extended any more. In February 1975 the Council framed general guide lines on the working of the NPC i.e. (1) the solution should be honourable to all concerned and (2) should be acceptable to both parties and there should be no pre-condition for the talks. To this day these principles continue to be the base for the Indo-Naga talks. The Council urged the underground Nagas and the Government of India to come to an early political settlement and thereby avoid further bloodshed of the Naga people. The talk between the parties took place in Shillong on November 1975 and as a result, the Shillong Accord was signed on 11th November 1975 at Raj Bhavan, between the Naga Underground consisting of a six-member delegation led by Kvi Yallay, brother of A.Z. Phizo, and the government of India represented by L.P. Singh, then governor. But unfortunately it was rejected by the Naga underground rebels. Because, the most controversial and divisive section of the Shillong Accord was the first section which states, 'the representatives of the underground organizations convey their decision; of their own volition, to accept, without condition, the constitution of India.' This accord created much rift among the Nagas. The Naga signatories were accused of having accepted the Constitution of India and were regarded as national traitors. In other words, the Shillong Accord was another great blow to the Naga National Movement. Many Nagas thought that the Accord was a sellout of the rights of the Nagas. Because of this Accord there was a division among the Naga leaders and also the subsequent split in the underground organization; NSCN was formed in 1980 and in 1988 it was split into NSCN (IM) & NSCN (K). It was followed by factional clashes. Above all NPC was blamed and rejected for its alleged role in Shillong Accord and gradually NPC lost its credibility.[27]

The NBCC Peace Activities after the Shillong Accord of 1975

After the Shillong Accord of 1975, the situation in Nagaland became tense. A great disagreement emerged among the Nagas. As a result, the Nagaland Peace Council kept a low profile. In 1994, the peace work of NPC was transferred to NBCC Executive Committee. With the help of this committee the church leaders were assigned to have a talk with the different insurgent groups to resolve the political violence. With the support of the NBCC Executive Committee, in 1996, a statewide peace procession was organized and in the same year the NBCC organized a seminar on "Peace Work" in different places of Nagaland. In 1997 (in the month of March) the NBCC leaders

and the Executive Committee toured the whole of Nagaland with the message of peace and reconciliation.[28]

In 1998, The NBCC with the help of the Executive Committee formed a committee called "Peace Committee" with the objective to bring mutual understanding and reconciliation among the different factional groups in Nagaland. Later on, in 2001, the NBCC appointed Rev. L. Kari Longchar as a full time Director of Peace Affairs. The Peace Affairs, with the help of NBCC leaders organized a number of seminars and consultation sessions among the Nagas. We can say that from 1975 till date, the NBCC persistently met the different factions in different places to bring them to a common platform for negotiation. They also visited different villages and towns all over Nagaland with the message of peace, harmony, forgiveness and reconciliation. NBCC, along with other Naga Civil Societies have worked relentlessly to bring about a ceasefire between the Naga faction and Indian security forces. They also issued a number of press releases in different newspapers and media. In many cases they condemned the killings, extortion and kidnapping by Naga underground in the Naga society.[29]

Future plans of NBCC for peace building includes:

1. Continuing to carry out healing and reconciliation movement.
2. Emphasizing civil/Tribal reconciliation
3. Strengthening cordial relationship with communities of neighbouring States
4. Setting up a centre for peace culture
5. Conducting peace building training.[30]

Conclusion

The NBCC is said to have played a very crucial role in Naga politics since 1950s. It has played an important role in maintaining peace in Nagaland. It was a peace agent during one of the darkest hours in the Naga history, when Indian armed operation was at its highest point (1955-75). It was the time in Naga history when outside observers, journalists and humanitarian groups were restricted entry and in such a situation the church body (NBCC) was the only organization that initiated peace in Nagaland. NBCC was the only independent organization that brought the Government of India and the Federal government of Nagaland together for peace talk. In reflecting the significant peace role played by the church, Rev. V.K. Nuh a veteran Naga church leader said: "If the NBCC did not take the responsibility and played its role to bring peace during that time

when there was absolutely no outside help and support, Nagaland would have slipped into an age of anarchy and eventual destruction"[31]

Further, he affirmed that "Church saved Naga people and made Naga history different, because during that time nobody could do it, nobody would listen, but only because of the Church, their leaders of both the Government of India and NNC listened and the Government of India gave confidence."[32]

The propagation of NBCC is that we can resolve the issues through painstaking, honest discussion and without resorting to violence. Whatever the factional compulsions maybe, violence begets violence and always the innocent people are the main victims. Killing humans who are made in the image of God is no way justified. Killings for factional victory cannot be equated with sacrifice for the Naga cause. Rather it is an arrogant violation of God's will. The NBCC appealed to each and everyone to engage, address, promote and mobilize people toward a process of healing. It encouraged all the political groups to participate in the attempt by the Nagas to go forward as one people. The church does not expound and fight for any political ideology. But the church, given its religious mooring, can try to build a corruption-free, extortion-free, fear-free, just, righteous society and nation. It is more than 75 years since NBCC has upheld the Biblical principle of peacemaking as one of its supreme responsibilities. From the very inception of NBCC, and during the peace initiative, its guiding principles have been non-violence, forgiveness and reconciliation.

The NBCC was in a way firm in its commitment that the Naga national movement should undertake its political activities drawing onthe teachings of Jesus Christ who advocated non-violence. Undoubtly, it was one of the great forces to reckon with in the peacemaking processes of the Naga society.

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GANDHI MARG

Quarterly Journal of the
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION

VOLUME THIRTY ONE ❑ NUMBER THREE ❑ OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2009

Published by:
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION
221 & 223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi-110 002
Phones: +91-11-23237491/93, Fax: +91 +11-23236734
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Volume 37 Number 2

Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 275–294

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Gandhi and Ambedkar on Human Dignity

Ravi Ranjan

ABSTRACT

This research paper seeks to explain the idea of human dignity by analysing Gandhi's and Ambedkar's discourses on self, untouchability and the emancipatory social projects they propose in their writings and political practices. Convergences and divergences are evident in their shared enterprise to transcend humiliation for institutionalising a plural living world of self-respect, social recognition and dignity. They relentlessly tried to solve the problems of hierarchized and humiliating social order to ensue human dignity in their own ways. In India, day-to-day caste violence and oppression based on our horizontal and vertical identity often erodes human freedom and disallows equal respect as human being. These two founding fathers of modern India fought valiantly against these social evils and tried their best to rescue human dignity by changing individual from within to respect each other and to resist humiliating practices to open space for social recognition.

Keywords: Human dignity, self, humiliation, self-respect and social recognition.

IN OUR EVERYDAY LIFE few basic questions always keep troubling us. Why do we like to be respected and honoured? Why a Hindu funeral pyre can only be lit by a *Dom/Mahar* (Dalits)? If their lighting is to ensure our last journey to heaven then why are they considered as outcaste and untouchables? Does God divide people in four types of *varnas*? If my birth is not my choice then why I have to pay and suffer and get humiliated to cross the social boundary of caste or *jati*? On what basis do we relate ourselves with other selves? Who is entitled to decide about my last birth and next birth? Why and how

the state processes have marginalized the livelihood resources of a large number of people and had impaired their support base? Such basic questions not only regulate our social relations but they do influence the socio-political discourses. Interrogating the idea of human dignity in Indian context may help us in searching for some ways to answer these questions.

The contemporary socio-political process is playing a significant role in destroying sources of dignity like autonomy, opportunity and rationality. Interrelated and diverse expressions are defining dignity, some of these expressions focus on more historical and systematic analysis of the causes of injustice and humiliation, in terms of caste, class, race, disability, gender and sexuality, while some other expressions focus on a market-driven society that marginalizes a substantial number of the population. Michael Sandel thinks that 'market triumphalism' and the 'consolidated faith' that markets are the primary means for achieving the public good has come to an end. Sandel further explains that we live at a time when almost everything can be bought and sold. Over many decades markets and market values have come to govern our lives never before and now market values are playing a greater role in social life.[1] Since we did not arrive at this condition through any deliberate choice, it is right time to deliberate on dignity of human being by looking into the history of ideas that not only reshape society but also provide the foundational norms for our social interactions.

Gandhi and Ambedkar: Contemporary Crisis and their Relevance

There are many ways in which we can understand the contemporary crisis of global India; some are external but majority of the problems are internal, few are legal but many are socio-political, and most of them are ethical and moral. 'The events of September 11 pointed, in spectacular fashion, to a clash of moral codes that focus on the role of violence in the deliberation of means and ends, not only physical violence, but violence in other forms: social, political, economic, psychological. This is *the* debate of our times.'[2] The escalating violent conflicts, oppression, marginalization and exclusion has been producing and reproducing humiliation which dehumanizes the human 'self.' The relation of self to other self, hegemonic self to the oppressed self and individual self with the shared self needs a critical engagement. This relationship embarks on the idea of equality and hence tries to eradicate untouchability and ensures dignity. In Indian context the notion of equality still has to reach to its constitutional commitment to be a righteous republic.[3] Therefore, it is required to deliberate on ideas of Gandhi and Ambedkar that are constantly

argued for dignified and harmonious human existence.

Although, untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form forbidden by Article 17 of the Constitution of India, our social practices are still a major hindrances and we are in the grip of caste violence in the age of globalization. Dalit movement scholar Eleanor Zelliot has rightly noted that Article 17 of the Constitution 'stands as a triumph-for Congress, for Gandhi, for Ambedkar, and for India,[4] however imperfectly the idea of complete equality and justice has been realized.'[5] Gandhi and Ambedkar had differences and serious conflicts over their respective political, social and religious philosophies and practical-political strategies, but both shared a genuine and deep commitment to the eradication of untouchability. Some limitations lie in a debilitating divergence that has developed between the trajectories taken by the Gandhian and Ambedkarian approaches to untouchability eradication, where our political and intellectual arena is still stamped with the legacies of Gandhi and Ambedkar.[6] Due to this reason, movements for social transformation have become 'weak and localized' and ideologically 'fragmented or stagnant' because of a standardized positioning of Gandhi and Ambedkar as each other's enemy. We need to get out of this situation and attempt to move forward by 'building bridges between the two rich discourses of our times.'[7] Political ideas and influences of historic figures play an important role in social change. Emancipatory linkages in Ambedkar's and Gandhi's writing have been explained by legal scholar of Indian jurisprudence Upendra Baxi, who admits that they learned and unlearned a good deal from each other. This has not been given sufficient appreciation or attention by social and political theorists.[8]

Among many of the modern Indian thinkers, activists and social reformers Gandhi and Ambedkar are of significance for many reasons. First, they have developed experiential epistemology, through their political practices and daily life social transactions. Second, both of them were among the main leaders and social mobilizers of independence movement and were well equipped with legal knowledge and negotiation tactics for their cause. They have produced a vast amount of original writings based on their belief; research and living and hold practices that place them as mass leaders with intellectual depth. They have dominated the national pedagogy of policy and practice. Third, while critical to each other view both of them have a common objective of fighting oppression and liberate individuals to realise their human worth and capability[9] which is required for enhancing human dignity. Fourth, both the leaders were well versed with Indian traditions and social practices and were having distinctive capacity to conceptualize their self-experience and

theorize human dignity from Indian perspective.

Realizing dignity and feeling humiliated are experiences of the 'self' in a contextualized space. In recent times, social science theorization in India is using experience to substantiate the historical fact and to philosophize the political incidents for producing normative theories. Gopal Guru and Sundar Sarukkai in their in-depth analysis of experience as an important category have explained Gandhi's and Ambedkar's experience to theorize political discourses of modern India, where politics of identity and the specificity of experiences seem to demarcate different notions of self and community.[10] Human dignity may be decoded from a triangular relationship and where experiences play an important epistemological role in the production of thought and in doing social theory.[11]

The triangular relationship of self, experience and context reflect on the norms of our social transaction and obligations and help us to understand social theory. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar have stressed on troubled relationship of notion of experiences and the social theory in which they were trained. In case of Gandhi and Ambedkar, their experiences are sources of reflective consciousness that helped them to come out with their ideas of social change. However, at times experience divides self and others and gives rise to claim and counter claim which generate a contestation,[12] particularly when individuals are localised and they are sharing their self with 'the other self.' Ambedkar and Gandhi depended on their lived experience in their theory and practice and it was entirely due to their different lived experiences that their theoretical formulations differ. Both Ambedkar and Gandhi generate a set of moral or political categories that they deploy to motivate the masses for the purification of society in the first case and the purification of the soul in the second. Both these thinkers of modern India gained an understanding of social nuances

and an adequate understanding of India through voyages across Indian regions. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar share one thing in common: for both of them, experience provides the vantage point for making epistemological moves and for political mobilization of the masses.[13]

However, there is a fundamental difference between the two. Gandhi experiments with the experience of the self and others. Thus, the experience of Ambedkar and his community becomes an object of Gandhi's experiment. Ambedkar and his entire untouchable community do not have to experiment in order to produce experience in fact, untouchables are born into it.[14] An investigation of contested experiences of Gandhi and Ambedkar is necessary to understand humiliation and to theorize human dignity in Indian perspective. Views on humiliation, caste, and untouchability reflect that for Gandhi it was theorizing others' experiences and experimenting with his own, but for Ambedkar it was a lived experience as a Dalit, as an untouchable. For Gandhi, guilt consciousness was the essence of experience, in case of Ambedkar it was first hand self-experience.[15]

Gandhi and Ambedkar on Idea of the 'Self'

'Self' is an important category to study human dignity because it is the human 'self' that feels suffering and pain, experiences humiliation and advocates for dignity. In modern Indian thought conceptions of the self draws upon the thinking of social and political leadership to understand and construct the different images of the self, the other, and the nation. The struggle against colonialism and imperialism, as a consequence, brought to the foreground both a sense of difference from the colonizer, as well as a strong sense of one's identity. The social and political leadership in each community articulated its identity by drawing upon the resources internal to the self/community. The image of the self and the others at times also expressed sectarian politics, anchored in the distinction between 'us' and 'them.'[16] At the same time leaders like Gandhi and Ambedkar were not only studying self and strategizing their politics from different perspectives; their political formulations were based on experiences which were space derived too.[17] For example, Ambedkar uses terms like 'self-respect;' Guru describes them in terms of experiential space which seems to have ownership of our experience. Their sense of self is always mediated by a sense of self given to them by the spaces. Their sense of self is actually supplementary to the sense of self. Gandhi's notion of self starts with a moral question and ends with a moral answer. While Gandhi was more concerned about the political self while formulating *swaraj*, Ambedkar was more focused on social self to

ensure equality to untouchables and their liberation *(moksha)*.

Searching for the self and shift in Indian political tradition shows that Gandhi's theorization of Indian sovereignty had constructed self as self-limiting. Gandhian non-violence (*ahimsa)* took an alternative Indian theory of rule *(raj)* and self-rule *(swaraj)* to another extreme, ultimately unrealizable within the horizon of the modern nation-state, but it came out of his engagement with multiple Indian political and moral traditions that had refined to the utmost degree a number of strategies to liberate the self from the primordial, irrational, and almost insuperable impulse to violence that comes with the human condition.[18] For Gandhi, the self both expands into the civilization self and contracts into the individual self; in thinking about the self at these two very different scales, he displaces it from its usual location in Indic political life, which is the community (*samaj/ jati*). If *swaraj* is "the domination of the self," then it is a realm whose extension cannot be measured within the bounds of history. Neither territorial nor temporal measures as understood historically, nor the form that the state might take, are relevant to *swaraj.* For Gandhi, self and the other can exist peacefully, respecting each other's difference.[19] *Hind Swaraj* is Gandhi's meditation on India's self and India's sovereignty. Gandhi's was the pivotal epistemological break he and other nationalists faced, a political crisis that led to their quest for what we could call "the sources of the self," an Indian self.[20]

An enlightened thinker, Ambedkar insisted that the Indian tradition by which he meant a Brahminical, Sanskritic tradition was the opposite of the argumentative one; that it was authoritarian, and this was responsible for modern India being intellectually conservative, socially reactionary, and politically oppressive, with or without British rule. For Ambedkar, the self, had to be painstakingly carved out of the shackling dross of a violent, hierarchical, and unequal society; it had to emerge out of the darkness of pre-modernity into the light of the rule of law, social justice, and egalitarian citizenship. Ambedkar rejected all interpretation of selfhood that subjected the self to rituals of humiliation, denied its intrinsic dignity, or resented its capacity for transformation and renewal. The Indic self had too long been bound in the chains of caste, gender, religion, region, and custom-first it had to be returned to a zero state, shorn of all its imputed attributes, and then it could begin to fashion itself as it wished. To Ambedkar, political freedom *(swaraj)* meant precisely the freedom to make the self. For Ambedkar it was more self-regarding than a moral question or spiritual intention. It was more a social self whose identity of being Dalit was cause of historical suffering and humiliation meted out to by caste Hindus.[21]

Contextualizing Humiliation: Gandhi and Ambedkar on Experience of Untouchability

What distinguishes humans from animals is the ability to experience the hurt caused by humiliation.[22] Humiliation is a normal risk in social interaction; it is an unavoidable feature, indeed one of the key features of civilized emotional life. Humiliation is almost endemic to social life that is active basically through asymmetries of intersecting sets of attitudes-arrogance and obeisance, self-respect and servility, and reverence and repulsion. It continues to survive in different forms depending upon the specific nature of the social context. In Indian context it is the notion of untouchability that foregrounds the form and content of humiliation.[23] The social practices and hierarchized order of the Indian society itself produces the site for humiliation in modern India. Humiliation as a claim does not choose its context but it operates in a social power structure, where honour and power are intimately linked. Humiliation and other related unpleasant emotions generated by normal social interaction are central emotions of everyday social existence, which may seem to impart an ironical misanthropy.[24]

The notions of humiliation also change due to a respective change in context and content. The western tradition through colonial rule in different parts of the world had subjected local people to both crude and subtle forms of humiliation.[25] India's nationalists ignored the internal forms of humiliation that emanate from the social practices based on caste, untouchability, and gender discrimination. However, they were over sensitive to racial humiliation; this looks internally conservative and externally radical, for instance Bankim was radically against racial humiliation but inconsistent in his views over caste humiliation.[26] Modernity plays an important role in generating among the servile a critical consciousness about actual and possible forms of humiliation, emanating from the local configuration of power. This is the historicized view of humiliation, which includes the experience of caste-based humiliation faced by Jotirao Phule, Bhimrao Ambedkar and their people.[27] In this situation humiliation becomes an experience that interrogates and recasts one's relationship to oneself. The untouchables— caste Hindus relationship cannot be divorced from the distribution of power throughout the wider society in which both untouchables and caste Hindus stay together.

Feeling of humiliation and shame is a powerful and ubiquitous emotion in social life, and humiliation is the active public face of shame: it is the hostile infliction of shame on others.[28] The humiliating power configuration has been discussed in Hegel's dialectics of slavery.

The slave cannot negate the master, for whatever he does is done on behalf of his master. The slave dies, it is true, but he dies in the master; so the master becomes auto confirming. But this one-sided and unequal form of recognition soon reveals its limitations. The opposite, Hegel thought, was true of the slave: The slave, by his social death,[29] and by living "in mortal terror of his sovereign master" becomes acutely conscious of both life and freedom. The idea of freedom is born, not in the consciousness of the master, but in the reality of the slave's condition. Freedom is continuously active and creative. The slave, in his social death, is already once transformed, further through his "work and labour" slave became positively free. Consciousness, through work, creates object, becomes externalized, and passes into something that is permanent and remains.[30] Therefore, dignity, like appreciation, love and care, is one of those human qualities that are most intensely felt and understood when they are absent or unrequited. Slavery, for the slave, was truly a "trial by death," as Hegel called it. Out of this trail the slave emerged, if he survived at all, as a person afire with the knowledge of and the need for dignity and honour.

In the Indian context, untouchability was both a condition of existence, as well as a violent expression of power. In August 1917, when the British colonial government, in anticipation of the 1919 Government of India Act, announced that it intended to set up self-government bodies, it provided an immediate opportunity to the untouchables, who constituted about one-seventh of the population, to claim representation as an important political group. They demanded representation proportionate to their numerical strength in the promised self-government bodies. Untouchability as a unique form of inequality is not prevalent anywhere else except in Hindu India. The caste imagination needs the untouchable, his continuous humiliation being the condition of our social order. D.D. Kosambi noted, the caste order in the present day could only survive through a negation of history and progress, through 'an exaggerated conservatism' that wrote the contingent into a text, claiming for both a timeless antiquity.[31] Day to day humiliation and feeling of indignity was not new to Indian society, where the sense of honour was heavily stressed in social life and in social relations. For Gandhi, reason (moral) was invoked internally from within the tradition, while for Ambedkar it was, seemingly, invoking reason both internally and externally. Both these thinkers deploy experience as well as space in order to produce sets of categories in their respective social constituencies and confront the spaces hostile to their emancipatory project.[32]

Ambedkar invokes the category of self-respect that signifies the transcendence of Bahishkrut Bharat[33] (the India of the excluded—the untouchables) into Prabuddha Bharat[34] (the India of the enlightened people). For Ambedkar, it was a historical necessity to reach out to the sensibilities of a cross section of Hindu society and to disrupt 'one dimensional imagination' through giving the high-caste Hindus a bitter dose of reason embedded in normative values: mutual respect, social justice, and equality.[35] Ambedkar's adoption of a modern vocabulary (social justice, equality, self-respect, and dignity) was definitely aimed at making a dent in the local configurations of caste and community. The untouchable's body and its shadow worked in tandem to produce a humiliating experience for the Dalits. In Ambedkar, the idea of self-respect as part of the larger concept of cultural justice springs from another experiential space – sacred space (Hindu temple). Sacred space, according to Ambedkar, is the source of not only the struggle for equal entry but the moral struggle for recognition. In Ambedkar's framework of social justice, the temple as sacred space gets seriously implicated in the radical politics that is aimed at creating a kind of negative consciousness among the untouchables.[36]Ambedkar argues that those untouchables who were responsible for constructing and later protecting the Hindu temple have every reason to feel the loss of self-respect as their labour contribution was not recognized by high-caste Hindus.[37] In his view, contribution generates the language of right to enter the temple.[38] If the untouchables failed to assert their right, then their self-respect would diminish.

Gandhi deploys the moral category of '*seva* in order to forge the intra-group solidarity that he thought was necessary for India's independence. Gandhi differs from Ambedkar to the extent that he does not deploy the modern language of rights while advocating temple entry for the untouchables. On the contrary, he puts emphasis on the moral duty of the high-caste Hindus to allow the untouchables to enter the Hindu temples and appeals them that untouchables have committed sin in their previous birth, is it not your moral duty to give them chance to wash their sin in the sacred space'[39] Here, unlike Ahmedabad, Gandhi fails to link actual labour with justice and self-respect.[40] Gandhi produces change by mobilizing against the British rule. Ambedkar, on the other hand, tries to reason with the caste Hindus by deploying disembodied universal reason based on the notion of 'entitlement,' in terms of the capacity to exercise autonomy over the distribution of value produced by one's own social labour.[41] Ambedkar, through his historical analysis and experiences, arrived at the conclusion that untouchability is inseparable from the caste

system and Hinduism. In his view, the untouchables and the Shudras constituted the sustaining bases of the 'graded inequality' of the caste system, whose legitimation was provided by the dogma of human inequality that is central to Brahmanic Hinduism. Ambedkar asked untouchables to make an unflinching resolve not to eat the throw-out crumbs. We will attain self-elevation only if we learn self-help, regain our self-respect, and gain self-knowledge.[42] Like Ambedkar, for E.V. Ramasamy Periyar, untouchability was a norm that informed the caste system, at every level of its hierarchical existence. For both these lifelong students of the *varna-jati* order, untouchability was the most important and expressive instance of an unjust, inhuman order. Both of them were also critical of Gandhi's role in the formulation of Indian nationalism.[43]

Gandhi put the campaign against untouchability high on the national agenda and gave it unprecedented momentum.[44] Initially, Gandhi's anti-untouchability work was guided by his reformist social-religious morality. He regarded untouchability as a historically institutionalized sin or *adharma* on the part of the caste Hindus, who should bear a primary responsibility for ending it. Using his South African experience Gandhi disapproved of untouchability, and reminded that Hindus believed not only in equality and brotherhood but also in the higher principle of the unity of all life. In *Young India,* he made the point even more clearly that 'Non-cooperation against the government means cooperation among the governed, and if Hindus do not remove the sin of untouchability there will be no *swaraj,* whether in one year or in one hundred years. *Swaraj* is unattainable without the removal of the sins of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim unity.'[45] Two important features of Gandhi's attack on untouchability during this period was first, to criticize it on the ground that its continued existence hindered national unity and harmed the cause of Indian independence. Second, he felt that untouchability was not an integral part of Hinduism. For these and other related reasons, Gandhi decided to debate with the orthodox elements.[46] However, Gandhi's initial critique of untouchability failed to challenge its scriptural or moral basis and attacked it on political grounds only.

Ambedkar analysed the nature of the caste system and tried to find out how it differed from other kinds of inequality, and was sustained for centuries, which also shaped the Hindu self-consciousness. In Ambedkar's view, the practice of untouchability was a necessary product of the caste system. In some of his writings Ambedkar thought that the caste system could be eradicated within the Hindu framework.[47] Ambedkar explained that there were three

factors responsible for continuation of untouchability; they are ideological, economic and political. Untouchability was sanctioned by religion or religiously inspired culture, and the entire weight of the structure of dominant beliefs and practices was deployed to convince its victims that this was their 'inescapable destiny' in terms of the doctrine of *karma.* Caste Hindus also commanded economic power, which they freely used to exploit the untouchables and keep them in degrading and dehumanising conditions. As Ambedkar put it, untouchability was a 'fold mine' for the caste Hindus[48]. It fed their pride and sense of self importance, provided cheap labour and a pool of people to do the dirty work for them. Finally, the caste Hindus controlled the institutions of government and terrorised people into obedience by imposing the most horrendous forms of punishment on even the smallest deviations from caste norms.

Gandhi was unable to see any internal connection between untouchability and the caste system. Gandhi defended the caste system on several grounds.[49] Untouchability was the most acute manifestation of this pervasive ethos of pollution. Gandhi began to advocate a reformed caste system, especially after his Vaikom visit.[50] Gandhian explanations were more rigid without working into possibility of class mobility and change of caste unless one converts himself. He equated religion with spirituality, the latter with morality, and defined morality in terms of self-purification and active social service. The highest human activity consisted in total dedication to the service of mankind as a way of attaining *moksha.* Gandhi radically redefined the four categories of traditional occupations underlying the ancient *varna* system by explaining that his well-rounded or fully moral man engaged in all four activities belonged to all four *varnas* and hence to none alone. For Gandhi untouchability was a mixture of social and moral problems which can be corrected through minimum of state intervention. He was, in principle, opposed to state-imposed and even state-initiated reforms. Gandhi's opposition to state-initiated reforms was derived from several sources.[51] He was prepared to devote his own life to fighting against untouchability, and felt sure that he could both organise a committed cadre and mobilise the moral energies of the Hindu masses.[52]

For Ambedkar untouchables developed deep, subtle and often unconscious self-contempt, and half-believed that they were worthy of nothing better; therefore it was equally important that the untouchables should develop a sense of self-respect, which alone can generate a 'divine discontent' with their current condition and a 'burning desire' to change it.[53] The untouchables must realise that they were fighting not only to 'improve' their material conditions

but also to regain their 'honour' and 'dignity' and reclaim the 'title deeds' of their humanity that had been taken away by their masters. Ambedkar was trying to establish the political institutions to pursue democratic rights for their people, as these political institutions can promise people a sense of respect and dignity. Rawls had later argued that democratic institutions based on egalitarian principles do not humiliate people.[54] In fact, they are supposed to create the conditions within which every person enjoys equal recognition. Ambedkar invoked a different group-based view of democracy. He insisted on a separate electorate for the untouchables at the Second Round Table Conference, and secured the Communal Award of 1931. When Gandhi opposed it and embarked on an indefinite fast, Ambedkar accepted a compromise, which saw an increase in the number of untouchable representatives.[55]

Gandhi suggests a two-way strategy to fight the problem of untouchability. First and most important, he sought to convince and convert the caste Hindus and mobilise their energies by means of moral and religious appeals. Second, he encouraged them to undertake welfare activities among the untouchables in a spirit of remorse and guilt. From 1920 onwards, Gandhi launched a systematic campaign against untouchability. He denounced it on every available occasion and debated. Under his leadership, the 1920 Congress session passed a resolution demanding that the untouchables be admitted to Hindu temples. National schools and colleges set up during the Non-Cooperation Movement were required to admit them and to campaign actively against untouchability. Under Gandhi's guidance, the 1921 Congress session in Ahmedabad passed a resolution requiring that everyone participating in the Non-Cooperation Movement should take the pledge that as a Hindu they believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall on all possible occasions seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.'[56] He started calling them *'harijans'* although many people found it patronising, including Ambedkar. Gandhi set a personal example by admitting a *harijan* woman in his *ashram* despite the opposition of some of its members, including his wife. He cleaned latrines and required his fellow-ashramites to do so as well. He made it a point to stay in *harijan* colonies, and later in life he only attended marriages in which one of the partners was a *harijan.*

Despite Gandhi's attempts to weaken irrational and deep-seated prejudices, caste Hindus remained opaque to his appeals. When the British government decided in 1932 to grant the *harijans* a separate electorate and raised the spectre of a major split within the Hindu community, Gandhi announced a 'fast unto death' on 20 September

1932. In a widely circulated statement, he made it abundantly clear that the fast was primarily directed not against the separate electorate alone but the practice of untouchability itself: 'No patched-up agreement between caste Hindus and rival depressed class leaders will answer the purpose. The agreement to be valid has to be real. If the Hindu mass mind is not yet prepared to banish untouchability root and branch, it must sacrifice me without the slightest hesitation.'[57] Gandhi's fast, which lasted for six days, was condemned by Ambedkar who reluctantly gave in under the strongest pressure, and has been subject of many criticisms. Gandhi's fast triggered off a public debate and forced the Hindus to concentrate on the issue they had hitherto not taken very lightly.[58] From November 1933 until July 1934, Gandhi undertook an all-India Harijan tour of 12,500 miles, travelling from village to village, to carry the battle against orthodoxy. However, he continued to attack untouchability in moral and religious terms only and mobilise Hindu feelings of guilt and repentance.

Exploring Human Dignity: A Critical Evaluation

Different from Ambedkar, Gandhi believed that the historical Hinduism of his time had a capacity to be reformed and to eliminate untouchability and he was instrumental in setting up the All-India Anti Untouchability League as an integral part of his campaign. Ambedkar, one of the three *harijan* members, wanted it to launch a nationwide civil rights movement.[59] He demanded that the League should attack not just untouchability but the caste system itself and vigorously campaigned against the taboos on inter-caste dining and marriage. When his proposals were turned down he resigned. After that Gandhi initiated the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the welfare of untouchables. He wanted it to ban untouchability and punish those found guilty of practising it. He also wanted it to introduce a massive social, educational and economic programme of *harijan* uplift, including giving them land for resettlement and necessary financial grants. He proposed that all elected bodies should reserve seats for them in proportion to their number in the population as a whole, but was against reservations in employment and in school and university admissions where merit alone was to count. He asked political parties to actively encourage *harijan* participation, and hoped that the Congress would give a lead by rotating its higher offices among the minority communities, especially the *harijans,* and by assigning them proportional representation on its district and working committees.[60]

Although Gandhi's campaign created a widespread reformist movement among caste Hindus, Ambedkar concluded that Hindu society was not going to change and that the untouchables had no

hope of achieving social equality with caste Hindus. As he remarked: 'There can be a better or a worse Hindu.'[61] Ambedkar preferred Buddhism, a truly 'egalitarian' as it placed morality, not God, at its centre, and concentrated on 'man and the righteousness between man and man' rather than 'problems of the soul and of worship' as other religions did.[62] He called the conversion 'rebirth' an 'end' to one form of life and mode of existence and the 'beginning' of another. In Ambedkar, self-respect emerges from an affirmative link between the moral quality of labour and the claim that can be made over the distribution of the fruits of that labour. However, in the social imagination of India, Ambedkar was forced to imagine India in a language that may sound quite negative to many.[63] It was Ambedkar who took Gandhi's battle against untouchability in post independent India, when the Constituent Assembly passed article 11 declaring untouchability a cognisable offence. However, till the end of their life, they differed on the grounds of emancipation in terms of both causality and instrumentality.

To affirm the dignity of individuals particularly of untouchables, Ambedkar drew an important distinction between independence of the country and independence of its people. To Ambedkar an independent India might mean little more than transfer of power from one set of masters to another, and make no difference to and even worsen the condition of the oppressed classes, especially the Dalits. He also argued that the question of untouchability was not just a social question like child marriage or a ban on widow re-marriage as Gandhi and others had argued. It was fundamentally an economic and political problem requiring a radical restructuring of not just the Hindu society but the Indian society as a whole and without this radical restructuring it is difficult to ensure dignity of every individual. For Ambedkar individual dignity was very important for liberation; therefore, he reinterpreted the Buddhist foundations in a new way that can deal with equity and human dignity. As Ambedkar said of Buddha, the latter was not a 'mokshadata but a margadata'.[64]

Ambedkar's vision of constitutive elements of dignity can be articulated in terms of the three interrelated ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, familiar since the French Revolution but to which he gave a somewhat different meaning and content. Social equality referred to equality of status and respect based on acknowledgement of the equal dignity and shared humanity of all human beings, and absence of all forms of discrimination, hierarchy and exclusion in their formal and informal relations. Economic equality meant equality of life chances and a broad equality of economic power. It required

that no individual or group should be at mercy of and exercise disproportionate power over others. Ambedkar wanted socialism to be enshrined in the Constitution so as to place it 'beyond the reach of a Parliamentary majority to suspend, amend or abrogate it.'[65] Later he changed his views on both. For Ambedkar, fraternity meant fellow feeling, and it implied a sense of common belonging.[66] For him, fraternity gave depth to liberty and equality and realised them in areas lying beyond the reach of the law. It is hardly surprising that the Preamble of the Constitution of India, in the drafting of which Ambedkar played an important role, commits the country to 'secure' justice, liberty and equality to all its citizens and to 'promote among them all fraternity.' Ambedkar's analysis of the nation suggests that without social union political unity is difficult to be achieved. If achieved, it would be precarious.[67] Like Tagore and Gandhi, his concept of nationhood has a humanist orientation and is remarkably free from the collectivism, narrowness and aggressiveness generally associated with it.[68]

Gandhi's contribution for achieving human dignity of untouchables was considerable and greater than that of many other Indian leaders. No one before him had mounted a frontal attack on untouchability and launched a vigorous national campaign. Gandhi lived in *bhangi* colonies, adopted a *harijan* girl and mixed, lived and shared his meals with them. He gave the *harijans* a measure of dignity and self-confidence and the courage to stand up for their rights. A close analysis shows that while Ambedkar was looking just into equity among selves, Gandhi found way for the realization of 'the shared self' where a caste Hindu self may share a Dalit self and vice-versa. Here Gandhi transcends the existing vocabulary of rights and enters into larger categories of human compassion through shared self. This kind of shared self is helpful to understand and restore dignity. Gandhi's contribution too, had its limits in many terms. Untouchability was both a moral and a political problem and was deeply rooted in the highly unequal structure of power relationship between the upper castes and the *harijans.* Gandhi's campaign was conducted only at the moral and religious level. It gave the *harijans* dignity but not power; moral and, to some extent, social but not political and economic equality; self-respect but the self-confidence to organise and fight their own battles. At the same time Ambedkar's approach also suffered from a strong statist and elitist bias. He was right to emphasise the importance of political power, but wrong to think that the State provided answers to all of society's problems.

Both Gandhi and Ambedkar wanted to liberate the self from shackles of hierarchy, caste and bonds of unfreedom. Both of them

emphasized the need of an open space to enhance human experience of self-respect and dignity. However, there were too many limitations in the understanding of both, as far as untouchability and its elimination were concerned. They have differences over the organising and correcting principles of society to assure human dignity. Ambedkar relied much on institutional mechanisms to protect and promote the interests of the untouchables, and did not fully appreciate the importance of changing the moral culture of the wider society. A profound cultural and moral change was needed in Hindu society in order to deal with the humiliation and privations of the untouchables. Since Gandhi saw this, he rightly concentrated on transforming Hinduism from within and Ambedkar was wrong to dismiss his work. Gandhi created among caste Hindus a deep sense of shame and guilt and awakened them to the egalitarian strand within their religion.[69] Despite their disagreements 'human dignity' was an important idea for them to deconstruct the inequality and ensure justice.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 295–314

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Reinterpreting Gandhi's Notion of "Dharma": An Entanglement of Duty, Religion, and Ethics

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ABSTRACT

The term 'dharma' is an enigmatic term. It is one of the purusârthas of Hindu tradition. Scholars belonging to classical age have described 'dharma' variously: faith in God(s), recognition of the quality of an object, and understanding the laws of the cosmos. These descriptions are found in classical manuscripts such as Mahâbhârata, Râmâyana, Bhagavad-Gita, Upanishads, Vedas, and Manusmruti. But there has been a gradual change in the interpretation of 'dharma' with time. In modern times, 'dharma' is interpreted as 'duty', 'ethics', and 'religion'. This paper examines the modern interpretations of 'dharma' from the Gandhian perspective and critically evaluates Gandhi's view on 'dharma' in relation to purusârthas. It discusses why 'dharma' must be given highest priority among the purusârthas. Finally, it attempts to answer how dharma is associated with duty, religion, and ethics.

Keywords: Duty, ethics, religion, purusârthas, dharma

THE TERM 'DHARMA' is enigmatic, not just for its ambivalence but also due to the many interpretations possible for it. 'Dharma is derived from the root 'dhº', which means 'to support or hold.'[1] A great deal of work on 'dharma' has been explored but Gandhi's view on 'dharma' remains unattended. Some of the primal questions pertaining to Gandhi's notion of dharma are: Is dharma an ontological or a normative principle? Does it exist independently of something or someone? Is dharma a component of human life? How to interpret 'dharma' from the modern perspective?

'Dharma' is widely acceptable to people both modern and ancient times. During India's classical age, 'dharma' was defined in terms of four subsidiary concepts: varnadharma, âshramadharma, sâmânyadharma, and svadharma.[2] Varna-dharma explains the duties of an individual in accordance with his/her clan. Âshrama-dharma expresses about the stages of life of an individual, and offers guidelines on performing one's duties aimed at personal development, societal assistance and overall prosperity. Sâmânyadharma elucidates the duties of an individual towards society. By performing sâmânyadharma, one contributes towards preserving a self-sustaining society. Svadharma guides individuals to perform their duties in accordance with time and situation. It has been believed that one cannot evade dharma in life. Dharma, therefore, associates with a person's life eternally.

In the classical age, dharma was also understood as having faith in God(s), recognizing the quality of an object, and understanding the laws of the cosmos. The schools of Nyâya, Sânkhya, Buddhism, and Vaisesika describe dharma as quality of a substance.'[3] They postulate that quality cannot exist without substance and thus requires a support for its subsistence. Quality is of two types — essential and accidental. Essential qualities inhere in the substance eternally, whereas accidental qualities don't. Essential qualities of an object are observed as the common features of individual objects belonging to a class, e.g., appleness of an apple, horseness of a horse, etc. Accidental qualities are associated with individual objects and vary from object to object belonging to the same class, e.g., colour of an apple, height of a horse, etc. Quality exists irrespective of human existence, as it subsists in the objects and their particles.

Dharma is also interpreted as, 'having faith in God(s),' which implies a trust on an eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and Supreme Being. The Supreme Being may be referred to as spirit, force, or God. A person who rigorously adheres to the performance of prescribed rituals can be called a dharmi. The understanding of the laws of cosmos (^{o}ta) is also attributed to dharma. ^{o}ta represents principles that are invariant in time, and applicable to all cultures and traditions. ^{a}ta includes basic cosmic principles, such as: "water flows down," "fire burns objects," "human beings think," "ice is cold," "death follows birth" etc.[4] Mahâbhârata treats dharma as a cosmic law, as seen in the debates between Arjuna and Lord Krishna.[5] Upanishads describe dharma as a quality of an object[6] and faith in the almighty.[7] Râmâyana endorses the perception of dharma being faith in God(s).[8] Manusmruti classifies dharma into pravrutti and nivrutti.[9] An action performed to fulfil a desire is called pravrutti, and an action performed without desire is called nivrutti. Nirvrutti is understood as emancipation from

worldly bondages on realization of God.

In modern times, unlike the classical age, 'dharma' is not just associated with social forms of human life but also with human values. A question arises, are these classical interpretations of dharma still valid or modern connotations must be appended to the existing classical interpretations? In this context, Gandhi's notion of 'dharma' plays a vital role in interpreting it and comprehending its complexities. According to Gandhi, 'dharma' means duty, ethics, and religion.[10] This is treated as the modern interpretation of dharma.

Dharma and Its Modern Interpretations

In Hinduism, all aspects of human life are bound by dharma. In the Vedic age, precedence was given to dharma over morality, because of the belief that morality springs from dharma. But in modern times, 'dharma' is treated as a dynamic force of life, because liberalism, secularism, and globalization are believed to be the principal adherents of human life. Dharma can be viewed as the code of law or the world order (°ta), that binds us to live together in a society and brings peace, happiness, and harmony in life. Thus, it is stated that universal peace and harmony are the outcomes of dharma. Hence, 'dharma' can be considered consisting of three elements; the ideas of uniformity, spirituality, and truth of life. 'Dharma' transforms human beings into "humane beings."

From an ethical perspective, it is stated that one cannot discard dharma from his/her life because dharma is perceived as the payment of an individual's debt to society. The underpinning reality behind this notion is that social order must be maintained through human efforts. Thus, performing dharma signifies an individual's contributions to the sustenance of social order.

Dharma guides us to be righteous. Activities with adherence to moral or social laws, or both are treated as dharma. In Indic civilization, the words dharma and Kâma occupy special status. Kâma provides the material foundation whereas dharma provides the form for human life.[11] An authentic human action must have both form and matter. These two components of human life constitute the world of experiences. Thus, essentially, dharma is about human activities relating to the aspiration of material and spiritual life.

In Indian Philosophy, 'dharma' has two referential meanings – metaphysical and moral. Metaphysical meaning emphasizes the governing spirit of dharma that is characteristic of the universe. The entire universe is a living body of which, dharma is the soul.[12] But in the latter case, dharma emphasizes the governing principle of intelligence, the sovereign law, and the principal form of eternal

justice. In this context, the highest compliment that one can pay to an individual is to say that he is a man of dharma.

The significance of dharma can be read from Dharmasâstra (the science of dharma). According to Dharmasâstra, the life span of a person is not only defined from the perspective of him/her being an individual and social being, but also characterized by his/her relation to fellow beings, rest of creation and cosmos itself.[13] Dharma advocates duties of human beings. It gives emphasis to duties than rights of a person. It is so because duty must be performed in such a manner that it causes no harm to others. By implication, everyone will do their duties and in the process they will get their rights, as there won't be any individual to snatch others' rights. The best performance of dharma brings universal peace and harmony to the society and transformation within an individual. Does Gandhi subscribe to this view? According to Gandhi, dharma means a conglomeration of duty, religion, and ethics. It is the essence of his teachings and approach to life. The paper elucidates this approach in the following passages.

Dharma as Duty

Gandhi identifies dharma as duty. Performance of the duties of an individual in a society helps the society to become self-sufficient and stable. Duties of an individual contribute not only to the growth and prosperity of the society but also assist in maintaining social order. It brings justice and peace to society. Gandhi explained 'duty' by referring to the notion of "varnadharma". He said, "all the four varnas (Brâhmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra) are equal in dignity,"[14] as they are caused by three gunas; sattva, rajas, and tamas. These three gunas prevail among humans in different forms. Rajas guna induces human beings to engage in actions. Sattva guna prevails in those who practice truth, wisdom, beauty, and goodness. Tamas guna characterizes individuals as torpid, stupid, dull, and sad. Since human beings are bound by gunas, they develop a natural tendency to do a particular duty/occupation.

By considering 'morality' as a source of action amongst people, Gandhi said that "if four varnas are members of one body, then how can one be superior or inferior to another?."[15] "No society could survive; much less prosper, unless there is a division of labour as well as harmony between the functional units of labour."[16] In this context, varnadharma is observed as parts of the body. The reason being pain or pleasure caused by a particular part is experienced by the entire body. This suggests that if a body is to be remained fit, all of its parts must function well and contribute to growth and stability.

Similarly, for the growth and stability of a society, varnas should do their duties religiously, righteously, sancrosantly, and timely. Ambedkar[17] said that this message diffuses the principle of graded inequality among the four classes. As a consequence, egalitarian ethics prevails in society.

On the question what sort of dharma we can adhere to if we don't accept varnadharma, Gandhi suggested "sâdhâranadharma" of Manusmruti, is an alternative to varnadharma.[18] Sâdhâranadharma embraces duties, such as ahimsa, satya, asteya, and aparigraha. These duties are to be performed by each and every individual regardless of his/her caste.

In his book *Caste Has to Go (1935)*, Gandhi stated that the classic scriptures must be interpreted as per the needs of the society. Even the accepted shâstras of the past cannot be accepted, if it contradicts the present. Thus, one should be a part of the changing society and contribute to its growth and progress. He recommended equality among varnas, as practiced in the Sabarmati Ashram, for caste free society. His view was to have one dharma in every âshrama, i.e., sannyâsa (an ascetic life). Members of the âshrama should perform multiple tasks irrespective of their caste. This would convey the message that "civic nationalism replaces casteism."[19] Dr. S. Radhakrishnan also supported this view by stating that caste should not be decided on birth and heredity, rather on temperament and vocation.[20]

According to Gandhi, dharma should be understood as the 'quality of soul.' This understanding will assist individuals to realize two primary things about their life. First, "what are their fundamental duties" and second, "how should they put up with others?"[21] The former hints at preserving one's traditions and customs while the latter deals with intelligence and will of a person. We may call the former as 'positive' and the latter as 'natural' dharma.[22] The 'positive dharma' deals with actions that are judged as good. According to Gandhi, positive dharma is a consequence of natural dharma which is reposed in the soul. Natural dharma *(buddhi),* on the other hand, is the ability to distinguish right from wrong.[23] Exercising dharmas would help an individual to lead a moral, peaceful, and non-violent life.

Performing dharma implies carrying out one's duties. Duties and rights form a knot. Individuals must, therefore, do their duties in consonance with their rights. Thus, it is stated that "without rights supplementing dharma suggests civilized life becomes virtually impossible in the modern world."[24]

Satyagraha: An Approach to Secure One's Rights

According to Gandhi, "Satyagraha is a way of defending human rights by soul-force, not by brute-force."[25] Soul-force involves sacrifice of one's self whereas brute-force is the use of violence by exercising State's laws and orders. 'Satyagraha' is also understood as 'conflict resolution.' It resolves conflicts by non-violence without compromising the fundamental rights of an individual. According to Gandhi, satyagraha is a method of securing rights by personal suffering.[26]

The concept of 'rights' can be linked to 'natural dharma,' where intelligence *(buddhi)* is treated as a practical element. For Gandhi, conflicts have to be resolved not through violence but through dharma (duties). In his words, "conflicts have to be sorted out non-violently, not because it is expedient to do so, not because the state exists, but because it is a requirement of dharma."[27] Just as an individual has a duty to not lie, cheat, and involve in violence, (s)he has the rights not to be physically assaulted, cheated, lied to and so on. If necessary, the State should protect one's rights as (s)he is a member of the State. In this regard, Gandhi said that when one performs his/her duties (dharma), rights would follow subsequently, as spring follows winter.[28]

Weil, an admirer of Gandhi's satyagraha stated that "a right is not effectual by itself, but only in relation to the duties to which it corresponds."[29] Further, she expressed that "a genuine moral duty originates in the soul. It can't originate in any convention, as conventions are liable to be altered according to the party wishes and desires. But a moral duty is an eternal one."[30] Thus, in Gandhi's view, unlike Vedic age, modern world treats 'dharma' as an amalgam of duties, rights, and equality.[31]

Dharma as Religion

According to Gandhi, the concept of 'dharma' should embrace all religions, not just Hinduism. He writes,

> Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and whichever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself.[32]

Gandhi's notion of religion was popularized largely through the works of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.[33] Dr. Radhakrishnan invited him to contribute a chapter for his book *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*. Gandhi was reluctant at first, claiming his incompetence in philosophy. After much persuasion, he answered the following questions,

i) What is your religion?
ii) How are you led to it?
iii) What is its bearing on social life?[34]

Gandhi's answers to these questions are summarized below.

Gandhi said that religion was the 'religion of humanity.' To the second question, he conveyed that 'truth is god' is the best methodology to adapt religion. To the last question, he conferred that 'service to mankind is service to god' and it helps to attain the 'truth.' Thus, for Gandhi, "non-violent action was the only test for truth."[35] In short, to love each other is the best practice of religion.

Gandhi's notion of 'religion' can be listed in the following four points.

i) Religion transforms human beings into "humane beings."
ii) It binds human beings to truth.
iii) It purifies the individual's mind and soul.
iv) It links the human soul to the Supreme soul.

Gandhi made a distinction between 'religion as an idea' and 'religion as an institution.'[36] 'Religion as an institution' relates to one's own religion, e.g., Hinduism, Christianity, Muslim, Buddhism, etc., whereas 'religion as an idea' transcends this notion and encompasses a social phenomenon within its ambit.

'Religion as an idea' helps individuals to realize the true nature of the 'soul.' This is known as 'self-realization' or 'self-transformation'. It brings change in persons' mind. It binds human beings as a pearl garland wherein truth reveals from within. Here 'truth' signifies 'eternal truth' and possesses 'self-subsistent' feature. To realize the 'truth,' one must purify his/her heart and mind. And this is possible through psychological and spiritual process. Awareness of one's own soul implies realization of God, and this leads to understanding the 'truth,' which is self-subsistent and eternal. Thus for Gandhi, truth is God and God is truth. For him, religion should be an idea and not an institution.[37] As an institution, it would have its own limitations, as we find in Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, etc. He thus believed that the sâmânyadharma— a dharma for all, is the one and only religion.

Gandhi's interest on Hinduism as an institutional religion is two fold. First, "he wanted to see to what extent Hinduism had realized the idea of religion and contributed to the attainment of the ultimate

end of all religions, viz., moksa. Second, he wanted to know "to what extent institutional Hinduism had become an obstacle to the realization of the idea of religion."[38] According to Gandhi, all institutional religions are 'divinely inspired.' Human minds created a space for institutional religion and thereby allowed modifications and alteration as per the evolvement of time. This confirms and reconfirms the imperfections of institutional religion. Removing the imperfections in Hinduism was one of his major goals. His attitude towards Hinduism is reflected in his letters to Rajchandbhai,[39] where he asked twenty-seven questions relating to Moksa, Vedas, and the nature of God. He referred to these questions, all his life. He believed that 'Hindu dharma' is a sanâtana dharma, which tries to understand the true nature of 'soul' and its relationship with God.

On the debate on whether Gandhi is to be considered as secular or communal, it is observed that, for him, secularism did not only mean having faith in religions besides your own, but also rendering service to all. He said, one could very well interpret religion as an inner movement that originates in the soul and guides the soul to do the righteous activities by conforming to the societal norms and principles. Further, one could achieve the temperance and prudence of virtues if (s)he adheres to the duties (dharmas) that are aimed at public welfare. In the process (s)he can understand the true nature of soul, and realize God's wish to create this vast universe. On his view, the ethical rules and regulations of a society should not be based on any particular religious belief. There should be some common consensus among people of all religions on what constitutes the duties of an individual. This explanation clarifies his stand as an adherent to secularism.[40] He stated that "we needlessly divide life into watertight compartments, religious and other, whereas if a man has true religion in him, it must show in every detail of life."[41] We, the Hindus, Muslims, and belonging to other religious groups, see God through our own eyes and interpret Him by our own language, which purports to claim as different Gods, but in reality we fail to notice that it is our lacuna to see God through others' eyes and languages.

Gandhi suggested that everyone should try to understand religion as 'an idea' to gain the virtues that help human beings attain holiness in their lives. As a religious pluralist, Gandhi embraced all institutional religions wholeheartedly on the noble understanding that all religions had their origin in divine revelation.[42] God revealed himself to the whole humanity. But human beings have little knowledge and capacity to understand the Supreme Reality in its entirety and use language and culture to understand Him. As a result, different institutional religions erupt. By quoting Rig Veda(I-164: 46), Gandhi said that "to

what is One, sages give many a title." But in reality, there is one and only one God, i.e. "Truth."

Gandhi assigned two values to the concept of religion: one must have reason(s) to tolerate other religions and one must allow dialogues among people with different religious beliefs. Having a dialogue with people of other religious beliefs does not impede presentation of one's ideas to others, rather it discourages hate and suppression.[43] Gandhi opined that "the outcome of dialogue would enable an orthodox Hindu to remain what he was, and yet to respect on orthodox Muslim for what he was."[44] By considering dharma as an inclusive religion, he, believed that "dharma should enable its followers not merely to respect other religions but also to admire and assimilate whatever is good in them."[45]

Dharma as Ethics

Gandhi also interpreted dharma as ethics. Quoting Gandhi, "as there can't be an ideal higher than truth similarly there can't be any duty higher than non-violence."[46] Ethics of non-violence was the primal principle of Gandhi's life, which he followed incessantly through his actions, speeches, and writings. 'Non-violence' as an ideal is intrinsically and extrinsically good. Intrinsicality suggests inner goodness, i.e., good in itself. It encompasses moral virtues like, truth, courage, celibacy, absence of greed, prudence, temperance, justice, etc. Extrinsically good 'non-violence' implies derivation of truth from each and every aspect of an individual's life irrespective of his or her religion. Gandhi said that non-violence (ahimsâ) may be deduced from 'truth' or may be paired with 'truth.' "Truth and ahimsâ are one and the same thing……Truth is the end, ahimsâ is the means thereto."[47] "Truth is the ultimate criterion of judging whether non-violence is the right ethics for a given context."[48]

In Gandhi's view, "most instances of human violence arose from disputes on what was 'mine'."[49] Thus, one should listen to his/her 'soul' before acting on anything. To maintain peace and harmony within himself/herself, one must adopt and practice universal dharma, i.e., svadharma. Svadharma suggests that one must act in conformity with what is desired in a given situation.

The idea of 'non-violence' can be conceived in two forms.

i) Non-violence as creed
ii) Non-violence as policy

Non-violence as creed, reduces and controls violence through peace. It is regarded as heroic non-violence because it demands sacrifice and benevolence in individuals. Non-violence as policy is treated as 'civic non-violence,' i.e., violence controlled through legal

force where State jurisprudence is allowed to take necessary actions to curb violence. There may be a case where a government authority can depute military forces to stop the violence, and thereby protect public goods from damages and destruction. Ultimately, human welfare must be considered, and this should be the basic criterion of non-violence.

Gandhi enunciated that each and every family must practice 'non-violence' for the betterment of society, as it is the basic constituent of a society. Members of a family should stand as exemplary practitioners of non-violence for others. Lessons like unconditional love, patience, forgiveness, guidance, etc. must be learnt by a family as these virtues are the elements of non-violence practice. Gandhi says, "I am aware of the fact that tensions and conflicts erupt in the family life, and I also know how to resolve these issues in a non-violent way. The process of learning these techniques in some extent helps me to practice non-violence in my life."[50]

Gandhi tried to inculcate non-violence practices among Hindus and Muslims in India, but admitted that he had succeeded much to his disappointment. In 1930, he stopped supporting the writing campaign of 'vande mâtaram' as it was opposed by Muslims.[51] He tried to preach a mantra (slogan) among them, i.e., sarva dharma samabhâvana (the equal respect for all religions).[52] He tried to bring peace between the Hindus and Muslims through heroic non-violence, but not through civic non-violence. He said, "There never can be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any, there is something wrong with one's religion, i.e. one's morals. True religion means good thought and good conduct."[53]

'Dharma' for Gandhi is nothing but an amalgam of duty, ethics, and religion. An individual must understand his/her duties, social obligations, and religion to lead a peaceful life. Further, one must perform his/her duties while living in a society, and judge which actions must be performed and which not. In addition to these, one must learn to respect religions besides his/her own religion, and shouldn't disrespect others' ideas and principles in his/her life endeavour.

Human beings' actions allure the notion of purusârthas. Purusârthas explain the nature and types of action that one should adhere to while living in a society. The notion of purusârthas is to be conceded as the source for modern interpretations of dharma. It is important to discuss here Gandhi's interpretations of dharma in relation to purusârthas. Before entering into this discussion let us succinctly depict the historical developments of 'purusârthas.'

A Concise Historical View of Purusârthas

Dharma, artha, kâma, and moksha are the four purusârthas accepted by Hindus of all ages.[54] In Hinduism, 'kâma' is interpreted as desire, 'artha' as money, 'dharma' as faith in god(s), and 'moksha' as emancipation from worldly miseries. Most authorities on the history of Hinduism seem to agree that the purusârthas are distinctive categories of Hinduism and a person who pursues these goals is a Hindu.[55] The nature of each purusârtha is unique and distinct from others, however they form a knot. The knot is the result of the ways of approach to life by human beings.

In Hinduism, purusârthas or "aims/goals of humanity" are said to be the unifying and fundamental principles of Hindu identity. In the classical age, dharma, artha, and kâma comprised purusârthas. Compositions of these three purusârthas were named as 'trivarga.'[56] At a later period, 'moksa' was added, and it was renamed as 'chaturvarga.'[57] The chaturvarga provides the impetus for the actions of Hindus. In this context, Arvind Sharma[58] stated that chaturvarga guides a Hindu how to lead his/her life. According to Davis, the chaturvarga, "deeply influences the personal and social history of Hindus and Hinduism…….Its structure…….reflect what Hindus understand to be the essence of Hinduism."[59] Biardeau stated that "the purusârthas, beyond being mere philosophical categories, are embedded in the social structure and culture of Hindu society."[60]

Gandhi's Notion of Dharma in Reference to Purusârthas

Gandhi has discussed purusârthas in his works[61] and followed the noble ideas of purusârthas in his life. Although many scholars have examined Gandhi's works from various perspectives, little work have been hitherto done on Gandhi's view about purusârthas.

Gandhi had dreamt of a modern India, free from poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, toil-treatment of women, caste practices, religious groups, etc. This notion was enshrined in his work 'sarvodaya,' where he stated that everyone should believe in the concept of 'oneness of all.'[62] It postulates that unity is strength, and feeling of oneness induces a person to adopt community-centric services rather than work that helps the individual alone.

In *Hind Swaraj,* Gandhi suggested that every individual should contribute to the larger benefit of Indians. To unite all Indians against the British, he advised that we must perform our duties and that must be our dharma. So dharma is to be practiced on a regular basis. Here, 'dharma' embraces two modern interpretations; faith in God(s), and practice of non-violence. Dharma, is not limited to religious faith. It encompasses norms and guidelines of the society. It regulates human

behaviour, controls counter-productive activities, and maintains sanctity through morality in the society.

According to Krishna (1996), Gandhi iterated that purusârthas are indeed the four goals of humans' life. Balasubramania also echoed the notion by stating that "purusârthas connote the aims and purposes of life" (Balasubramania Iyer, 1969, p. 6). Focusing on 'dharma' as a purusârtha, along with Nagaraja Rao (1970: 2), Iyer further conveyed that "eat, sleep, fear, and copulation, these are common to men with animals. What is more in men is dharma. Devoid of dharma they become equal to animals" (Balasubramania Iyer, 1969, p. 6).

Gandhi said that the actions (dharmas) of human beings are either deliberate or accidental. In case of deliberate actions, purusârthas play a pivotal role. In this context, Hiriyanna (1952) said that "human beings can consciously set actions before themselves and work for them. It is this conscious pursuit that transforms them into beholders of purusârthas"(p.65). Further, Hiriyanna remarked that "a purusârtha as an end which is consciously sought to be accomplished whether for its own sake or for the sake of utilizing it as a means to the accomplishment of a further end" (Hiriyanna, 1952, p. 66). Balasubramania Iyer (1969) in translating a verse from the Mahâbhârata wrote, "as regards to purusârthas, what is found here may be elsewhere but what is not here will not be found elsewhere" (p. 7).

According to Gandhi, the purusârthas depict the goals of human life which human beings pursue and ought to pursue in a social world. In his view, practicing purusârthas assist individuals to grow in personal and social fronts.[63] It regulates societal affairs and guides individuals to do the desired, required, and demanded tasks of social concerns. It further offers the moral and spiritual guidance to human beings. In these ways, purusârthas are socio-politically associated with human beings' life.

Gandhi's Remarks on the Relationship of Purusârthas

Gandhi opined that artha and kâma are secular values whereas dharma and moksa are spiritual values.[64] Dharma is also regarded as an intrinsic value, whereas kâma and artha are extrinsic values of human life.[65] Prasad (1981) stated that dharma is the regulator because any kâma is permissible or considered to be worthy should not conflict with dharma. In the Manusmruti (V.56), it is mentioned that eating fish, consuming intoxicants and having sexual intercourse are not sinful in themselves as all human beings are naturally inclined to these activities. "But abstention from these lead to great rewards."[66] The abstention is in itself, a dharma. According to Gandhi, this is

called celibacy — a societal virtue that everyone should practice. Thus, dharma occupies an apex position in relation to kâma. Gandhi remarked that kâma is subject to dharma.[67] Otherwise, the whole society will lose the charm and beauty of life. Life cannot be cherished from the aspiration for moksa. Hence one should understand and perform the duties from an utiliteriastic standpoint.

Artha is a necessary condition for the acquisition of kâma. Artha implies acquisition of wealth for our livelihood and material comforts. In this regard, Sharma said that "there is no sin in the acquisition of wealth nor is there only virtue in poverty."[68] It is virtually impossible to accumulate artha without dharma. Nagaraja Rao said, "dharma is earned by artha and by dharma artha is earned."[69]

For Gandhi, purusârthas can be paired as, artha and dharma; kâma and moksa. The former is considered as means and the latter as their ends. For example, the source of 'moksa' is dharma, but not vice versa. One can perform certain dharmas without obtaining moksa, e.g., tapa, japa, etc. But without dharma one can't attain moksa. A question arises, what should be the order of purusârthas? Balasubramania Iyer stated that artha enables human beings to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of life. Thus, it is to be placed before kâma. Dharma is the legitimate source of artha and kâma. Thus, dharma must be given priority over artha and kâma in a sequential order.

Is Dharma Highest of Purusârthas?

According to Gandhi, "dharma yields both artha and kâma, so why is that dharma not observed?"[70] Dharma can be practiced in many ways. Either as an end in itself at the expense of artha and kâma, or as productive of artha and kâma, or as to elevate their pursuits, and finally may be to regulate them.[71] In the Mahâbhârata, it is stated that "it is from dharma that artha and kâma result; why then dharma not followed?"[72] "It is also found by our experiences towards the worldly affairs that dharma, artha, and kâma are attained as the fruit of the pursuit of dharma alone."[73] Thus, dharma is placed in the apex in relation to artha and kâma, as they are its followers or subordinates.[74] Manusmruti states that "we should avoid the acquisition of wealth and the gratification of desire if they are opposed to dharma."[75] So, human beings should earn their livelihood only by performing certain actions which are not reprehensible and not opposed to dharma.

Dharma besides being credited with the role of determining which kâma is worth pursuing, is also considered to be a necessary condition for any successful pursuit of artha and kâma.[76] It brings social stability

and harmony in the society. Thus, it is considered to be a necessary condition for artha and kâma. Pursuit of dharma implies the pursuit of artha and kâma. Dharma is, thus, said to be a higher purusârtha than artha and kâma. Moreover, dharma, artha, and kâma form a trio, which not only guides human beings on how to lead the best life but also encourages them to do humane activities. Thus, to arrange purusârthas in a chronological order, one can place dharma first, then artha and, subsequently kâma. In this regard, Prasad said that "dharma is to regulate the pursuits of artha and kâma means that the individual, the society, and the State, all are to be governed by dharma, i.e., all pursuits of man in his/her individual, social, political, or non-religious spheres should be in accordance with the laws of dharma."[77]

Besides social goals, human beings aspire to lead a peaceful life. For this, one must aspire for moksa. In this regard, Hiriyanna said that "kâma and artha are implicitly ranked as lower ends while dharma and moksa are ranked as higher ends."

We have already asserted that dharma is the highest purusârtha of trivarga. The question rises here is: in our consideration of chaturvarga, where should we place moksa?

Is Moksa Superior to Dharma?

Moksa is considered a spiritual goal of human life. Attainment of moksa implies liberation from worldly sufferings. It is thus the highest achievement in life. Kane states that "moksa is a way opposed to the first three purusârthas, but the first three purusârthas enable a person to attain moksa. It was not meant for everybody but only for a selected few, those who are capable to attain moksa."[78]

Is moksa considered to be a purusârtha in the metaphysical sense? Mimânsikas rejected the inclusion of moksa as a purusârtha because they viewed moksa as the attainment of svarga or heaven, rather than liberation from sansâra (worldly attachments).[79] Advaita Vedântins were also reluctant to accept moksa as a purusârtha. They argued that "moksa is something that already exists but has somehow been obscured. So achieving moksa would mean accomplishing the accomplished."[80] A most refined and significant sentiment was shared by Gandhi on this topic. He believed that moksa is a spiritual goal of human life. But to attain moksa one must practice dharmas, either svadharma, or sâmânyadharma, or âshramdharma, or all three dharmas together. He also viewed that human beings cannot distinct

themselves from other creatures, if they don't aspire for moksa. So, human beings must adhere to their dharmas. Without dharma moksa can't be obtained.

Moksa is of two types.[81]

i) Jivanmukti (liberation obtained from earthly life)
ii) Videhamukti (liberation attained once body dies)

Gandhi emphasized the former rather than the latter. The reason is that even though one may attain moksa after his/her death, that attainment is neither realizable nor cherishable. The concept of pleasure and pain will not be associated with it. Again, the concept of satisfaction will not be attached to it. So, desire for moksa should be initiated and processed when a person is alive and active.

Moksa is not functional,[82] but dharma is functional.[83] Moksa stands for a personalistic or individualistic value whereas dharma stands for a universal value. Unlike moksa, dharma is associated with all categories and sections of people. Human beings perform dharmas to attain moksa. Thus, for attaining moksa one cannot evade dharma. This is so because dharma is the means to obtain the moksa. If there are no means then how can one achieve the end, i.e., moksa? Gandhi also echoed the idea in his work on 'means and ends.' He subscribed to the view that means is important to obtain a desired end. If means are pure and good, ends are bound to be pure and good. The purity lies in 'the means' when they are 'true' in character. Here, the term 'true' does not mean 'contrast to false.' Rather, it embraces moral and social virtues, such as; purity in heart, temperance, prudence, justice, courage, empathy, etc.

Moksa cannot be claimed as a moral goal because it is rude to say that a person who is not interested in seeking moksa is not interested in leading a moral life, or one who is not a mukta (liberated) is not a fully moral person.[84] Moral, immoral, and amoral actions associate with dharma, but not with moksa. Dharma is seen as instrumental to moksa.[85] On Mahadevan's words, "dharma is the gateway to moksa."[86]

According to Koller, "Dharma is the most important component of the purusârthas. Without it, the other goals are not realizable. It is regarded as superior to other purusârthas because unless one acts according to the moral rules governing him/her and the universe, (s)he cannot attain moksa."[87] In this sense, dharma is judged as the highest purusârtha of life. Further Koller said, "Unless everything that is done is done according to the proper rules (dharmas) it all comes to naught."[88] The Vaisesikas in the Vaisesika Sutra[89] also mentioned that "dharma is claimed to be a means for the acquisition of prosperity (artha) and salvation (moksa)." In Prasad's view, dharma is claimed to be the desirable objective of a well-balanced personality.[90]

If there is no dharma, the question of moksa does not arise. From these discussions, it is observed that, a person may not experience moksa but cannot avoid dharma. Thus, it is asserted that dharma plays a pivotal role to obtain moksa. Hence dharma stands taller than moksa.

Conclusion

Gandhi's notion of 'dharma' is promulgated through the concept of 'oneness of all.' In his words, "none can be born untouchable, as we spark of the same fire."[91] Thus, 'dharma' for him is one that is conducive to the integration of the society. This notion binds people together. Hence, 'oneness of all' is a conspicuous phenomenon to all. The concept of 'oneness of all' can be maintained and protected by practicing moral laws.[92] According to Gandhi, a law-abiding citizen should accept the relation between one's nature and one's social role to maintain the peace and harmony in the society.[93] In addition to this, Gandhi held that cultural unity, uniformity, and homogeneity are the essential conditions among others to practice dharma to bring social solidarity and stability.[94]

In Gandhi's view, dharma should be observed as a functional goal of human life. Although everyone must adhere to his/her dharma, to hold on to dharma, one must understand the stages of life and the expectations of a society. Thus, "Dharma of a person is linked to the performance rendered by him/her which have been socially allotted to him/her."[95] Here, it may be stated that a good man is good on the account of good performance performed by him/her for his/her assigned roles.

Gandhi's interpretations of dharma, highlights the duties and rights of an individual. However, classical interpretations of dharma only explain the duties of an individual in relation to the stages of life. In other words, modern interpretations of dharma suggest that it is an obligation for human beings to perform their duties while enjoying their rights, and by not doing their duties invite legal and moral punishments. On the other hand, classical interpretations of dharma talk of the natural duties of human beings. It suggests that individuals must perform their duties in accordance to the stages of life. Failure to do so will be judged as unethical actions and for that the Supreme Reality (God) will sanction punishments. Thus, dharma is invariably and inalienably associated with human life. It is a basic principle of human life and starts when the human being is born. Dharma thus implies subsistence of human life, and therefore an integral part of human life.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 315–332

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Clothing Choices in Gandhi's Non-verbal Communication

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ABSTRACT

This second of the two articles on the Swadeshi Movement brings into relief its symbolic impact with the help of a few theories from the vast field of non-verbal communication. As a result, Gandhi's rare ability to invest clothing-related objects and events with extraordinary socio-political significance is amply demonstrated.

Keywords: Mahatma Gandhi, swadeshi, clothing, khadi, non-verbal communication, body language

The man who is prepared to sacrifice his body for any cause is bound to have power in his words and greater power still in his thoughts. Speech is only a means of the expression of thought. Man cannot put all his thoughts in words. Thought is a veritable ocean.[1]

M. K. Gandhi

IN TWO ARTICLES[2] previously published in *Gandhi Marg*, we presented historical details of Gandhi's clothes and clothing choices for personal integrity and for socio-political liberation through the *Swadeshi* Movement.[3] In this article, we will interpret those same choices through the lens of sartorial communication which lies within the wider field of Non-verbal Communication Theory.[4] It includes sub-theories ranging from those of body language and semiotics to those of human interaction through space, time and material things.

A Brief History of Non-verbal Communication

Academic interest in Non-verbal Communication Theory dates back

to ancient times, from Aristotle in the west to Confucius and Indian philosophers in the East. While the East adopted a holistic approach to defining human sciences, the West advocated that reason alone could be the key to understanding and interpreting the conundrum of human existence. For instance, Aristotle's reflection on human behaviour and animal passions led him to define the human being as a 'rational animal.' According to him, our animality is distinct in nature from our rationality, although they are inseparable in forging a common human identity. Though distinct, our ability to reason is nevertheless intimately linked to the spatio-temporal world. The connection is effected through our senses by which we are able to encounter material elements such as earth, water, fire and air. But contacts with sensory inputs have emphasised the need for a higher, abstract and spiritual end. From this basic perspective, anthropological and epistemological models favouring rational discourse over human corporality have emerged.[5]

Descartes takes this intellectual emphasis further, when he introduces the dichotomy between mind and body, 'thought' and 'existence' through his famous dictum: "I think, therefore I am." He perceives his body through the use of the senses; however, these have previously been proven unreliable. Therefore, Descartes concludes that the only indubitable knowledge he has is that he is a *thinking thing*. Thinking is the essence of being human – the only thing about the human that is beyond doubt. This overwhelming attention to the rational led to its consequence: the emphasis on 'words.' Verbal discourse, reading and writing were given a considerable boost, especially with the invention of the printing press in the sixteenth century. Western thinkers developed an interest in literacy which bordered fundamentally on communication that was orderly, rational, linear, verbal and numerical. It helped to make knowledge visible, retrievable and analytical, thus opening up new avenues of innovation, mathematics, science and exploration beyond the seas.[6]

The Aristotle-Descartes intellectual influence was to undergo further change with the arrival of other thinkers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Charles Darwin (1809-1882), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Albert Einstein (1879-1955). They ushered in newer perceptions on the human being that drew attention to non-verbal issues. Darwin's theory of evolution suggested that the human emotional expression had its roots in animal survival. Freud examined the human unconscious and suggested that verbal statements could well be rationalisations (or unconscious justifications of behaviour) – not merely rational expressions (of conscious

thoughts). Einstein's theories still continue to shape our notions of time, space, matter, energy, and information that have far surpassed the Aristotelian conception of a static world. More than ever before, knowledge has become so vast, diverse and complex that scientific specialisations are absolutely necessary. The *communication* of knowledge has become a highly specialized area of study since the 1950s. With the arrival of sophisticated communication technology, like film, television and video recording, some scholars began to make 'non-verbal communication' the focus of their research. Today, much of non-verbal communication analysis has been used to mutually enrich the sciences of psychology, sociology and culture.

A Definition of Non-verbal Communication

The phrase 'non-verbal communication' first appeared as the title of a book in 1956 by two researchers, Ruesch and Kees. They outlined what they considered to be the primary elements in the new study.

> In broad terms, non-verbal forms of codification fall into three distinct categories:
> *Sign Language* includes all those forms of codification in which words numbers and punctuation signs have been supplanted by gestures: these vary from the "monosyllabic" gesture of the hitchhiker to such complete systems as the language of the deaf.
> *Action Language* embraces all movements that are not used exclusively as signals. Such acts as walking and drinking, for example, have a dual function: on one hand they serve personal needs, and on the other they constitute statements to those who may perceive them.
> *Object Language* comprises all intentional and non-intentional display of material things, such as implements, machines, art objects, architectural structures, and – last but not the least – the human body and whatever clothes or covers it. The embodiment of letters as they occur in books and on signs has a material substance, and this aspect of words also has to be considered as object language.[7]

The phrase 'non-verbal communication' is not appreciated by some scholars as they think it sounds like a residual category, something left over from verbal communication. It betrays the ancient Aristotelian two-valued logic that emphasizes the mind-body dichotomy – rejected by many scholars today. The dualism that is inherent in the definition makes research difficult for those who are interested precisely in the integration of word and gesture as two forms of a single mode of holistic self-expression.

Non-verbal Dimensions of Communication

In spite of the objections to the term "non-verbal", the alternatives available – like "body language", "kinesics", "signs", and so on, are too narrow. For want of an adequate substitute, the title, "non-verbal communication" has become the familiar label to describe all non-word events of informational value. One coherent way to identify the appropriateness of the designation is to examine the volume of research done and to look at the common points of focus.[8] They may be divided into areas of non-verbal communication as indicated in the table below.[9] We present an abbreviated list solely to highlight the place of *clothing* within the vast range of non-verbal communication research.

FIELDS OF STUDY IN NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH	
1. Kinesics[10]	*Body motion*: general or specific gestures, movements of the body, limbs, hands, head, feet and legs, facial expressions, eye behaviour and posture.*Body acts*: emblems (e.g. the peace sign), illustrators (acts that accompany speech), affect displays (acts that are put on for social occasions, e.g. crying at a funeral), adaptors (habits that help us adapt to satisfy needs, e.g. knee jerk in moments of anxiety).
2. Physical Characteristics	Traits that remain relatively unchanged during interaction, such as: physique or body shape, general attractiveness, body or breath odours, height, weight, hair, and skin colour or tone.
3. Touch	Actual physical contact among persons such as: stroking, hitting, signs of greeting and farewell, holding, guiding another's movements, etc.
4. Paralanguage	Deals with *how* something is said and not what is said. Some components are: voice qualities (pitch, rhythm, tempo, articulation, resonance, etc.) and vocalizations (laughing, belching, sneezing,

	yawning, etc. and sounds such as: "uh-huh", "um")
5. Proxemics	Use of personal and social space in formal and informal settings, in conversational distance and its variations according to sex, status, roles, cultural orientation, etc.
6. Artifacts	The manipulation of objects in contact with interacting persons which may act as non-verbal stimuli, such as, ***clothing***, ornamentation, wigs, perfume, and beauty-aids.
7. Environment	That which surrounds the person such as, furniture, architectural style, interior decoration, lighting conditions, smells, colours, temperature, additional noises or music, etc.

The Complementary Nature of Verbal and Non-verbal Communication

To understand 'clothing' as a form of non-verbal communication in the *Swadeshi* Movement it would be helpful to look at the general contribution it has made to human communication in its complementarity with verbal communication.[11] Six different modes of complementarity can be cited.[12] Wherever possible, we shall cite examples from our historical studies of Gandhi's choice of clothing and the *swadeshi* campaign.

a. Repeating: Non-verbal communication repeats verbal behaviour. For instance, when asked for directions to the nearest train station, our words generally accompany the gesture of using the index finger to point in the indicated direction. The wearing of *khadi* by Congressmen during the Indian freedom struggle repeated and reinforced their speeches and writings on *swaraj*.

b. Contradicting: Non-verbal communication can contradict what is said verbally. Gandhi learned from experience that Western clothes worn by an Indian nationalist could be a jarring contradiction. Jinnah, however, preferred to live with the contradiction, using it simultaneously to appropriate the respect of the British in deliberate opposition to Gandhi's indigenized model of obtaining *swaraj*.

c. Substituting: Non-verbal behaviours can substitute verbal messages. Our joy or sorrow can render words unnecessary simply by the

expressions on our faces. During the period of non-cooperation, the simple donning of the Gandhi *topi*, without overt verbal expressions of allegiance to Gandhi's *Swadeshi* Movement, were enough to court penalties and arrests.

d. Complementing: Non-verbal behaviour can modify or elaborate verbal messages. Complementary functions of non-verbal communication serve to signal one's attitudes and intentions towards another person. While in jail in South Africa, during his first experiment with *satyagraha*, Gandhi prepared with his own hands a pair of sandals as a gift for General Smuts, the man responsible for his imprisonment.[13] The simplicity of the gift and the tenderness with which it was given proved a worthy complement to Gandhi's resolute fight for truth through *ahimsa*.

e. Accenting: Non-verbal behaviour may accentuate parts of the verbal message, just like italicized words serve to emphasize parts of a text. When complementing a person, the slight pressure one exerts in the handshake may convey the sincerity of the gesture or the closeness of the relationship. Gandhi's appearance in a loincloth accentuated unequivocally the importance he gave to the participation of the poor in the struggle for freedom.

f. Relating and Regulating: Non-verbal behaviour also regulates the flow of communication between interacting persons. For example, head nods, eye movements, shifts in position, can signal to the speaker the attitude of the listener to what is being said. Through eye-witness accounts of the civil disobedience campaign we have seen how *khadi*, despite being an exterior non-verbal sign of unity, played a salient role in building the spirit of camaraderie among participants such that villagers warmly welcomed *khadi*-clad volunteers at first sight, even though the latter were total strangers. However, once welcomed by them, the way the volunteers behaved (with respect to the high standard expected of Gandhi's sartorial choices) related and regulated the level of credibility in the eyes of their hosts.[14]

The Power of Non-verbal Communication Over Verbal Communication

Communication researchers hold that the impact of non-verbal behaviour in communication overwhelmingly surpasses that of verbal output. This is proved by researchers by counting the *quantity* of non-verbal communication in human interaction.

Ray Birdwhistell (1971), a noted authority in non-verbal communication provides these astonishing estimates that are the result of his experiments:

> The average person actually speaks words for a total of only 10 to 11 minutes daily – the standard spoken sentence taking only about 2.5 seconds […]. In a normal two person conversation, the verbal components

carry less than 35% of the social meaning of the situation; more than 65% is carried on the non-verbal band.[15]

This quantity of non-verbal communication can also be measured by counting the various systems human beings use, to define the complexity of culture. Edward Hall outlines ten separate kinds of human activity which he calls "primary message systems." They are: Interaction, Temporality, Association, Learning, Subsistence, Play, Bisexuality, Defence, Territoriality and Exploitation. Verbal communication through interaction forms only a part of one of the ten primary message systems.[16]

The research of Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees (1956) discusses seven different systems of human communication, of which, only two involve words: personal appearance and dress, gestures or deliberate movements, random action, traces of action, vocal sounds, spoken words, and written words.[17]

Albert Mehrabian (1971) arrived at two important conclusions after his research on the relationship between verbal and non-verbal messages in the expression of likes and dislikes among participants. Firstly, that there are basically three elements in any face-to-face communication: words, tone of voice and body language. According to Mehrabian, these *three elements* have different levels of significance in conveying the meaning of the message. Words account for 7%, tone of voice accounts for 38%, and body language accounts for 55% of the message. Secondly, for effective and meaningful communication these three elements in the same message need to be congruent. If incongruent, the conflicting channels can send cues in different directions. In such situations of ambiguity the listener is most likely to accept the dominant channels, which are the non-verbal channels (38 + 55 %), rather than the verbal channel (7%).[18] Thus body-language has a far greater impact than verbal language in nearly all instances of face-to-face communication whether interpersonally or in groups.

One may very well wonder if Gandhi's presence on the world's stage would have had the same impact if his communication strategy was limited solely to writings and speeches; or, if he would have come to mean anything to the masses in far-flung villages, if he had restricted his movements to cities and retained his 'English Gentleman' attire. Our data on the many changes he brought about in his clothing reveal that he was diligently alert to the indispensable role played by the body and the physical presence of the leader among his people in motivating and moulding public opinion. There is no doubt that the *Swadeshi* Movement became an effective vehicle of change, precisely because of its powerful *non-verbal thrust*: its visibility

through bodily gestures, its tangibility through physical presence and its congruency with the words that accompanied the action on behalf of millions across the subcontinent.

The Function of Clothes

The above presentation of the role and importance of non-verbal communication will serve as an essential backdrop to a more detailed analysis of the communicative properties of clothing. Non-verbal scholar, Mark Knapp, highlights the following functions of clothing: They are decoration, protection (both physical and psychological), sexual attraction, self-assertion, self-denial, concealment, group identification, and display of status or role.[19]

A comment on each of these functions is in order. Decoration or *adornment* of the body through clothing is a practice common throughout the history of humankind – in some cases, as for example in some tribes of Africa, the human skin is itself the surface for displaying insignia and art. Clothes also *protect* the naked body physically, from the vagaries of the weather or psychologically, from becoming the object of another's gaze. Thus, clothes perform a biological as well as a moral function. Clothes can also serve to *attract* attention, especially between the sexes, by limiting the amount of body-cover or by designing and using fabric to provoke seduction. Clothing can be used either to *assert* one's identity and belonging to a group, or to *deny* such belonging and identity. In certain cases, clothes can be used as masks behind which to *hide* one's true identity, enabling the wearer to have multiple 'personalities' adapted to multiple contexts. Clothing has almost always been used to define *group* identities. And within groups, clothing serves to demarcate *roles*, ranks and responsibilities. In most instances, clothing serves more than one of the above functions. For instance, a policeman's uniform may highlight his role, identify him as an official member of the security services and make him appear smart and sexually appealing.

The mixing of the various functions of clothing can be noticed in the complexity of sartorial choices made during the Indian freedom movement as well. Indians who dressed in European garments tried to assert their educational status, but were by that very fact, disassociating themselves from their own identity and from the poor toiling masses. *Swadeshi* volunteers were eager to implement the constructive programme but considered *khadi* too thick and uncomfortable for village work. Women found *khadi* too plain and unsuitable for their tastes while Gandhi considered colour and adornment on women's clothing as gaudy signs of vanity and subtle

forms of seduction. People thought *khadi* was too much of an equal-opportunity leveller – therefore disrespectful of regional, religious, class and caste identities and privileges which they would have preferred to display through traditional costumes. Gandhi instead saw clothing as a means to assert broader goals for wider alliances. He saw the promotion of egalitarian values as the precondition for obtaining *swaraj*.

Our historical data has sufficiently revealed that the hermeneutical genius of the Mahatma lay precisely in using the functions of clothing to his advantage – a characteristic that escaped the attention of most of his contemporaries. He challenged Indians to think of clothing beyond the frame of stereotypical functionality. The semiotician in Gandhi gave clothing eco-political, psycho-cultural and socio-religious significance by placing it within the wider and comprehensive discourse of *purna swaraj*. He invested clothing with the power to *shout out* what words were not allowed to express.[20] The British Government was caught on the wrong foot. It was adept at curbing the freedom of spoken and written expression, but it was completely at a loss in dealing with the defiant *khadi* on the backs of illiterate peasants.

His meeting with the heavily attired King George VI in England in his simple *khadi dhoti* and leather slippers was his clarion call for change. We have here an extremely rich contrast of symbolism based on Knapp's functions of clothing. Gandhi's austere clothing on this unique occasion was his free choice. The King's pompous attire instead was hardly a choice, but a burden of regal protocol. For Gandhi, "to dress in any other way [before the king] would be artificial" – a form of self-deception, as well as an act of deceiving his esteemed host. The King-Emperor's dress had to be a ceremonious display designed to flaunt his unique and proud position through an array of stars, ribbons and honorary medallions – hiding, of course, his human frailty behind the deceptive mask. Gandhi's clothing also represented his role as a leader – but one who led millions of poor by personal example. The Emperor's clothes symbolised power that appropriated and dominated lands and peoples primarily for imperial interest. Gandhi's half-nakedness signified the transparency of truth in humility and dependence on God. Clothing the way he did in front of the King-Emperor was nauseating for Winston Churchill, but it was a symbol of subversion of Himalayan proportions – it was a sartorial scream, a blistering affront to imperialism, a testimony before the world of the economic exploitation that had reduced colonies to poverty while Britain basked in luxury. Gandhi wittily summed it up in his crisp retort to a journalist who wondered if he felt ashamed of

dressing the way he did before the king: "Why should I feel ashamed? The king had enough on for both of us!"

On Judging People by Their Clothes

Research has shown that clothes do not merely fulfil various functions, they are also powerful stimulants that can affect the behaviour of others.[21] One does not need statistical proof to show that clothes are potent means of communication. Anecdotal evidence from the past is plentiful. The young England-returned Indian advocate in a South African court who presented himself before an English judge simply by deciding to wear an Indian turban together with his regular suit was transcending the mere functional use of clothing. He was making a statement revealing his Indian identity and it provoked the judge to deny him admittance to court if he refused to change. The decision of the same advocate to make his wife wear a Parsee sari and the insistence that his boys sport suits and boots instead of the traditional Gujarati attire was also a declaration of the family's status. This time, however, it was meant to cover his true Gujarati identity so as to make himself more acceptable to the elite Indian community that was paying him for his services. In pre-independent India, an Indian in an English hat and another in a white Gandhi *topi* spoke volumes about the political correctness or incorrectness of the values each lived by. Thus, members of a highly polarised society were obliged to choose the manner in which they disclosed the side to which they belonged – whether in favour of imperial rule or against it.

Experiments on the impact of clothing based on the judgements of observers reveal that clothes do influence how we rank people through the manner in which they dress.[22] In some cases this influence of clothes on our judgements of people can have serious consequences.[23] The question put to Gandhi by the journalist (who obviously missed the meaning we have given the encounter) on whether he felt ashamed before the well-dressed king, was also a subtle and perhaps, inadvertent judgement on Gandhi's lack of dress sense for such a privileged occasion. But like all judgements, it revealed equally the criteria and values the journalist lived by, rather than merely his opinion of Gandhi.

Furthermore, the accuracy of reading, attributed to the clothing choices of persons can vary considerably. The more concrete the attribute signalled – for example, sex, age, nationality, economic status, the more accurate the reading by the observer. The more abstract the attribute – like attitudes, values and personality, the more difficult the reading. Not all personality traits may be easy to judge by apparel alone. For instance, one may find it easier to conclude that one is

lazy or has a poor aesthetic sense by observing his clothing, yet it would be more difficult to judge someone's honesty or intelligence by the same criterion.[24] At the height of the struggle for Independence there were many who aspired for political privileges. They dressed in *khadi*, not because they believed and lived the virtues it epitomised, nor because they admired Gandhi and strove to follow in his footsteps. They did so because they could not afford to cut themselves off from the political mainstream, if they wished to secure seats in the future India of their dreams. Simply put: they were self-serving wolves disguised in *khadi*.

Gandhi's Non-verbal Communication Through the Eyes of His Contemporaries

In his autobiography published in 1927, Gandhi candidly admitted that his "punctiliousness in dress persisted for years."[25] One of his close associates, J. B. Kripalani humorously confirms: "The fastidiousness in dress persisted throughout his life, even when he was wearing a loin cloth and a chaddar."[26] Indeed, it is worth reading what his contemporaries have to say about his physical features which were inherently part of his non-verbal communication.

Krishnalal Sridharani, a journalist who participated in the independence movement says: "this unarmed little ninety pounds of humanity"[27] "fights non-violently, without injuring his opponent, and he has a childlike, toothless, disarming laughter."[28] Joseph Doke, Gandhi's first biographer recalls that when he had met Gandhi for the first time in 1907 he was expecting to meet a tall and stately figure, of bold and majestic visage to match the powerful influence he was known to have exerted in Johannesburg.

> Instead of this, to my surprise, a small, lithe, spare figure stood before me, and a refined, earnest face looked into mine. The skin was dark, the eyes dark, but the smile which lighted the face, and that direct fearless glance, simply took one's heart by storm.[29]

Herman Ould, a writer and philosopher describes Gandhi's glance and poise at one of his usual prayer meetings:

> Although he did not speak, his rather small shrewd eyes were active, to charm, to please, to impose silence, to admonish, but chiefly, or so it seemed to me, to charm…On the platform were a couple of couches covered with white material and a large square cushion on which Gandhi sat cross-legged; behind him, an erection of pillows, against which, however, he did not lean. He sat there, like an ancient sculpture, his eyes closed, motionless…[30]

Yone Noguchi, a scholar from the Keio University, Tokyo, shares a similar sense of surprise at meeting a sick Gandhi at Wardha:

> I found him with a saintly little smile revealing his broken teeth, stretching out his bare legs, as lean as a cricket's and as stiff as steel wire,... I found difficulty in connecting this seemingly simple and unaffected man with the heroic fasts that had made the mammoth soul of England once tremble with fear.[31]

Maria Montessori writes about Gandhi's visit to her Training College in London. She describes the power of his presence in a hall filled to capacity with children and adults.[32]

> I then felt that there emanated from Gandhi a mysterious power. During his stay in his honour, and while he sat on the floor and spun, they sat round him, serene and silent. And all the adults also who attended this unforgettable reception were silent and still. It was enough to be together; there was no need of singing, dancing or speeches.[33]

Regarding Gandhi's use of clothing (and the character behind the clothes), we have this insightful description by Millie Polak, the wife of Henry Polak, one of Gandhi's trusted collaborators in South Africa:[34]

> What different phases in Mr Gandhi's mental career had been proclaimed by the clothes he wore! Each costume, I think, denoted an attitude of mind. Yet with what a curious detachment he wore them! Each seemed to be but a fugitive expression of him, and behind it often one sensed a human being, who wore form itself as though he would readily and easily cast it off, and stand naked before his God.

Gandhi's changes in external appearance were "a *continuous* and *deliberate* process of *self-definition* and *construction*".[35] Mrs. Polak's feminine eye for detail testifies to his sartorial metamorphosis:

> When I first saw him in South Africa, he wore a black professional turban, an easy lounge suit of a neat patterned material, a faint blue stripe on a darker ground being rather a favourite with him, a stiff collar and tie, with shoes and socks for outdoor wear. When later I met him in London, he looked distinguished (op cit.) in the conventional dress of a pre-War English gentleman – a silk hat, well-cut morning coat, smart shoes and socks, and years afterwards I gave away a number of dress shirts that he had discarded from his wardrobe of this period. Then again, in South Africa, he returned to the lounge suit, but now a ready-made, rather sloppy one, shoes more clumsy, and no longer

> starched collars for ordinary wear. During the latter part of his life there, this gave way to a combination of East and West whenever possible – a pair of trousers accompanying a shirt-like garment, and nearly always sandals.
>
> Then the final change, a loin-cloth of home-spun material and a shawl to throw round his shoulders when he considered it necessary to do so.[36]

Photographs[37] of Gandhi reveal a non-verbal behaviour consistent with apparel. For instance, we see him as a barrister in South Africa in the midst of his clients, visibly conscious of his self-importance. At the Phoenix Settlement he is one among a large extended family of like-minded labourers. His final dress in a loin-cloth turns him into an international icon of simplicity, sincerity and peace. The visual power of these photographic images reveals the consistency between his non-verbal behaviour and his verbal communication. The cloth spoke the man, just as the man tailored the cloth to fit his lofty goal: nothing less than *purna swaraj* through *satya*, *ahimsa* and *swadeshi*.

Khadi's Non-verbal Impact

The visibility of *khadi* worn on the bodies of participants in the *swadeshi* campaign had an extremely powerful effect. Besides its political efficacy to embarrass a Government that was insensitive to the nuances of Gandhian symbolism through subversive sartorial choices, *khadi* was also a catalyst for *group bonding* and *social contagion* among participants in the struggle. In a context as politically volatile as pre-independent India, Gandhi saw the supreme importance of encouraging the public expression of opinion and the necessity of extending its manifestation throughout India, even to remotest villages. In a country of gross illiteracy, where only a miniscule percentage were readers, writers and orators on political issues, Gandhi's insistence on wearing *khadi* was a stroke of genius. All that was required for the common man and woman to declare on which side of the political debate he or she stood was *appearing* in public. One's visibility automatically revealed one's sartorial preference, which in turn disclosed one's options for or against *swaraj*. The result was that the more people wore *khadi*, the more those who vacillated were emotionally pressured to follow suit. That this social contagion also spawned uncommitted *khadi*-wearers or even impostors is a moot point when considering the cumulative visibility *khadi* generated. This was *subversion on parade,* a kind of *thinking aloud through clothing* – the rarest form of mass protests the world had ever witnessed. It did take time to gain momentum, but in the end, Gandhi won.

Eyewitness Shridharani explains and testifies to the triumph of Gandhi's non-verbal communication: "In India, this period of non-violent direct action has been disproportionately long […] In due time, however, the whole of India became a veritable ocean of snowy, handmade cloth – the simple and inexpensive uniform of the Gandhi movement."[38]

Once millions across the country caught the *khadi* fever, *swaraj* was but a legal formality away.

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3. This article on Gandhi's non-verbal communication is a sequel to the article by the same author, entitled: "Clothing Choices in Gandhi's *Swadeshi* Movement" in *Gandhi Marg* (please add volume and page details).
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5. Cf. Milton D. Hunnex, *Chronological and Thematic Charts of Philosophies and Philosophers*, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986, p.3.
6. Unlike literate cultures, oral cultures were strongly community-based where knowledge was invested in the person of the chieftain or orator or witchdoctor. Such cultures were hierarchical, traditional and geographically stable. For more on the cultural contrasts see Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy – The Technologizing of the Word*, New York, Routledge, 2002.
7. J. Ruesch – W. Kees, *Nonverbal Communication: Notes on the Visual Perception of Human Relations*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, (1956) 1974, p. 189 in Mark L. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston INC., 1972, p. 4.
8. By 1980, Jerry K. Frye was able to publish a book-length bibliography with more than 4,000 references to non-verbal research. Cf. John Wiemann – Randall Harrison, *Nonverbal Interaction*, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1983, p. 273. See also:

9. Table 5 is my summary of the fields of nonverbal communication as presented by Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, pp. 5-8.
10. Cf. P. Ekman – W. Friesen, "The repertoire of nonverbal behavior. Categories, origins, usage, and coding," in *Semiotica*, vol. 1, 1969, pp. 49-98.
11. Some researchers are unwilling to use the term 'nonverbal communication' as it gives the impression of a distinctiveness from verbal communication. They prefer a perspective that admits of a complementary relationship between the two parts of the same communication process. For example, on linguistic or kinesic systems Ray Birdwhistell notes that "only in their interrelationship with each other and with comparable systems from other sensory modalities is the emergent communication system achieved." Cf. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 9.
12. Cf. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, pp. 9-11.
13. Cf. B. R. Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi : A Biography*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, p. 119.
14. We have instances to show that not all who wore *khadi* were truly Gandhian followers. See my book: *Khadi: Gandhi's Mega Symbol*, Delhi, Sage, 2012, pp. 116-118.
15. Ray Birdwhistell, *Kinesics and Context*, London, Allan Lane, 1972, cited in Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 12.
16. Cf. Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language*, New York, Doubleday, 1959, in Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 12. We have merely listed the primary message systems without explaining each of them, a task beyond the scope of this paper.
17. Cf. Ruesch – Kees, *Nonverbal Communication*, in Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p.12.
18. The three elements are often abbreviated as the "3 Vs" for Verbal, Vocal and Visual. It is important to note that the "7%-38%-55% Rule" does not apply to just any communication situation – as is often misunderstood. Mehrabian's website states that unless a communicator is talking about her feelings or attitudes, these equations do not apply. Cf. Mehrabian's website: http://www.kaaj.com/psych/smorder.html (retrieved: 29-11-2014). See also, "Mehrabian's communication study", *Changing Minds*: http://changingminds.org/explanations/behaviors/body_language/mehrabian.htm (retrieved: 9-12-2014).
19. Cf. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 82.
20. At the height of the Non-cooperation Movement large scale arrests were made of *satyagrahis* who spoke out against the Government through public meetings and associations. It charged those who wrote and published seditious literature. On 24 December 1921, Mahadev Desai was imprisoned for starting a handwritten paper (called *Independent*). On 11 March 1922, Gandhi was imprisoned on the charge of seditious writings in *Young India*.
21. Cf. M. Lefkowitz, R. Blake and J. Mouton, "Status Factors in

Pedestrian Violation of Traffic Signals," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, vol. 51, 1955, pp. 704-706, in Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 82. The authors research reveals that pedestrians are likely to violate traffic signals when they are with others, and more importantly, when these others are dressed to represent high status individuals.

22. Cf. R. Hoult, "Experimental Measurement of Clothing as a factor in Some social Ratings of selected American men," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 19, 1954, pp. 324-328, in Mark L. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 13. See also **Mary Lapitsky, "I**mpact of Clothing on Impressions of Personal Characteristics and Writing Ability", *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 1981, vol. 9, No. 4, 327-335.
23. See also, Diane M Turner-Bowker, "How Can You Pull Yourself up by Your Bootstraps, if You Don't Have Boots? Work-Appropriate Clothing for Poor Women", *Journal of Social Issues*, 2001, vol. 57 (2), 311–322.
24. Cf. Knapp, *Nonverbal Communication*, p. 81.
25. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 2005 [1927], p. 48.
26. J. B. Kripalani, *Gandhi, His Life and Thought*, Delhi, Publications Division, Government of India, 1970, p. 6.
27. Krishnalal Shridharani, *War without Violence: A study of Gandhi's Method and its Accomplishmentes,* New York, Brace Harcourt, 1939, p. 235.
28. *Ibid*., p. 232.
29. Krishna Kripalani, *Gandhi: A Life*, New Delhi, National Book Trust, 1982, p. 73. Doke's little biography was published in 1909. It was one of the best accounts of Gandhi's personality and life at that time. It was the life that Tolstoy read and led him to write to Gandhi in September 1910 these prophetic words: "your activity in Transvaal as it seems to us, at this end of the world, is the most essential work, the most important of all the work now being done in the world, wherein not only the nations of the Christian, but of all the world, will unavoidably take part."
30. Herman Ould, 'Gandhi' in Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, et al., *Mahatma Gandhi*, *Essays and Reflections on his life and work*, Mumbai, Jaico Publishing House, 2004, p. 447.
31. Yone Naguchi, "A Visit from the Far East" in Radhakrishnan, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 198.
32. Cf. "[Gandhi's] Speech At Montessori Training College, 28 October 1931", *Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace*: http://www.peace.ca/montessoriandgandhi.htm (retrieved: 16-01-2015). On greeting Montessori, Gandhi is reported to have said, "We are members of the same family."
33. Maria Montessori, "Gandhi and the Child" in Radhakrishnan, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 182.

34. On one of Gandhi's journeys in South Africa, it was Henry Polak who offered him the book by Ruskin Bond, entitled, *Unto this Last*, a book that would change Gandhi's life. His wife, Millie Polak wrote a delightful pen-portrait of Gandhi. Cf. Millie Polak, *Mr. Gandhi: the Man*, Bombay, Vora, 1950.
35. Calude Markovits, *The Un-Gandhian Gandhi: The Life and Afterlife of the Mahatma,* New Delhi, Permanent Black, 2004, p. 30. (italics mine)
36. K. Kripalani, *Gandhi: A Life*, p. 79-80.
37. See the collection of photographs by Peter Ruhe, *Gandhi*, London, Phaidon Press Limited, 2001. Notice the contrast in the photographs of Gandhi's arrival in India, p. 55 and the days of the *Swadeshi* Movement that follow pp. 60 ff.
38. Shridharani, *War without Violence*, p. 10.

PETER GONSALVES published the last of his Gandhian trilogy entitled, *Gandhi and the Popes, From Pius XI to Francis* early this year(Peter Lang, 2015). His two previous books are: *Clothing for Liberation, A Communication Analysis of Gandhi's Swadeshi Revolution* (Sage, 2010) and *Khadi, Gandhi's Mega Symbol of Subversion* (Sage, 2012). As Associate Professor in the Faculty of Communication at Salesian University, Rome, he teaches Peace Communication, Media Education and is in charge of the Doctoral Programme. Email: gonsalves.p@gmail.com

GANDHI MARG

Quarterly Journal of the
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION

VOLUME THIRTY THREE ❑ NUMBER ONE ❑ APRIL-JUNE 2011

Published by:
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION
221 & 223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi-110 002
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Volume 37 Number 2

Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 333–354

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

On the Self-other Relationship: Lessons from Gandhi for an Alternative Cosmopolitan Framework

Kumar Rahul

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to identify elements of an alternative cosmopolitan framework devoid of Eurocentric focus drawing on Gandhian insights. Gandhi's selective borrowing of ideas from the West and the non-dichotomous manner in which the 'self' and the 'other' are perceived with a preference for the 'other' in certain situations provides a sound normative basis for global justice.

Keywords: Cosmopolitanism, global justice, othering, universalism, alternative framework.

Introduction

THE UPANISHADS, WHICH are classic texts that offer teachings about true nature of the self, at times conflict with one another, even as they concern themselves with the true nature of the self. Political theory in India has not looked into the deeper implications of Indian texts in terms of self-other relationships. Doing it was the task of religious philosophy, because a large part of the notions of the self and its relation with 'the other' are derived from religious texts and traditions. Also, notions of the self-other relation are mostly immersed in religious language, attributes of God and His connection with human beings. In this paper, I draw on Gandhi's views on the self-

other relationship as moral resources to construct an alternative cosmopolitan framework with Advaita-Vedanta and the Bhagavad-Gita in the background. Gandhi himself was very modest about his philosophical claims. He said: "I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth, I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. ……When anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the latter of the two on the same subject."[1] *Hind Swaraj*, written in 1909, is the only work, which Gandhi has authored as a philosophical treatise. Besides the autobiography most of his other writings have been compiled into more than hundred volumes. There are several commentaries on his life and thought. But works that throw light on the self-other relationship to address pressing questions of cosmopolitanism are few.

We come across multiple views of the self in Gandhian writings. Most of his writings on self, though they may appear inconsistent and incoherent, have a deep sense of metaphysics. It could be confounding at times as to which view of the self one could authentically associate Gandhi with. Some find Gandhi endorsing a social, empirical view of the self, some others discover a relational view of the self in his writings, yet some others associate him with a non-social, typically individualist view of the self. For example, in some writings Gandhi emphasises the sovereignty of the 'Inner voice.' It is to be exercised by autonomous individuals for confirming the veracity and authenticity of a moral position. It is contrasted with and distinguished from any relational 'other.' This paper affirms the point that Gandhi develops a spiritual-social conception of the self, which purifies the realm of the empirical and the political. Thus, to those who are intrigued and confounded and dismiss Gandhi's view of the self as philosophically untenable, this paper intends to address those concerns benefitting from a contextual reading of his writings and show that far from being discreet and separate, various conceptions of the self that emerge from his writings, complement one another, and together they form a metaphysical and spiritual framework. Most compelling aspect of this framework is that the self and 'the other' are placed in the cosmos in such a way that they strike a perfect balance, yet the self has an intrinsic tendency to accord primacy to the other as and when there is a felt need. The clue that 'the primacy of the other' can be a good resource for an alternative cosmopolitan framework is the central assumption of this paper. In this quest, I dwell on Gandhi's Swaraj also, which can be vitally useful

for enriching a cosmopolitan framework, where individuals are experientially motivated to acquire cognitive capacity to see all people as ends in themselves and to aspire to love oneself and others to the point of regarding them as part of oneself. These notions of the self and self-other relationship are complementary, but as stated earlier, they do intrigue. Some scholars even claim that Gandhi never had a consistent view of the self.[2] Gandhi's response to such philosophical questions is often fragmented and undeveloped. This paper intends to address some of these philosophical concerns.

The other concern in this paper is that legitimacy of cosmopolitanism as a new narrative of liberal, colonial, universal project is at stake in non-Western societies. Inclusion of non-Western texts, thoughts, and thinkers is one way to address this legitimacy deficit.

Metaphysics of the Advaita-Vedanta

Advaita philosophy has not been a part of a popular political theory. Keeping in mind the endemic roots of some of the Gandhian principles, it is imperative to acquaint with basic formulations of the Advaita metaphysics which Gandhi has drawn on heavily in propounding a framework of the self-other relationship. Some scholars, however, dispute the Advaitist route to interpret Gandhi's notion of the self. Yet others even doubt Gandhi's consistent faith in Advaitism. In reply to a question, he wrote: "I am Advaitist and yet I can support 'Dvaitism' (dualism). The world is changing every moment, and is therefore unreal, it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists and it is therefore to that extent real. I have therefore no objection to calling it real and unreal, and thus being called an 'Anekantavadi' or a 'Syadvadi.' But my 'Syadvad' is not the Syadvad' of the learned, it is peculiarly my own."[3] Although he accepts the manyness of reality and relativity of truth, he never quits the non-dualist premise of understanding 'the Real' and 'the Truth.' That is to say, individuals are at liberty to construct their own reality and relish their notions of relative truth, but subject to an unflinching commitment to have a view of God, who represents the truth and freedom of all beings. Entrenching this position he wrote: "He (God) allows us freedom, and yet His compassion commands obedience to His will."[4] Despite Gandhi drawing from multiple sources, his rootedness in two sources, the Advaita-Vedanta and the Bhagavad-Gita, has been the most profound and primal. We will come back to this question toward the end of this section. It is imperative here to understand some of the basic assumptions of the Advaita-Vedanta.

The term Vedanta means the end of the Vedas. Vedanta is the end in two senses: it is the philosophy based on the Upanishads—the last part of the Vedic writings. It is the goal of Indian speculations. Vedantists regard their system as the synthesis of all other systems. Vedanta is the only philosophy which directly plays a part in modern Indian civilization. Vedantists hold that *Brahman* is the first cause of the world, that knowledge of *Brahman* leads to final liberation, and that *Brahman* can be known through the scriptures and not through mere reasoning.

There are five schools of Vedantic philosophy, of which the Advaita School is the oldest and has been the most influential. Most of the Vedantists belong to this school. It was founded by Adi Shankaracharya in the early part of the ninth century AD. Other schools are 'Vishishtadvaita' of Ramanuja, 'Dvaita' of Madhava, 'Shuddhadvaita' of Vishnuswamin and 'Dvaitadvait' of Nimbarka. They differ in their take on the unity of being, the reality of the physical world, and the relation of the human self to the Brahman.

The Bhagavad-Gita was an early attempt to make a system out of Upanishadic doctrines. It is estimated that it was composed in the fifth century BC in a form that would appeal to the ordinary persons, yet would contain sufficient depth to stimulate the wisest philosophers. From the fifth to second century BC, many philosophers wrote aphorisms or sutras which attempted to convey the message of the Upanishads in precise language. Only one has survived, i.e., the Vedanta-sutras or Brahma-sutras of Badrayana.

Adi Shankaracharya set himself to the task of reviving Vedic culture at a time when primitive superstitions and magical practices were influencing people. He established four monasteries at widely separated places in India. There was yet another reason for the founding of the Advaita School. The period of the Upanishads is estimated to range from 2510 B.C.E to 600 B.C.E. The first systematic challenge to the Upanishadic conception of the self was posed by the Buddha, with which began the decline of the Upanishadic influence. Advaita-Vedanta is the philosophic moment of return and grand revival of the Upanishads. Despite several differences among the Upanishadic scholars as to the nature of the self, there is a continuum: they agree with considerable certainty that the Upanishads uphold the eternal continuity, imperishability and coherent nature of the self.

But Adi Shankaracharya set strict conditions for those wishing to be eligible to make a sustained and existential study of the Advaita philosophy. He required that a prospective student of Vedanta give evidence of *viveka* (discrimination between that which is eternal and that which is non-eternal), *vairagya* (renunciation of the hope for

happiness in either this life or next), *shatsampatti* (calmness, self-control, relinquishment, concentration, and affirmative attitude of mind), and *mumukshutwam* (longing to become free from all bondage). We will see later in this paper that though Gandhi borrows some of the conditions set forth by Adi Shankaracharya, he adopts them in recognizably his own ways.

The Absolute

In Advaita metaphysics, the fundamental reality of the universe is *Brahman*. Adi Shankaracharya contended that *Brahman* cannot be known without appeal to the revelations of the Upanishads. *Brahman* is completely a real Being. It's pure Being. It is apriori, that is, the Being necessary in order for anything to be; it is not aposteriori, that is, a being discovered by empirical experiences. It is the basis of the empirical world, although it cannot be experienced in itself. The Upanishads, claimed Adi Shankaracharya, described *Brahman* from two points of view: the higher knowledge *(para vidya)* and the lower knowledge *(apara vidya)* or as the world under the aspect of eternity and the world viewed under the aspect of time. *Para vidya* and *apara vidya* can be traced throughout the Advaita system. Gandhi wanted a dialectical examination of *apara vidya* with *para vidya.* The latter connects one with 'other selves,' while the former drives one toward cornering attachments of the world to oneself. By stressing a dialectical examination of the *apara vidya* with *para vidya* Gandhi lays the foundation of 'self-knowledge'— a key component of his philosophy of *Swaraj*, recognizably distinct from prevailing epistemic traditions. With a command over *apara vidya*, one will be able to exercise autonomy. That is, one will be able to know oneself and his relationship in the cosmos with 'other selves.'

The *Brahman* of the higher form of knowing is the *Brahman* without attributes (*Nirguna Brahman)*. The Brahman of the lower form of knowing is the *Brahman* with attributes *(saguna Brahman)*. *Nirguna Brahman* cannot be described as good or evil, just or unjust or loving or non-loving. All attributes are inadequate. Because all such attributes denote an order of reality but less than Absolute reality. *Nirguna Brahman* is sometimes described as *satchitanand* (being-consciousness-bliss). Religious teachers thought *satchitanand* could only be achieved in other-worldly way. In sharp departure, Gandhi thought the stage could very well be reached even with committing to worldly (political, economic) affairs, provided the individual passes through a three-stage process: self-examination, self-knowledge, and self-transformation. What follows is a stage where one would bask in delight of *Swaraj* (Self-rule).

Thus, *Brahman* must not be regarded as a remote thing, hiding in some distant corner of the universe. *Brahman* is the foundation of all existence, the ultimate basis of all things, the material and efficient cause of the world, the transcendent unity behind all plurality, the permanence that makes change possible. *Brahman* acts upon itself and causes the phenomenal world to be.[5] *Brahman* is present in all its manifestations, and, since the entire universe is the manifestation of the *Brahman*, it is experienced indirectly in all experiences of the microcosmos. *Brahman*, like space, makes possible spatial experiences, yet it is not experienced directly.

Brahman is the essence of consciousness. It is not consciousness as minds can be conscious. It is the foundation of knowledge. It is self-knowing in a direct manner. It knows without separating subject and object. *Brahman* is above all duality, both metaphysical duality and epistemological duality. *Brahman* is the knower of knowing. It is self-sufficient, and hence is spiritual, for no material thing can be self-sufficient. Consciousness, Thought or Knowledge is the substance not an attribute of *Brahman*.[6]

If *Brahman* is the only reality, what sort of reality does the world have? In dealing with this problem, Adi Shankaracharya seized upon an Upanishadic expression '*iva*' (as it were) and developed the doctrine of illusion, *maya*. The term *maya* first appeared in the Rig Veda to denote a kind of magical power. Later, in the Upanishads—as they are interpreted by Adi Shankaracharya, *maya* became the power of *Brahman* to manifest itself in a world, which has *iva* reality. The world itself is then said to be *maya*, and *maya* is often translated as illusion or unreality. Max Muller writes, *Brahman* is true, the world is false, and the soul is *Brahman* and nothing else.[7] In Advaita metaphysics, thus we see that *Brahman* is God. It is the Being of all existence, the Knower of all knowledge, foundation of all bliss. *Brahman* is beyond space, time and causality.

The Self

The Buddhist conception of the self preceded the Advaita philosophy. Gautama Buddha (563 B.C.E to 483 B.C.E) constructed a metaphysics of the self in opposition to the Vedic metaphysics, which Gandhi largely endorsed. It can be summed up with his dual doctrines of *anityata* and *kshanikavada*. *Anityata* refers to the universal impermanence of all things. *Kshanikavada* refers to the momentariness of all realities. Empirical realities that we experience are ever-fluctuating, they are ever-changing. The material objects, and also non-material things, such as thought, concept, or even our own body and everything around us exist in a perpetual cycle of motion. They come into being,

persist momentarily, and finally disintegrate into non-being. Therefore, there is neither a self nor any continuity of the soul. Our experience of selfhood is no more than a series of momentary semi-organic complexes of psycho-physical elements continuously succeeding one another. Adi Shankaracharya, the founder of the Advaita School, was among the first ones to provide a systematic critique of the Buddhist conception of the self. Adi Shankaracharya objects to the subject-object dualism, central to the Buddhist conception. Law of *karma* entails that every good *karma* or moral *karma* and every bad/immoral karma shall be accounted for with commensurate results. The subject causes the action, the object bears the result of action. Why should an object, which has not caused the action, bear the punishment of a bad action undertaken by the subject? There is moral inconsistency in this thought, Adi Shankaracharya pointed out.

After offering an epistemic critique of Buddhism, Adi Shankaracharya postulates two important theories: one affirming the existence of the soul, and the other demonstrating the continuity of the soul. The gist of his theories is that the self is an experientially and logically undeniable fact. If one attempts to deny the existence of the self, then in that very denial he is asserting the existence of a self who is doing the denying. For, only a conscious, thinking being can make such a self-referential statement. In his second argument, Adi Shankaracharya denies the momentariness and non-continuity of the self by an appeal to the faculty of memory. Here, the self has been construed as a continuous experiencer. Adi Shankaracharya held that the very essence of the self is *Chaitanya*, pure and uncontaminated consciousness. The self is not conditioned by spatial and temporal constraints. It is *vibhu*, all pervasive. It is not even atomic. It is the spirit which pervades all persons, in every part of the body and springs the consciousness.[8] The self for Adi Shankaracharya is one unitary entity. The self is eternal, omniscient, which exists simultaneously in all beings.

For Shankara, the self *(atman)* and the Absolute *(Brahman)* are one unitary entity. The temporary instance of an individual self viewed as being separate from *Brahman* is a mistaken perception due to *avidya*, or ignorance. Illusory limitations are imposed upon *Brahman* by the internal organ of *manas*, or mind.

Non-dualism

The word Advaita means non-dual. There is no dualism in Advaita philosophy between subject and object. Adi Shankaracharya said that the *jiva* or individual self is a subject. The self as subject cannot be the

creator of the world. It is witness to the creation, however. *Brahman* cannot be a subject because a subject must have an object in order to be a subject. Hence, *Brahman* is the object to be studied, to be known, and to be realized by the individual self. The self is a necessary condition for objects of knowledge, not for the existence of things, just as light is necessary for objects of sight, not for things themselves.[9] Knowledge of the *Brahman*, the object, is the knowledge of the Truth. Realization of the Truth is the moment when the self subliminally unites with the *Brahman*. All dichotomies, whether ontological or epistemological, vanishes. In explaining this spiritual moment, Adi Shankaracharya uses a word, *jiva*. According to Adi Shankaracharya, *jiva* appears to be numberless. *Jiva*, when in true state, is not aware of its individuality. Then the self does not distinguish between ego and non-ego. Only when the self is associated with the body in the empirical world does the self imagine it is distinct from other selves, from the world, and from the God. The spiritual unity which underlies the plurality of the *jiva* is called *Atman*. It is consciousness which appears in the form of an internal organ *(antahkaran).* The individual self is the appearance of the highest self. Gandhi imports from the Advaita metaphysics the insight to accord ethical priority to the other selves, which is vital for construing an alternative cosmopolitan framework.

The gist of the Advaita philosophy can be concluded as follows: the essential reality of individuals cannot be different from the essential reality of 'Totality.' From *apara* point of view, the *Brahman* appears to be broken into the multiplicity of sentient beings, but from *para* point of view, these manifestations are unreal. There is only *Atman*, and the *Atman* is not different from *Brahman*. *Atman* is subjective foundation of all reality; *Brahman* is the objective foundation of all reality. But in ultimate reality there is no difference between subject and object. There is 'One Being,' 'One Consciousness,' and 'One Bliss.' *Atman* is *Brahman*.

Gandhi and the Advaita Philosophy

As mentioned earlier, though Gandhi could accept 'dvaitism,' he announced his preference for the Advaita philosophy.[10] But this contention is far from settled. Following arguments will support that he consistently maintained his preference for the Advaita philosophy.

We need to recall here how he comprehended the notion of truth and linked it with God. Realizing that his earlier formulation 'God is Truth' does not depict his ethics accurately, he advanced its reversed version, 'Truth is God.' It indicates that in an ethical system he wants to promote, God is appellative of truth rather than truth assuming

attributes of God. It is consistent with the Advaita metaphysics that 'Truth' alone is eternal and all else is momentary, it alone is the 'Being,' which causes other beings to be. Gandhi's premising of truth with God affirms persons' quest for its seeking and yearning for unison with it. It is consistent also with his rejection of propositions that ascribe Buddhism as atheistic. *Dhamma* in Buddhism is the essence of truth that Gandhi considers God. Conceived this way, Gandhi is able to describe God as formless, pure consciousness, and the essence of life. This enables him to believe that it hardly matters whether a person conceives of God in personal or impersonal terms since the one position is not inferior to the other.[11] Thus, commensurate to his position that God is how one wants to conceive of it, provided the essence of truth is not lost, he is prepared to support *Dvaita* and *Vishishtadvaita* positions, while asserting that these are not inconsistent with his own preference for the Advaita. Pronouncing his position he says:

> I believe in Advaita. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him, and if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent.[12]

He reaffirms his Advaitin position in several other writings. But the following one illustrates it more unambiguously than any other:

> I believe in the absolute oneness of God and therefore of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source.[13]

The other argument that will support Gandhi's Advaitin position is contained in the way he conceptualises *Swaraj*. 'Ruling the self' that has gone awry is an important stage in the journey of *Swaraj*. But, how do we know our 'self' has gone awry and why is it urgently necessary to correct it? Search for an answer takes Gandhi closer to the Advaita philosophy. 'Dharma' is the essence of truth that guides us with yardsticks of moral action. Gandhi uses the epistemic category of *para* knowledge to examine and thereby refine *apara* knowledge, which actually causes the self to go distracted. It is the guide to moral action. Thus, having acquired *Swaraj,* one is motivated not to differentiate oneself from others as one would treat oneself. But unlike Adi Shankaracharya, Gandhi does not lay strict conditions and qualifications for obtaining knowledge of *Swaraj*. One who has experienced *Swaraj,* Gandhi suggests, will motivate and help others in their pursuits. Thus, while Adi Shankaracharya's conditions for

gaining knowledge requires some sort of asceticism and esoterism, Gandhi is more democratic and egalitarian in asking people to obtain and experience *Swaraj*.

On the Self-Other Relationship: Gandhi's Quest for Cosmopolitanism

Any one venturing into Gandhian literature would know that Gandhi invariably uses terms, such as self-rule, self-control, self-transformation, self-purification etc. Given the plurality of sources Gandhi draws on, it leaves out ambiguities as to what exactly is the nature of the self he refers to. Some scholars trace Gandhi having a lineage of the Jaina philosophy. Others interpret him borrowing from the Buddhist tradition a notion of the self. Yet some others dismiss altogether that Gandhi ever had a consistent doctrine of the self.[14] For example, Stephen Hay is one of those who affirms that Gandhi's principles were influenced by the Jaina philosophy[15] —a fact Gandhi acknowledges in his Autobiography as well. Frequent use of techniques, such as fast, fast-unto death, and self-purification, further support the argument that in forming a notion of the self, Gandhi was both intellectually and existentially influenced by the Jaina philosophy. However, it should be argued in response that though Gandhi was influenced, but not to the extent of forming a conception of the self and self-other relationship. Gandhi's use of techniques and practices, such as prayer, self-purification, and fast including fast-unto death resemble Jaina practices, but later in this paper I show that Gandhi was working on a bigger metaphysics to expound a notion of the self, which could well become a cosmopolitan self. We all know that Gandhi employed many fasts in the course of his struggle for India's freedom. Whereas in the Jaina and other religious philosophies, fast, including fast-unto-death, is purely a spiritual activity, in Gandhi it assumes a form in which the spiritual and the political intertwine. Resolve to observe the fast strengthened the soul-force to fight the political battle against injustice. And, recourse to fast-unto-death assured and reassured Gandhi about genuineness of the cause, veracity of the purpose and honesty of his commitment to the cause. An excerpt from his writing will further illuminate the point:

> A genuine fast cleanses body, mind and soul. It crucifies the flesh and to that extent sets the soul free……Purity thus gained, when utilized for a noble purpose, becomes a prayer.[16]

He writes further, "Fasting and Prayer therefore are a most

powerful process of purification and that which purifies necessarily enables us better to do our duty and to attain our goal."[17]

Above two statements point us to a more categorical assertion that Gandhi's framework combines the sphere of the spiritual and the political with complementarity, rather than adversity. Practice of fast purifies the soul, which is the repository of cosmic energy, and prepares mind and body to perform our duty and attain our goal. Which duty, what goal, is Gandhi pointing us to? For some, it may be a goal of salvation with a considered disconnection with politics and complete negation of the world. For others, this duty would entail an active engagement with politics and emancipation of the humanity as its goal. Given Gandhi's avowed devotion to the Bhagavad Gita, one should dispel moral conundrum and announce with certainty that Gandhi would enjoin upon the self a righteous duty to follow *dharma*. In what follows is that Gandhi is incessantly longing for 'the other.' It is the duty of the self to worry for 'the other.'

Let us now turn to the practice of daily prayer and self-purification, which were an essential part of Gandhi's existential life. It would become clearer that Gandhi's concern for the other is not only locally political, but we would notice a cosmopolitan impulse in his thought. What is noteworthy is that such a cosmopolitan impulse in Gandhi is not bland, rather it is supported by a strong metaphysics.

Prayer and self-purification apparently look purely a spiritual activity, and not political, and by far not cosmopolitan. I examine them from a cosmological vantage point, which Gandhi himself had supplied to us, and show that his yearning for the cosmopolitan self was intense and irresistible. Gandhi writes:

> Prayer is the most vital part of religion. Prayer is either petitional or in its wider sense is inward communication. In either case, the ultimate result is the same. Even when it is petitional, the petition should be for cleansing and purification of the soul, for freeing it from the layer of ignorance and darkness that envelop it. He therefore who hungers for the awakening of the divine in him must fall back on prayer……..It is passionate cry of the soul hungering for union with the divine.[18]

The above lines are a resounding confirmation of Gandhi drawing on the Advaita-Vedanta. We find an organic thread of connection in human's relation with the Absolute or by whatever name we call it, the *Brahman*, the God, and the Cosmos. Earlier in this paper, we have noticed that the self (soul) and the *Brahman* are in constitutively non-dualistic unison. Human beings are composites of material nature and spirit, that is, body and soul. *Manas* (the mind) occupies an

intermediate position. It has agential power, which it can use either way. It has emancipatory potential, however, it is susceptible to craving for passion, hence corruptible. Passions manifest as anger, lust, caprice, hatred and disturb not only our inner self, they also trample on tapestry of our social relations. Thus, mind needs rigorous sessions of training so that it can harness the cosmic energy of the soul in directing the self to perform its rightful duty in the cosmos. The practice of prayer is a part of this training. But its ultimate teleology is to seek the unity of soul with *Brahman*, as much as possible.

Prayer, according to Gandhi, fulfils three main functions: worship, meditation, and inner purification.[19] In all its functions, yearning of the soul for unison with God, the *Brahman*, the Absolute is the driving force. While in worship, human's imaginative faculty is at work, in meditation his spiritual faculty is at work.[20] The theory underlying meditation is that God is not an alien being, indifferent to human beings.[21] As Gandhi writes, "God is not some person outside ourselves or away from the universe…… He abides in our hearts and is nearer to us than the nails are to the fingers."[22]

Gandhi's emphasis on the metaphysics of prayer has not caught much intellectual attention. What we find is that behind a seemingly simple regular practice of prayer, Gandhi has a supportive metaphysical system. A practice as mundane as prayer has a cosmological grounding. The following quote from *Young India*[23] is illuminating to show once again that ethical concern for 'the other' in the universe is supremely invaluable for Gandhi.

"All things in the universe, including the sun and the moon and the stars, obey certain laws. Without the restraining influence of these laws the world will not go on for a single moment. You, whose mission in life is service of your fellowmen (individuals), will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline, and prayer is a necessary discipline."[24] We see in this moment a glimpse of *Swaraj,* which is self-discipline writ large.

Inner Voice: Confirming the Ethical Primacy of 'The Other'

We discussed above that in the backdrop of his rootedness in the Advaita philosophy, Gandhi believed humans are composite constitution of matter and spirit, that is, body and soul. Craving for body and its pleasure is a kind of fetish with man. Gandhi's critique of modern civilization is based on its excessive preoccupation with utility and materiality. For, Gandhi maintained that materialistic craving is evil, it thwarts moral progress, and worst of all it jeopardizes a person's fundamental capacity of knowing his true self. That is why Gandhi begins to build his project of *Swaraj,* both as philosophical

concept and as praxis, from the platform of his intellectual critique of modern civilization. But he was aware, everyone does not develop capacity to practice *Swaraj* overnight. Attaining *Swaraj* requires a sustained, considered and organized effort. How would, then, an individual confront the pull of the evil? Gandhi's answer is the inner voice or conscience or *antaratman*. He affirms the sovereignty of the inner voice as a guide to action. Raghavan Iyer, a prominent Gandhian scholar, observes: 'inner voice' is the principal western influence on Gandhi; it is Socratic influence.[25] From Socrates he derived a view of an inviolable and individually independent conscience. Iyer comments that there is no Indian equivalent to Socrates' *daimon*,[26] an 'inner voice' that claims, as Gandhi said often, an authority higher than the laws of the land. Gandhi writes: "There are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all, i.e. the voice of conscience, even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, and even more separation from friends, from family, from the state to which you may belong."[27]

Seeing the inner voice as individually distinct has led some scholars to conclude that Gandhi's notion of the self is not relational. It relinquishes the ethical primacy of 'the other.' Yet some others argue that invoking the inner voice in evaluative judgements is methodologically obscurantist. I contend that conclusions so drawn and renditions so given are intellectually misconceived and interpretively mistaken. Let us describe first, the idea underlying the employability of 'inner voice' as a sovereign call. Inner voice enables a person with a sense of ethical evaluation, which may not be as comprehensive as *Swaraj*. Nevertheless, it helps the individual in judging between good and evil, proper and improper, just and unjust. It could be argued in the following manner:

Inner voice, it must be appreciated, is in the first place a 'spiritual device.' Second, application of this device is of temporary nature, though the effect could well be long-lasting. Third, recipients of inner voice are allusive to both, personal and essentially relational. The following paragraph elaborates the arguments:

The best way to illuminate the first argument is to ask, who is the caller and who is the hearer of this inner voice? Because he borrowed it from Socrates, some scholars have ascribed Gandhi's inner voice as 'innate' quality and 'internal property.'[28] Though, to some extent, it may be agreeable to consider it as an 'internal property,' it is certainly not an 'innate' quality. For, Gandhi prescribes a rigorous process for acquiring self-discipline and equanimity of mind, if at all they are to be ascribed as 'internal properties.' A property, which is waiting to be acquired by Gandhi's person and

waiting to be put to praxis, and workability of which property is subject to regular empirical testing, can be attributed as anything, but 'innate.' We have noticed that prayer (with all its associative practices) and penance are part of the spiritual process to be able to exercise self-discipline. A discussion of how importantly did Gandhi perceive the practice of prayer, has already been presented above.

While discussing 'inner voice,' we must not forget Gandhi's avowed commitment to the philosophy of the Gita. There is incessant yearning for transcendence in the metaphysics of both the Gita and the Advaita. *Brahman*, is the spirit of the impersonal, Absolute Truth. Gandhi's individual too, through organized spiritual practices and training, such as self-purification, is overpowered by a yearning for unison with the Absolute. Gandhi writes: "Having made a ceaseless effort to attain self-purification, I have developed some little capacity to hear correctly and clearly the 'still small voice within.'[29] The 'truth' received by the call of 'inner voice,' we can say, is a moment in the spiritual process of self-realization. This is a communication, where the hearer and the caller are wanting to be one. And, in this is an answer to those, who find Gandhi endorsing the call to 'inner voice' as methodologically obscurantist. 'Inner voice,' for Gandhi, is a 'spiritual device,' the use of which is subject to the practitioner's self-purity and unity with the Truth, and exposition of which has a philosophical framework.

In the above section, it has been argued that 'inner voice' is a spiritual moment in the otherwise demanding process of self-realization. Gandhi takes the message of inner voice as initial prompts of the conscience. "There are moments in your life when you must act, even though you cannot carry best friends with you. The 'still small voice within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty,"[30] says Gandhi. 'Temporariness' of these moments, when one hears the inner voice, assumes special importance. It has metaphysical grounding in philosophy of the Gita. The Gita, chapter-II, teaches all persons to obtain a state of *'sthitha-prajna,'* 'the person of stable wisdom.'[31] "That man alone is 'the wise', who keeps the mastery of himself,"[32] Krishna tells Arjuna. But, exaltation to the level of *'Sthitha-prajna'* can only be achieved by a sustained and devoted yogic practice. That is the ideal. But, in ordinary life we often feel the imperative to take recourse to the inner voice, when caught in temporary moments of moral quandary. Again, he turns to the Gita for guidance and says, "Today the Gita is not only my bible or my Koran; it is more than that—it is my mother."[33] In those moments, Gandhi tells us to rely on God, who guides everyone, as Krishna did to Arjuna. God, for him, is not an alien power. Rather, he is a friend,

who comes to help those who are in need, whose trust can be gained by existential promise to obeying *dharma* and practicing *karma yoga*.

The example of 'inner voice' is more illustrative of what Gandhi would have in mind about his take on the self-other relationship. What is the purpose of listening to the inner voice? Given his background of an immersed practitioner of the Gita, he cannot tell us to take recourse 'always' to the call of 'inner voice,' because it cannot replace the ideal-the state of *'sthitha-prajna.'* So, the spiritual device of inner voice has to be for temporary invocation. Gandhi's whole purpose of bringing about the spiritual device of inner voice in our existential life is to seek reassurance about our commitment to the *dharma* even in fragmentary moments. He wants to challenge domination wherever it appears. The following excerpt would illustrate most appropriately, how intensely he wanted to challenge social domination. Mother, the metaphor he uses for the Gita, speaks to the agent to resolve the conundrum and stay firm with *dharma.*

> Often in the course of my struggle against untouchability, I am confronted with conflicting opinions delivered by the doctors of learning. Some of them tell me that untouchability as it is practiced today has no sanction in Hinduism and they bless my efforts to eradicate it; but there are some others who maintain that untouchability has been an essential part of Hinduism from the very beginning. Which authority should I follow under the circumstances? I feel absolutely at sea. The Vedas and *Smritis* are of no avail to me. I then approach the Mother (the Gita) and say, 'Mother, these learned *pundits* have put me in predicament. Help me out of my perplexity.' And the Mother with a smile says in reply: 'The assurance held out by me in the ninth chapter is not meant for the *Brahmanas* only, but for the sinner and the outcaste, the downtrodden and the disinherited, too.[34]

This is the idea of inner voice Gandhi seems to have in mind. In this thought, we have a picture of 'the other,' which is in distress, which is battling for respect and dignity, and toward which we need to direct ourselves in the sense of moral, social, and political obligation. Individuals and institutions alike have emptied them from their most fundamental possession—respect and dignity by a systematic social process of 'othering.' Inner voice is in the nature of an urgent call to remedy this situation, both at the citizen and cosmopolitan level, before global injustice becomes a global outcry aphoristically between the forces of good and evil like the battlefield of the Mahabharata.

Why Thinking About an Alternative Framework?

For cosmopolitanism to be truly cosmopolitan, the very first task would be to take stock of the state of theorizing a thought. We should ask, what is the framework of organizing and theorizing some individual normative speculations, empirical experiences, and some historical experiences? This question is crucial for two reasons: first is the legitimacy question and second is epistemic question.

In India and also elsewhere in the non-West, histories of their bitter colonial past suggest them to see a thought-package coming from the West with suspicious eyes, for colonialism itself came to them under the mask of a 'civilizing mission.' Interestingly, elements that set-out contemporary cosmopolitanism as theory also constitute the core of liberal political morality. Prominent among them are: the primacy of the individual, neutralism and impartiality, and universalism. Contemporary cosmopolitanism[35] has domesticated this liberal position. However, from the vantage point of nationalist history of erstwhile colonial countries, liberalism is seen to have a chequered and tragic history, fraught with fear of colonization, marginalization, and discrimination. The real problem arises when a thought as vital as cosmopolitanism struggles to pass the legitimacy test. Cosmopolitanism, both as institutional and moral theory, has to shed off this fear, or else it will cease to be truly cosmopolitan.

Hardly would one dispute that frameworks of theorizing, which includes normative speculations, organizing historical and empirical experiences, have largely been West-centric. There is no harm as such in knowledge production using frameworks developed in the West. The larger issue here is not of producing knowledge, but testing and contesting knowledge in a cosmopolitan way. Do we have an alternative framework of knowledge production, let us say, in the East? The answer is perhaps 'no.' Nor has there been any serious attempt to fill the gap, as a result of which even some of the very original Indian texts and ideas, which can be understood with fullness through a suitable framework only, have remained unheard of in 'popular' political theory. Testing and contesting are reduced to a mere intra-framework affair, rather than based on an inter-framework. Interestingly enough, a theory which is borne out of a framework, is validated by the same framework, and yet it aspires to be cosmopolitan. How contradictory is the process! For example, Gandhi's usage of the concept of *dharma* has not received a nuanced treatment. Some see in Gandhi's preoccupation with *dharma* a Hindu thinker, some others bring him closer to Kant's categorical imperative, and yet some others describe him as a reformed liberal, privileging a

liberal doctrine of political obligation. Preoccupation with these essentialist frames do not allow us to fathom the fullness of his thought. Thus, by amputating comprehensibility, we become party to interpretative injustice.

My whole concern of formulating the problem of framework in terms of the legitimacy question and the epistemic question was to consider the possibility of an alternative framework that facilitates better intelligibility and permeability for cosmopolitan audience. Availability of an alternative framework will always facilitate better intelligibility of the truth contained in a text or an idea. However, this is too big an epistemic project to do in this paper. The focus of this paper is a limited one, that is, to draw on Gandhi to come up with an alternative framework for cosmopolitanism. This is because Gandhi has a cosmopolitan presence both in terms of readership and iconography. For a 'popular' cosmopolitanism and for it to be legitimately accepted and practiced, especially in Asia, iconographic status of Gandhi will be of help to counter pan-nationalistic histories that tell people to read cosmopolitanism as a new narrative of colonialism and liberalism. And, second, Gandhi has his own cosmology as an alternative to the deontology-centric framework.

Gandhi's Dharma: His Cosmology

Let us now situate Gandhi in his cosmological framework to which he avowedly commits, that is, the Advaita-Vedanta in general and the Gita in particular, and see how the meaning of *dharma* springs up. One prominent Western scholar on Gandhi, Ronald Terchek, has rightly observed, "In the West, theories of ontology and deontology have replaced cosmology as ways of understanding human beings and their relationship with each other and non-human subjects."[36] *Dharma* has both general and particular meaning. This is a Sanskrit word, and translating it into English or any other foreign language runs the risk of evaporating its quintessence. For example, even the most approximate English translation, 'religion,' does not capture the true sense of *dharma* and if employed as such there is a risk that the core meaning of *dharma* will be externalized. It is supreme 'religiosity,' not religion. It is 'luminosity,' not light. What is most compelling in Gandhi's *dharma* is to note that its observance does not entail self-negation and world-renunciation. Religiosity and luminosity of *dharma* will purify politics and worldly pursuits. Here is a radical inversion of a reason-morality relationship, which could be an element of alternative framework. Unlike Kant, Gandhi wants morality to check rationality. Gandhi thought, autonomy of reason would be fatal. Reason is to be guided by morality. Gandhi's *dharma*

is truly cosmopolitan and egalitarian.

His method of reading *dharma* does not require any interpretive strategy as scholars insist. In his schema, there is no subject-object dualism. The self (subject) itself is the object of study—*"atma-darshan."* His method is that of reading through existential practicing. If each one of us is self-awakened and self-realized *(atm-bodh)* of our *dharmic*-duty, we will come to know 'what we owe to others,'[37] a question forcefully raised by Peter Singer that has set the tone of the global justice debate today.

Otherness, but not 'Othering'

Gandhi has centred around the idea of cosmos. Key to the understanding of cosmos are the twin notions of the self and the other, sharing the same spiritual plank, same source of energy (life), same sense of origin and rootedness. All selves are transcendentally connected to, by whatever name we call it, the *Brahman*, the Absolute, the God. All are seekers of the Absolute Truth. But when it manifests in the 'world,' due to the very nature of the 'world,' it tries to eclipse the cosmic constitution of our 'selves' by devices of illusion and ignorance, and hence, we encounter the birth of 'the other,' where self is not transcendentally, but tangentially connected to 'the other.' Unfortunately, some versions of liberalism have precipitated this gulf**.** 'Self-other relationship perceived in this way is perhaps the Enlightenment's most dichotomous creation. All relations to 'other' are subjected to methodological doubt. The pernicious impact it germinates is the process of 'othering', where a large part of humanity, suffering in abject poverty, is not considered worthy of raising their claim in global resources. To think of addressing the question of 'what we owe to others' in the mode of current political thinking in which we find ourselves, will not restore our normative commitment to treat others as part and parcel of ourselves. Thus, the imperative to look to Gandhi to supply moral resources to restore our moral commitment to treat others with love, care, and compassion and give them 'what we owe to them,' is well founded.

To speak about the location of selves in cosmos at transcendental level might prompt one to hastily think that he is negating relative truth and plurality of ways in which we find ourselves across cultures and communities. Understanding of Gandhi's cosmos will relieve us from this doubt. Let us not forget that Gandhi has forced intellectuals and academics to include him in discourses of modernity and redefine it in ways in which beauty is discovered in difference, slowness, simplicity, austerity, and most importantly 'voluntary poverty.' Modernity understood in the way he did, distorts the true nature of

the self, and what we perceive through the prism of modernity is a false notion of the self, dislocated from the cosmos. He tells us to relive tradition with all its associated norms and virtues. So individuals in the cosmos can celebrate values of 'difference' or 'otherness,' if we may say so, subject to restrictions dictated by *dharma*. In other words, he does not allow traditions and communities to subordinate the autonomy of the individual. If some traditional practices have over time become corrupt to the extent of distorting the self, they must be abandoned. They cannot be allowed to perpetuate the 'othering' process.

Supreme Primacy of the Other: Cosmopolitan Dharma

Here is one of the last notes left behind by Gandhi in 1948, the year in which he was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic.

> I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away.[38]

The above lines express Gandhi's deepest social thought, which can serve as manifesto of a cosmopolitan *dharma*. In these lines we find a radical inversion of the self-other relationship that has been accentuated in political theory and in our social life.

Conclusion

This paper is in the nature of a preliminary exercise to excite and explore possibilities of a cosmopolitan framework thinking along Gandhi. Frameworks of theorizing have largely been West-centric. Texts and ideas carry peculiarities of the context, history, and social formation. To see a text originating in the non-West from the Western-prism will run the risk of externalising the quintessence of the text. This raises to the fore the question of 'alterity.' This paper concludes that a framework to be truly cosmopolitan must include non-Western prisms as well. The West has largely adopted a binary framework privileging either teleology or deontology. The cosmology could well provide an alternative framing for conceiving, explaining and theorizing ideas. This paper intends to show that there is a connect of cosmology underlying Gandhi's writings.

Analysis of the self-other relationship has suffered because of

universalising instincts of liberalism. Tendency to see all ideas and concepts in dichotomous frames precipitates the gulf between 'self' and 'other.' What is worrisome is that there has been a preponderance of the liberal-universalist approach in the curricula of the non-West. This is showing clear ramifications in our social and civic life as well. What is required is to treat 'the other' as part of our selves, as one of the sources of our strength. Gandhi's approach to premising the 'self-other' relationship therefore calls for our attention.

This paper concludes that Gandhi's approach to conceiving 'self-other' relationship can be a good recipe for an alternative cosmopolitan framework. Cosmopolitan approach and cosmopolitanism as a thought have to be rescued from universalism. We are living in a global age in which our lives are marked by asymmetries, mainly economic. What is problematic is to note that asymmetries are not only inter-regional or international. Rather, they are intra-regional and intra-national as well. While some nations and regions prosper, others fight the demon of poverty. Even within a nation, some individuals are hungry for amassing insatiable wealth, while a huge chunk is starving, and committing suicide out of hunger. The compelling question to ponder over is 'what we owe to others, and why we owe.' Philosophers are cognizant of this question. What we should endeavour is to have in place a cosmopolitan approach to address this question. Cosmopolitan impulse in Gandhi is overwhelming. Cosmopolitan *dharma* can possibly be a normative guide to shape our thinking about one-another and what we owe each other.

Acknowledgements:

This paper was presented at a doctoral conference, organized by the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics, University of Birmingham, the U.K on 26th November, 2014. I am thankful to Dr. Ram Chandra Pradhan, Institute of Gandhian Studies, Wardha, Prof. Ashok Acharya, University of Delhi, Dr. Luis Cabrera and Dr. Scott Wiser, discussant for this paper, from the University of Birmingham for valuable comments.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 355–376

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Gandhi and Materialism: An Economic Perspective

Rana Ravinder Singh

ABSTRACT

No amount of literature can do full justice to the practicability of Gandhi's ideology. His life is an enormous data source for interdisciplinary research. The more one digs into Gandhi's experiments with truth, the more one gets enlightened. This paper attempts to apply his principles and ideology to the global phenomenon of materialism and the accompanying consumerism, within the domain of economic theory. His faith in the power of reform, his stress on a simpler life with limited desires, his emphasis on the virtue of self-restraint, and his idea of placing the interest of community before one's own, have been pitted against the canons of materialism. Gandhi's mass movements like the historic Salt March and his symbol of independence from the foreign subjugation, the famous "Charkha," have been analysed through the prism of economic principles. The paper also tries to find out as to how Gandhian ideology can be employed to address the global issues concerning materialism and consumerism that have come to dominate societies of the present times.

Keywords: Gandhi, materialism, consumerism, economic principles.

Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is not merely a name. Instead it is the title of an epic. With each page of this epic, one is exposed to an ocean of knowledge. This knowledge base surpasses the boundaries of any given subject and connects the dots between various disciplines. But does this knowledge stand the test of time? Is it possible to address the modern day queries and present feasible solutions to the present world problems using Gandhian ideology? This paper builds on this

platform. The paper tries to make use of Gandhian perspective and way of life to answer the questions related to materialism that have become so relevant in the present global economy. The earlier human wants were limited to the basic necessities of life. But with the advent of the Industrial Revolution and Globalization, the desires increased manifold and the humans started to accumulate much more than what was required for subsistence. A new pattern of life emerged: Materialism that had roots in glorification of self and acquisition of material wealth. Materialism emerged as a giant mechanical setup consuming the morals and values of the people and replacing these virtues with the tangible objects. It gave new definition to the concept of happiness and contentment. People, consumed by the materialistic values, started to believe that happiness could actually be bought. Consumerism became the fulcrum of this setup, always keeping people in the hunt for consuming and accumulating more. This consumerist society needed things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever increasing rate.[1] Consumerism created a consumption function in which the people started to emulate others. With the increase in their income, their consumption increased, but with a fall in their income, their consumption pattern didn't change. This is because people continuously tried to improve or at least maintain their position on the relative scale of living standard.[2] Thus, materialism through consumerism took over our life style. The western civilization accepted and spread this philosophy which Gandhi considered to be the root cause of conflict, inequality, starvation, suffering and discontentment across the globe. That's why when someone asked Gandhi what he thought about the western civilization, he replied, "I think it would be a good idea."[3] In the following paragraphs, an effort has been made to stitch together the ideas of Gandhi and attributes of materialism and consumerism, both of which are intrinsically wedded to the economic framework. The paper delves upon the economic fundamentals behind Gandhi's ideology and put them to test in the materialism dominated society of the present world.

Virtue of Self Restraint: Answer to India's Growing Debt Problem?

Gandhi was the epitome of self-restraint. In fact the whole life of M.K. Gandhi was a tale of self-restraint and self-discipline. Gandhi maintained that there was no end to the human desires. Materialism makes people spend their whole life trying to afford materialistic things and when they do obtain them, they aspire for more. This gives birth to conspicuous consumption, wherein the consumption is not need based but wasteful with a view to enhance one's social prestige.[4] Gandhi in one of his quotes says: "while there is enough on

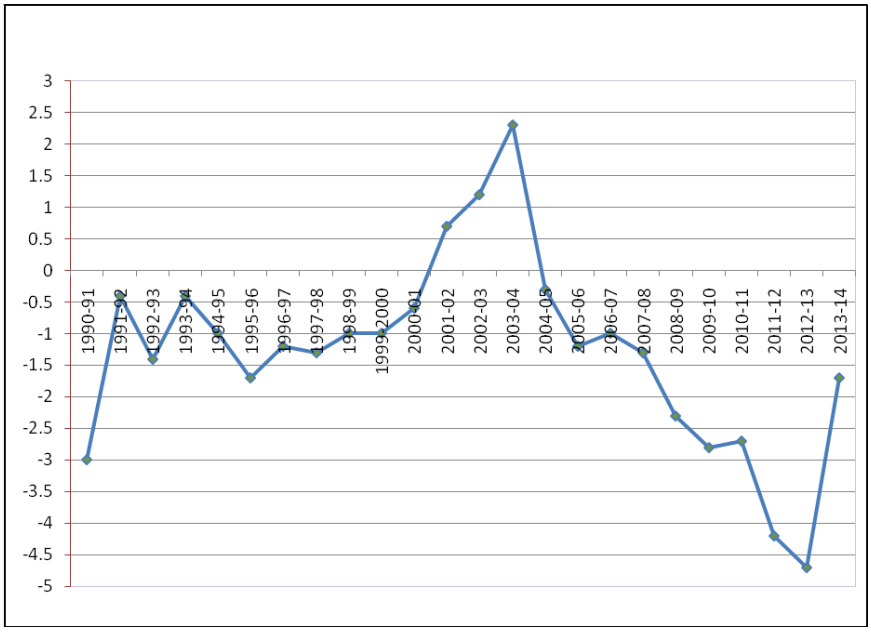
earth for every man's need, there is not enough for everyone's greed."[5] In yet another quote, he points out "Not to have control over the senses is like sailing in a rudderless ship, bound to break to pieces on coming in contact with the very first rock."[6] It is clear that Gandhi advocated a life of simplicity with minimum materialistic desires. With the onset of globalisation and the rise of middle class in India, the avenues and incentives have seen a phenomenal growth. People are not living off their incomes, but credit. Globalization has come up with a number of financial instruments such as credit cards, Pay pal, Paisa Pay to make sure that the urge for consumption and accumulation never dies. India's retail market was estimated at $470 billion in 2011 and is expected to grow to $675 billion by 2016 and $850 billion by 2020.[7] The e-commerce business has been flourishing like never before. India's e-commerce market was worth about $2.5 billion in 2009, it went up to $6.3 billion in 2011 and to $14 billion in 2012.[8] Overall e-commerce market is expected to reach Rs 1,07,800 crores (US$24 billion) by the year 2015. In order to sustain this consumer behaviour in the face of any adverse action by the government, virtual currency "Bitcoin" has been launched in 2009. This virtual currency is totally unregulated and in many cases untraceable. The currency is accepted in many parts of the world as a means of payment and exchange.[9] This tendency among the expanding Indian middle class, to acquire and accumulate more than what is required, has posed serious problems to Indian economy. One of the main economic indicators reflecting a country's tendency to live off its borrowings, i.e. consuming more than its income, is Current Account Deficit. Current Account is the sum of the balance of trade (exports minus imports of goods and services), net factor income (such as interest and dividends) and net transfer payments (such as foreign aid). The line graph in Figure-1 shows India's Current Account Deficit as a percentage of India's GDP over the years.

The data has been taken for nearly two and a half decade, starting from the fiscal year 1990-91 (the year considered to be the year of onset of market liberalization, globalisation and mass consumerism in India) till 2013-14. A cursory look at the graph reveals a marked trend in India's Current Account situation. For the entire period under consideration, India had a positive Current Account balance in just 3 fiscal years, i.e. for years 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04. For the rest of the fiscal years, we suffered a deficit in the Current Account. The Current Account Deficit as a percentage of GDP reached an astonishing figure of-4.2 in fiscal year 2011-12 and breached it further in fiscal year 2012-13 to strike the bottom at -4.7. Countries recording a Current Account Deficit have strong imports, a low Savings Rate and

high personal consumption rates as a percentage of disposable incomes.

On page 362, line 2, "Source: Reserve Bank
text with a red line.

India's Current Account Balance (% of GDP), 2004-05



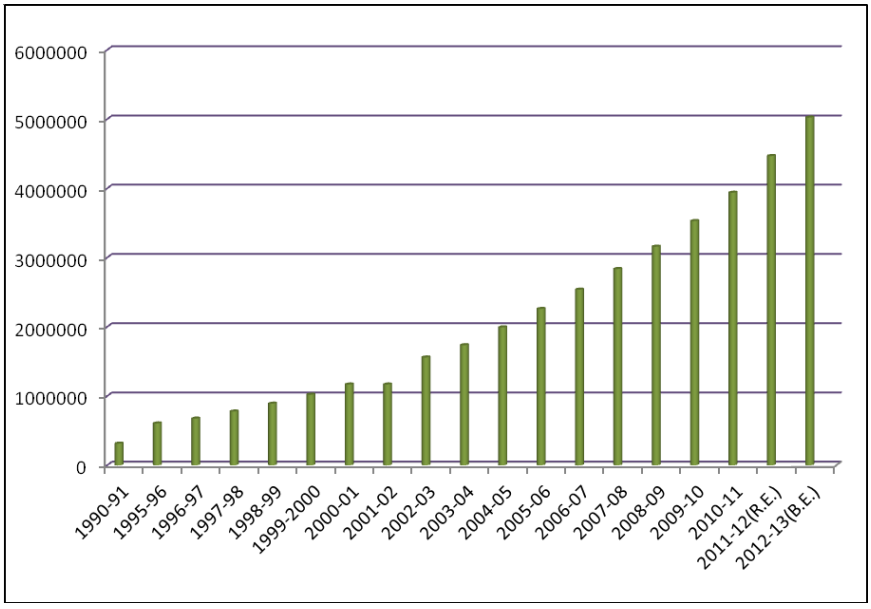
Soure: Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

Figure-1

The data clearly indicates that India has been consuming by far more than what its national income can sustain. In fact, India has been virtually living off the borrowings for a major period after opening up Indian economy to the global producers. The question then arises as to how sustainable such an existence could be? The answer is "Not Much." It would not be wrong to say that Indians would have to take the corrective measures pretty soon. The doling out of subsidies by the government to consumers to enable more consumption is pulling up the fiscal deficit [It is the difference between the government's expenditures and its revenues (excluding the money it has borrowed)] of the country. It would be appropriate here to mention the case of oil imports in India. It is because of the subsidy assisted over consumption of oil that it forms the largest component of India's import bill and is responsible for increasing Current Account Deficit. An expanding Current Account Deficit and fiscal deficit

increases the public debt as well as the cost of borrowing. Figure-2 gives a detailed picture of India's debt profile. The figure shows the liability of Central government of India over the years. The figure reveals that India's debt has shown a uniform upward trend over the years.

Debt Postion of the Govt. of India (In Rs Crores)
(Amount outstanding at the end of March)



Source: Indian Public Finance Statistics, 2013-14

Figure-2

When we look for the possible solutions to the growing debt problem of India, the Gandhian ideology of self-restraint seems to show us the way. The core issue here is that the internal resistance of man, i.e. the power and will not to give in to the materialistic urges, has been undermined. Unfortunately, education set up and governance have lost moral standing and values have gotten debased, the reason being that materialism and individualism have become synonymous. Individualism advocates maximisation of one's own utility. This pushes people into an unending loop of personal gratification and personal desires. Materialism feeds on such behaviour and attitude. The value based education system and a well knit family structure complemented by a disciplined life could become the potent tools to contain such a

wasteful life style. Economies should not merely focus on increasing the output of consumer goods, but the emphasis should be on the equitable distribution of country's resources. People should be willing to offer to redistribute income from the rich to the poor. Money spent on wasteful expenditure should be channelled towards provision of basic necessities of life to the needy and poor. The goal should be to achieve Inclusive development, wherein even the most backward of the lot becomes a part of the growth story. This can only happen if we are willing and committed to restrain our desires and put others' needs above ours. Such a transformation can have direct impact on lowering the consumer's propensity to import, i.e. the portion of increased income that is spent on imports, thereby reducing country's deficits and easing the pressure of public debt. An economy's marginal propensity to Import (MPM) is given by: $\triangle M/\triangle Y$, where $\triangle M$= Change in country's Imports and $\triangle Y$= Change in country's income. Imports are leakages from the economy as the expenditure on them becomes income of foreign producers. Greater the marginal propensity to import of domestic consumers, greater would they be spending on imports, thereby reducing the scope and extent of domestic income increase. An increased propensity to import can cause a country's imports to exceed its exports, causing a trade deficit and hence a swelling debt. The Gandhian ideology of simple life, contentment and self-restraint would help in containing this propensity to import. A lower MPM would mean lesser leakage; ensure greater value of foreign trade multiplier and a subsequent rise in domestic income via increase in country's exports.

The Economics of "Charkha" (Spinning Wheel)

Gandhi once said: "Materialism and morality have an inverse relationship. When one increases, the other decreases."[10] A materialistic society that feeds on consumerism, transforms its whole socio-economic fabric. Materialism is a way of life. A way of life, that focuses on "self" over the community and society. It focuses on glorification of materialistic values and urges.[11] It is like a drug, addicting people with its intoxication and developing a constant urge for more. It thrives on destruction of virtues like contentment, self-discipline and ideas of equity and social justice. It breeds inequality because only then, it would be able to create the divide of haves and have nots. The have nots would spend their entire life emulating the materialistic life style of haves and materialism would thus flourish.

With the advent of Industrial Revolution, the western economies suddenly realised the power of mass production and the associated rapid economic growth. These economies realized that they could

improve upon their incomes and living standards at a rate that was unprecedented. But the mass production would require things consumed at an ever increasing rate, beyond the aggregate demand of the domestic economy. So, these economies started to look for alternative economies and to lure these societies with the comforts that the materialism had to offer. To sell them the idea of personal gratification and individualism; and to make them "addicts," But such a feat would need an exceptionally innovative marketing strategy. It would require a complete structural transformation of the host country's economic and social setup. Gandhi had come to understand this comprehensive strategy of the British. He knew that to sell the idea of western civilization and consumerism to Indian masses, British first had to dismantle the socio-economic milieu of India. This would mean destroying the self sufficiency of Indian villages, the Indian handicrafts, the Indian agriculture, horticulture and pottery, furniture making, metal work, jewellery and the modest Indian manufacturing sector. The colonial power, therefore, used every tool at its disposal to make sure Indian people accepted the mechanised goods of the west and made them part of their daily lives. Lord Macaulay tried to sell this idea of materialism to Indians while introducing the Indian Education Act in the British Parliament by announcing, "We must do our best to form a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."[12] Gandhi knew that the prime target of British had to be the Indian villages as the majority of Indian population was living there. In Gandhi's own words, "The true India is to be found not in its few cities, but in its seven hundred thousand villages. If the villages perish, India will perish too."[13] Gandhi wanted to make sure that the self sufficiency of villages was not compromised in any way due to the mechanized production culture of the west. Gandhi was actually employing sound economic principles there. He knew that India had comparative advantage in the labour intensive techniques of production. It was because labour was abundant in India and it was cheap. Hence, labour could have added to the value of the goods by hands (the labour theory of value).[14] Gandhi himself wrote, "It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that millions of people have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature has bestowed upon us this great gift which is our hands. If the craze for machinery methods continues, it is highly likely that a time will come when we shall be so incapacitated and weak that we shall begin to curse ourselves for having forgotten the use of the living machines given to us by God."[15] But consumerism entails mass production, which is only possible when labour is replaced by capital (machines). Such a mode of production would have created unemployment and would

have left more people out in the streets dying of starvation and hunger. That is why Gandhi advocated production by masses instead of the western concept of mass production. This was to ensure that India's relatively abundant factor of production, i.e. Labour, was effectively used and employment was generated. Moreover, because of the low income level of village people in India and their unmet desire for basic needs, their Marginal propensity to consume (MPC), i.e. portion of increased income spent on consumption, was high. This meant that once the machine made goods at cheaper rates flooded India; they would have created their market because the naïve Indians would have fallen prey to the broader materialistic strategy of the British, thereby effectively destroying the local manufacturing units. This is when Gandhi introduced *charkha* (spinning wheel) to the Indian masses, in its new *avatar* and a broader meaning. The spinning wheel became the symbol of economic freedom, political independence, and cohesive and classless communities. The weaving and wearing of homespun cloth became a mark of distinction for all social groups. It gave a new definition to the economic concept of self-employment and self-reliance. Gandhi asked Indians to boycott foreign goods and accept *"Charkha"* and *"Swadeshi,"* i.e. the manufacture and consumption of indigenous products, as a way of life. He urged masses to purchase from the local producers instead and help Indian workers maintain the self-reliance of villages. This was to ensure there was no leakage of Indian wealth out to the foreign countries. A comprehensive picture of this drain of wealth from Indian to British coffers can be found in Dadabhai Naoroji's book *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*.[16] Gandhi was of the opinion that the local resources should be used for building up local economies, that there should be minimum dependence on external economies. The external economies were prone to fluctuations as they were out of the ambit of domestic policy control and hence dependence on them would have made the local (village/community) economies vulnerable. A strong local economy enhances community spirit, community relationships, and community well-being. In such an economy, the emphasis is not on competition but on cooperation, where the focus is not on the "survival of the fittest," but on mutual survival and mutual co-existence.

But unfortunately, we find that India has, at times, drifted away from the Gandhian economic principles only to suffer. Indian government has been criticised for exposing Indian economy too much to the International market. And this has been done in the name of economic growth. Unfortunately, the economic growth and materialistic life style have been used as synonyms by the Indian planners. Economic policies are being framed in such a way that can

help increase purchasing power of the masses, regardless of the distributive justice, so that they could consume more and accumulate more. The focus is greater on growth than development. Today, Indian economy is more vulnerable to external shocks than ever before due to such policy. The Global recession that struck international markets after the collapse of the housing bubble in late 2007, is a classic example of it. Indian economy which was experiencing a growth rate of 8-9 per cent, suddenly decelerated to below 5 per cent growth rate in the subsequent years, with many quarters exhibiting a negative growth rate in the manufacturing sector. The "trickle-down effect" theory of which the Indian (UPA-I and UPA-II) government and Planning Commission of India are the biggest supporters, has failed miserably. The idea that growth percolates down from the rich to the poor eventually, has been severely criticised. It has only created inequalities and a sense of disillusionment among the Indian masses.[17] Although India has recorded faster growth rate in the recent past, especially during the early part of Eleventh Five Year Plan, the growth has been jobless, fruitless and rootless. It is ironic that the Gandhian economic principles are being used more at international level than in Indian economy context. The Obama Government of United States of America, the epitome and embodiment of capitalism, materialism and consumerism, used the Gandhian economic postulates when it included a protectionist 'Buy American' provision in its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, as a strategy to pull its economy out of global recession. The provision made it mandatory for any public building or public works project funded by the new stimulus package to use iron, steel and other manufactured goods produced in the United States only. European Union economies like Ireland are trying to pull themselves out of the abyss of Euro crisis (as Ireland has officially declared to have left its dependence on the international bailout) by reducing their dependence on external sector, by strengthening their domestic market and economy and by following the austerity measures. Many countries of the world are strengthening their local economies wherein the focus is on the use of local resources for local production and local consumption, as was encouraged by Gandhi. One can find a dimension of this in the Regional Trade Agreements between the countries such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which is based on the "Rules of Origin" principal. The principle is used to determine the origins of goods. Locally (within the free trade area) manufactured good is traded duty free while the import of commodities produced outside the local markets is taxed.

If the present dispensation is to go, Gandhi is our hope. World is

not lost yet. The sound economic principles that powered *"Charkha"* are very much there to be used and applied. In fact, India has incorporated the Gandhian economic ideology on self-reliance in its Five Year Plans. To minimise the dependence of domestic economy on external sector, India incorporated the idea of "Import substitution." India tried to enhance its capacities to indigenously produce the products that were being sold in international markets. To ensure the self-reliance of villages, a number of social services schemes have been implemented by the government of India, targeting rural areas. Former President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam actually used the Gandhian economics of "Charkha," when he gave the idea of PURA (Providing Urban Amenities to Rural Areas), the mission objective of which is "Holistic and accelerated development of compact areas around a potential growth centre in a Gram Panchayat (or a group of Gram Panchayats) through Public Private Partnership (PPP) framework for providing livelihood opportunities and urban amenities to improve the quality of life in rural areas." The main focus of India's Eleventh (2007-2012) and Twelfth (20012-2017) Five Years Plans is "Inclusive Growth," which again has its roots in the Gandhian economic model of social and economic inclusion via local area development.[18] The objective is to ensure that the fruits of growth are reaped by even the most backward strata of society and to ensure that this stratum too contributes and becomes a part of the India's growth story.

"Hate the Sin and not the Sinner" - The Economics of Reformation

These words of Gandhi reflect his views on the human nature and his behaviour. To him, a sinner (criminal) was just another person whose actions were not in conformity with the established norms of the society. This person could have fallen prey to circumstances or to various sensual pleasures, incapable of understanding the ramifications of treading this undesirable path. In such a scenario, Gandhi stressed on the meaningful role society could play in reforming the person. The strategy should be to engage such a person in the social framework through reformation and guidance, rather than isolating him and tagging him as an outlaw. Gandhi believed in the intrinsic goodness of every human being. Gandhi acknowledged that a person could be wrong under a given set of circumstances but he refused to acknowledge that the person was incorrigible. Gandhi in one of his quotes says: "Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature."[19] If the person continues to tread on the wrong path, it means failure on the part of the society to take each and every

person along. One finds sound economic fundamentals in his ideology. The strategy of focussing on reformation so that the criminal foregoes (reduces demand for) criminal activity is now being applied throughout the world to answer the legal issues that have been lingering on for years altogether. Materialism, through its operating tool of consumerism, unfortunately, in its wake has created demand for a number of illegal and socially undesirable commodities.[20] Materialism, through these commodities has provided people with a simpler alternative to fill the vacuum in their lives. Empirical economic findings have time and again showed that the demand for such illegal commodities, such as narcotics, drugs and anti-social consumptions such as prostitution, are price inelastic in nature. This means that their demand is not much affected by the changes in their price. Governments have tried to reduce the demand of these commodities on the basis of classic economic fundamentals via taxing these commodities heavily or by assigning stringent punishments in the form of heavy fines and jail sentences.[21] But these strategies have failed miserably to deliver much. The reason being, the demand for such illegal consumption and addictions is inelastic in nature. This means that raising their price through taxation would only result in increased consumer expenditure on them. The same goes for punitive legal actions. If there is demand in the market, it would be supplied no matter what. This is the working mechanism of materialistic societies and consumerism. Laws could only try to influence the supply, but as long as there is demand in the market, the suppliers would eventually find a way to circumvent the law and supply the same. In fact, a stricter action or law on the part of the government would only end up giving rise to a number of other illegal activities. This has been realised by a number of countries. Take the example of Prostitution. It has been prevalent in the societies from times immemorial. No amount of legal punitive action has been able to stop it. Areas where anti-prostitution laws are stricter, problem of human trafficking, slavery, women abuse and torture are rampant. Stringent laws only add up to the woes of human rights violation. This is because once prostitution is declared illegal; the victim is unable to approach any court of law for her security. The illegal trade of prostitution goes unabated in the underground circles because there is and will always be demand for it. Thailand is an apt example of such a country where although prostitution is illegal, yet it continues to be the world's (in) famous destination for sex tourism. Countries have now begun to realize this and started decriminalizing prostitution. Countries like Germany and Netherlands have made prostitution legal. The focus is now not on the supply, but to influence the demand side of prostitution.

Another example on similar terms with regard to illegal consumption can be cited here. Marijuana, which is a drug, an intoxicant and a hallucinogen, has been the favourite of drug mafia due to its global demand. South Africa, Mexico, Paraguay, Columbia, Nigeria, Kazakhstan and Jamaica are a few countries that have been selling marijuana internationally. Ironically, marijuana yields greater profits in countries where it is illegal. The reason here again is the inelastic demand of addictive consumption. A higher tax or a stricter law only jacks up the price, having negligible effect on the demand. The addicts in fact get engaged in other illegal activities like extortion and robbery, so as to finance their demand for these intoxicants.

Figure-3 shows the effect of the conventional government policy to contain the supply of the illegal commodities. Commodity could be taxed heavily or stricter laws could be enforced on the sale of illegal commodities. The result in both the cases would be a backward shift of the supply curve from S_1 to S_2. Since demand of such illegal commodities (addictions) is inelastic, it would lead to an increase in price proportionately greater than the fall in demand, thereby increasing the total final expenditure on the commodity.

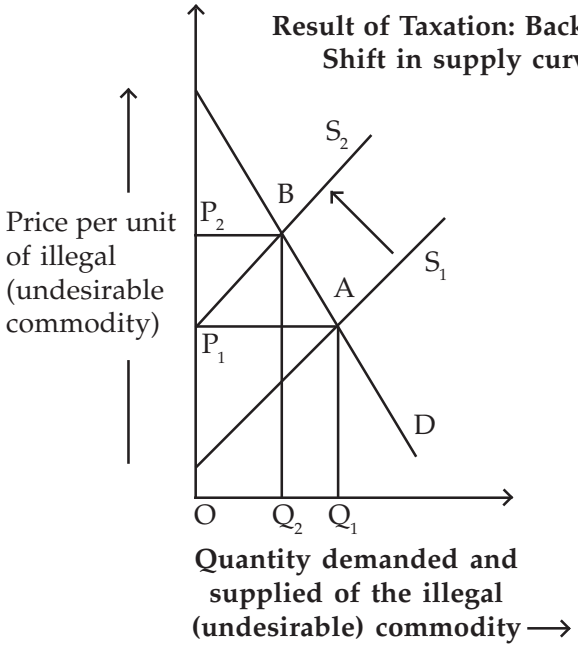


Figure - 3

Initial Expenditure = Price per unit × Number of units sold

$= OP_1 \times OQ_1$

= Area of rectangle (OP_1AQ_1)

Final Expenditure = Price per unit × Number of units sold

$= OP_2 \times OQ_2$

= Area of rectangle (OP_2BQ_2)

Clearly, Area of rectangle (OP_2BQ_2)> Area of rectangle (OP_1AQ_1)

Hence the total expenditure on the commodity is greater after the tax (or legal restriction) has been imposed. This is clearly undesirable.

Of late, countries have started to acknowledge this fact. In December 2013, Uruguay became the first country to legalise the production, sale and distribution of marijuana in limited quantities under government regulation. Netherlands and states of Colorado and Washington in U.S.A. have also followed suit and legalised possession of marijuana in their respective jurisdictions. So the question arises, "have the governments across the globe submitted meekly before the drug problem and before the drug cartels and the traders of flesh and prostitution?" The answer is a resounding "No." Governments are in fact adopting a new approach— one that I prefer to call the Gandhian approach of reformation, wherein the focus is not on the supply side, but on reducing demand for such illegal consumption through reformative measures. This is being done as an effective means to put a dent in the underground, unregulated market for marijuana, prostitution and other such illegal consumption. This is being achieved through the establishment of various rehabilitation centres and de-addiction centres. These centres rely on the power of reformation and intrinsic will power of the affected and give them a chance to once again enter the society's mainstream. Cognitive-behavioural therapy, Multidimensional family therapy, Motivational interviewing and Motivational incentives along with meditation form the working basis of these centres. Since 2001, Portugal has been relying on such measures to limit the drug abuse. Instead of imposing criminal penalties and sending drug abusers to jail, they are sent to "dissuasion commissions" that offer therapy.[22] The logic behind the whole exercise is to reduce the market's demand for the illegal

commodities. Once the demand gets reduced, that too due to the self-imposed will of the consumer, the market for such commodities shrinks. This way, keeping reformation of the affected as the focus, we try to eradicate the wrong (criminal activity) from the society. So 'hate the sin and not the sinner'.

The Gandhian approach has been shown in Figure-4. In this panel, Gandhian reformative strategy has been applied to contain the market (consumption) for illegal commodity. The focus in this case is to reduce the demand for the product. The reformative measures ensure that the market demand for the illegal commodity decreases and the demand curve shifts backwards from D_1 to D_2. Such a shift causes a fall in demand and expenditure incurred on the illegal commodity. The following calculations prove this:

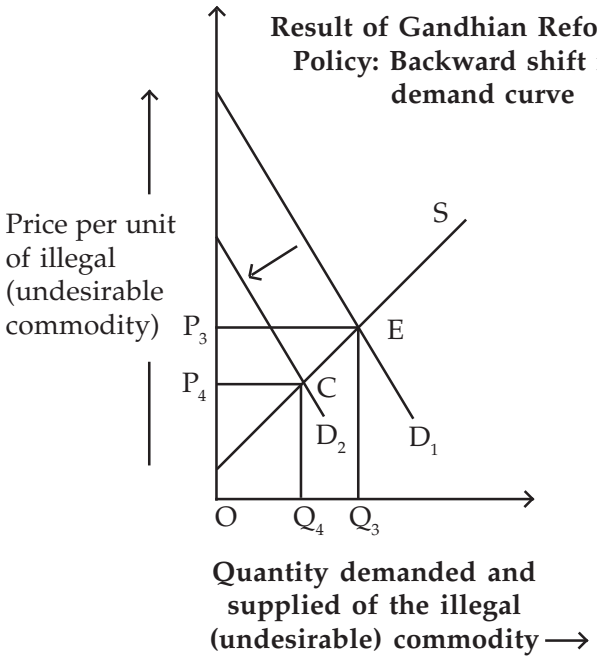


Figure- 4

Initial Expenditure = Price per unit × Number of units sold

$= OP_3 \times OQ_3$

= Area of rectangle (OP_3EQ_3)

Final Expenditure = Price per unit × Number of units sold

$= OP_4 \times OQ_4$

= Area of rectangle (OP_4CQ_4)

Clearly, Area of rectangle (OP_4CQ_4) < Area of rectangle (OP_3EQ_3)

Hence, the total expenditure on the illegal commodity is less after the reformative policy has been applied than before. This is clearly the desirable effect we were looking for.

Dandi March: A March Against Monopoly

While materialism through its philosophy of mass consumption has provided consumers with the "so-called" alternatives for better living, it has through its principles of mass production, created market structures wherein a few have come to control most of the land's resources and thus emerge as the undisputed and dominant leaders of the market. The salt march by Gandhi was a march against one such economic structure (monopoly) that is an offshoot of materialism. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on March 12, 1930 left his Sabarmati Ashram near Ahmedabad and marched 390 kms for 24 days to reach the coastal village of Dandi, located at a small town called Navsari, in the State of Gujarat. On reaching his destination, he picked up the grains of salt and changed India's destiny. India would no longer remain subvert to the British power. We all are familiar with this historic march that led to a nation-wide civil disobedience movement and the socio-political developments that followed. So let us now, in this section, try to interpret the economic dimension of this march and its relation vis-à-vis materialism. Salt is a basic necessity of life, whose price elasticity of demand is inelastic. This means even a substantial change in its price, would not cause much change in its quantity demanded. This means that if the price of salt is increased, due to its proportionately lesser effect on quantity demanded, the total revenue accruing to the producer would substantially increase. With lower cost of production and higher revenue, great profits are to be had. Gandhi had a great sense of economics and understood this calculation very well. The taxation policy of the British with regard to salt production in India was a broader scheme of creating a market structure of monopoly. It was not like the salt was not taxed in India before British, but the tax was relatively quite low. In 1765, Robert Clive laid the foundation of salt monopoly and salt taxation. He was instrumental in increasing the tax on salt production in India firstly to

35 per cent and later to 50 per cent.[23] The salt lobby in Cheshire, England was hugely benefitted from such an economic policy. Increased taxes on salt producers in India raised the cost of production, and this gave an opportunity to the salt lobby in Cheshire to capture the Indian salt market. The salt production effectively moved from India to England. With little competition, the salt producers in England enjoyed supernormal (economic) profits accruing to a monopolist. The salt lobby used its political influence and clout to impose taxes on domestic salt producers in India and hence retained its monopoly power.[24] With high price of salt, other unethical practices associated with monopoly, such as smuggling and adulteration cropped up in India. When Gandhi lifted his hand filled with grains of salt in Dandi, he put a dent in the monopoly power of British salt producers. What Gandhi effectively did was that he paved the way for competition in salt production industry. This was to restrict the monopoly power. Competition brought a reduction in price and an increased quantity available for the consumers.

Figure 5 shows the monopoly power on consumer goods' price and output and the loss suffered by a consumer under such market conditions. Monopoly has been compared in the figure with the competitive market structure to bring forth the differences in consumer welfare. AR, MR, ATC and MC are the Average revenue, Marginal revenue, Average total cost and Marginal cost curves respectively. The monopoly price (P_2) is higher than the competitive price (P_1) and the monopoly output (Q_2) is less than the competitive output (Q_1).

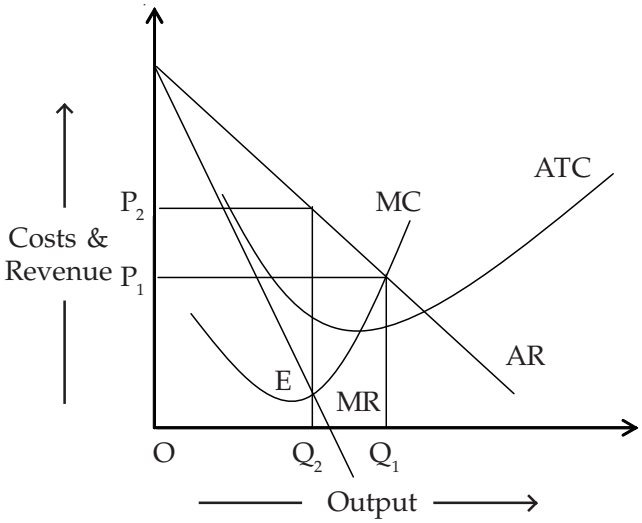


Figure - 5

So a monopolist is able to sell lesser output at a higher price as compared to a firm operating in a competitive market and hence enjoys supernormal profits. This is because the monopolist is able to sell the product at a price greater than the marginal cost of production (i.e. cost incurred in producing an additional unit of the commodity) as opposed to a firm in a competitive market that sells output at a price equal to its marginal cost of production. This is the monopoly power that was being enjoyed by the salt lobby of England, the power that Gandhi tried to break, the power that many Multi-National Corporations still have and exercise. Materialism has given these corporations ample scope and space to flex their economic muscles. While catering to the ever increasing consumption demand of the global consumers, these economic entities have secured their market dominance and are now exhibiting monopolistic powers.

In the present world, one finds different facets of monopoly power. The Transnational corporations, because of their comparative advantage of ample resources, improved technology, better information resource base and an expansive network, have time and again used this power to enjoy supernormal profits. The market dominance of these corporations can be gauged from the billions of dollars these companies earn in revenue annually, which is comparable and sometimes exceeds the GDP of many countries (see Table-1).

S. No.	Company*/Country	Company Revenue*/ Country's GDP (in Million US $)
01	Wal-Mart*	4,76,294*
02	Royal Dutch Shell*	4,59,599*
03	Austria	4,15,672
04	Exxon Mobil*	4,07,666*
05	BP*	3,96,217*
06	United Arab Emirates	3,83,799
07	Volkswagen*	2,61,539*
08	Toyota Motor*	2,56,454*
09	Greece	2,41,721
10	Portugal	2,20,022

11	Samsung Electronics*	2,08,938*
12	New Zealand	1,85,787
13	Berkshire Hathaway*	1,82,150*
14	Ukraine	1,77,431
15	Apple*	1,70,910*
16	Hungary	1,29,989
17	General Motors*	1,55,427*
18	Citigroup*	93,629*
19	Ecuador	90,023
20	Microsoft*	77,849*
21	Belarus	71,710
22	PepsiCo*	66,415*
23	Luxembourg	60,383

Source: Fortune Global 500, 2014 & World Bank (GDP Ranking, 2014)

Table-1

Many a times, corporates engage in predatory dumping (pricing). This is a pricing strategy wherein the foreign corporates dump the consumer goods in the domestic market at a very low price. This price is lower than being charged by the domestic producers. The strategy is to drive out competition from the domestic market as they are unable to sustain such low prices. Once the competition is out of the way, these corporates enjoy monopoly power and hence can raise the price of their products and earn economic profits.[25] This causes loss of consumer sovereignty and consumer choice. Another aspect of monopoly relates to the asymmetric information. A competitive market structure promotes correct and adequate information to the consumer about the product being sold by the seller. But monopolies lack this attribute and pass on asymmetric information. Asymmetric information is one in which one section or part of the market knows about the true nature and quality of the product (in this case, the monopolist), while as the other section or part of the market does not (in this case,

the consumer). The result is that inferior quality product continues to be sold in the market. Cheaper and low quality consumer goods drive better quality but dearer products out of the market. This is because of the inadequate and asymmetric information at the disposal of the consumer.[26] Add to this the millions of dollars of expenditure on selling costs like advertisements, product branding and marketing strategy by the monopolist. These selling costs build false trust of consumers for these products. What this false propaganda does is to create a myth in the minds of the people that they could be happy and at peace only when they would lay their hands on these products. Monopolists use this misplaced trust to sell their products to the consumers at their (consumer's) maximum willing price, thereby leaving behind almost zero consumer surplus. Countries have realised these ill effects of monopoly on consumer welfare and on consumer surplus. Many countries have competition laws and Antitrust laws in place. But the powerful political and economic clout of MNCs provides them ample chance to circumvent the legal framework. Many a times the firms realizing the monopoly power come together and form cartels. OPEC (Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) is a classic example of such a cartel. To avoid legal repercussions, cartels are many a time formed only tacitly but enforced with full economic conviction. This is why Gandhi stressed and encouraged the development of local markets. Consumers have knowledge of the products being sold in the local market. This would enable people to identify and isolate a good quality product from a bad one. Fixing of responsibility is easier and convenient as the seller is known to the consumer. The reward-punishment system works well under such a scenario because such a system is forged out of a relationship built over long lasting mutual trust.

Conclusion

No matter how much we discuss the negative attributes of materialism and consumerism, the fact remains that globalisation has made them a reality of the present day world. Economies across the board are following the policies of mass production and mass consumption to achieve the goal of rapid economic growth. So the question that needs to be pondered upon is whether Gandhi's ideology could be applied to optimise the economic behaviour of present materialism based societies. Gandhi is a way of life. A life which is based on self-discipline, self-restraint, egalitarianism and community based approach and harmony. At first these virtues seem contradictory to the economic principles of materialism and consumerism. But a keener study reveals the true picture. Gandhi was not against the economic

theories of consumption and production, what he was opposed to was humans becoming slaves to machines. He was not against the comfort and better life style that consumerism and economic growth promised to bring along with them, but he was against its overindulgence and the resultant destruction of social fabric and the loss of individual moral values and ethical codes that had kept the Indian civilization alive even after the passage of so many centuries. In his own words, "A certain degree of physical comfort is necessary but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of a help; therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them, seems to be a delusion and a trap. The satisfaction of one's physical needs must come at a certain point to a dead stop before it degenerates into physical decadence."[27] To Gandhi, spiritualism was not separate from economic freedom. Both could co-exist. A simpler way of life doesn't mean poorer standard of living. It only means that one values inner peace more than the external materialistic and tangible commodities. A simpler economy that has simpler needs and limited desires is much more prosperous than an economy with unlimited desires and an unending quest for growth which is bad both in content and intent.

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Gandhi Marg Quarterly
37(2): 377–400

http://gandhipeacefoundation.org/
ISSN 0016—4437

Notes & Comments

Relevance of *Satyagraha* as a Weapon of Conflict Resolution

Anil K Ojha

Introduction

SATYAGRAHA IS THE MOST important contribution of Gandhi to social philosophy and movement. It emerged as a weapon of conflict resolution. The concept of *satyagraha* could be understood in the broader context of Gandhian socio-political thought that developed out of actions, which he called 'Experiments with Truth.' It was aimed not merely at political change, but at the complete social, political, economic and cultural transformation. So far as its contemporary relevance as a means for attainment of justice and conflict resolution is concerned, diverse worldwide social movements drew and continue to draw inspiration from the Gandhian Way.

Gandhian Way: *Satyagraha* and its Prerequisites

Gandhian Way is a holistic philosophy of life and society equally applicable to national and international settings. The uniqueness of Gandhian Way is primacy of morality over power politics. 'Truth is God' and emphasis on ends—means continuum say it all. Gandhian Way rejects the western philosophical tradition of ends justifying the means. Purity of ends is an essential ingredient. In the Gandhian way, the solution of any conflict lies in the method of its resolution.

Truth with non-violence is the only pure means to achieve the goal of a peaceful world order.

Gandhi gave revolutionary turn to social reform movements. Gandhi applied *satyagraha* in the non-violent struggle against injustice, exploitation and dictatorship. Apart from the non-cooperation, civil-disobedience and individual *satyagraha* movements against British imperialism, Gandhi launched movements against untouchability and capitalist exploitation of the labour.[1]

Gandhi's world view is rooted in his concept of peace, which was comprehensive. It was neither mere absence of war nor acceptance of non-violence as a strategy. Gandhi linked peace with truth achieved through non-violence. Transformation of individual was an essential element of *satyagraha*. Peace is restored after resolution of conflict. Non-violence with the techniques of *satyagraha* and non-cooperation was to be the sanction for a peaceful society as envisaged by Gandhi.

Gandhian Way does not seek to avoid conflict, but seek to face it squarely. *Satyagraha* is clearly distinguished from passive resistance. *Satyagraha* is the weapon of the strong, one who is capable of self-suffering can use it. That strength can come only through following the path of truth with non-violence is emphasized in *satyagraha*. 'He who has not overcome all fear cannot practice *ahimsa* to perfection.'[2] Just as love for Gandhi was the other side of *ahimsa*, courage for him was the counterpart of self-suffering. He distinguished self-suffering from cowardice. He said: 'Where there is only one choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.'[3] Truth plus non-violence plus self-suffering constitute the essence of *satyagraha.*[4]

Gandhi kept human factor at the centre. 'Those who seek to destroy man rather than their manners adopt the latter and become worse than those whom they destroy under the mistaken belief that the manners will die with them. They do not know the root of the evil.'[5] Emancipation from human misery was an essential precondition for social transformation. He was not attempting any piecemeal social engineering, but a total transformation of both man and society.

Satya, *Ahimsa* and Moral State

Gandhi's fundamental belief is in *satya*, 'truth,' which he also calls God. *Satya* is the ruling principle of the universe. *Satya* manifests itself in all living beings, especially in humans, as self-consciousness or soul or spirit. Because all human beings participate in *satya*, all are parts of a single whole. External differences— race, caste, class, religion, regional loyalties — are irrelevant. According to Gandhi, love is the law of our being.[6] The only appropriate relation between human beings is love. And by love he means what one may usually

call compassion that is unconditional practical concern for the welfare and happiness of others. Such love implies *ahimsa*, non-violence, as a principle of social and political action. The achievement of political and moral ends through *ahimsa* is what Gandhi called *satyagraha*, 'truth force' or non-violent action, which is not passive or sullen. It calls for courage, strength of character and positive contribution to a righteous cause. Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence is absolute or dogmatic. In some circumstances, he thinks, it might be better to choose violence than submit to injustice. *Satya* constitutes the essence of human being. The body is only material, and, as such unreal. The satisfaction of bodily desire is degrading in as much as it represents a concession to the material and inauthentic. It follows that desire for anything beyond what is necessary to sustain life is to be avoided. Here lies the root of the contemporary concept of sustainable development. Western civilisation, in so far as it is centred upon unrestricted satisfaction of material desire, suffers from a moral shallowness that will lead to its downfall. For this reason, Gandhi rejects modern civilisation. For Gandhi, India's future must focus on the agricultural roots of her economy.

For Gandhi, civilisation is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our minds and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves…The mind is a restless bird, the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied…Happiness is largely a mental condition. Our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet."[7] Gandhi proclaimed ancient civilisation of India to be the best. The tendency of Indian civilisation is to elevate the moral being.

Gandhian Minimal State: Gandhi saw the state as the antithesis of how human beings should be organised. It institutionalises violence. It commands, compels, constrains. It encourages dependence and undermines self-reliance. In a word, the state dehumanises human beings. Yet it is indispensable because human beings lack the capacity to govern themselves. Gandhi's answer to this predicament is plea for a 'minimal state.' In the Gandhian concept of village republics, conflict will be resolved constructively through discussion and negotiation. The ends of such a state will be achieved not through threats and force, but through persuasion and consensus. Crime will be regarded not as wrong-doing to be punished, but as an illness to be treated with help and understanding. Gandhian concept of minimal state cannot be equated with the libertarian view of minimal state[8] espoused by contemporary philosophers like Robert Nozick, whose

emphasis is on night watchman state— state as a security agency— that lacks the moral fibre of Gandhian village republic.

Satyagraha as a Weapon of Conflict Resolution

Gandhi's experiments with *satyagraha* started in South Africa in late ninetenth century. The weapon of conflict resolution was perfected during struggles against the racist regime of South Africa. Gandhi himself recounts that the *satyagraha* in South Africa begun in 1906 persisted for eight years before concluding in 1914. He worked there for the restoration of justice to fellow Indians who were subjected to degrading and mortifying discriminations. Indians had been going to Natal since the sixties of the eighteenth century as indentured labourers. The treatment meted out to them and their descendants by the whites was humiliating. He, a barrister with British education also had to suffer. Natal Indian Congress was formed mainly at Gandhi's behest. It is being revived again. On October 28, 1913 he began the historic march from Newcastle to Volksrust at the head of nearly three thousand people. Finally, in 1914 he arrived at a settlement with the government. On January 21, 1914, *satyagraha* was suspended and the £ 3 poll tax on *Girmitias* in Natal was repealed. In the process, Gandhi became Mahatma. On his leaving South Africa, a prominent South African Boer politician Jan Christian Smuts remarked, "The Saint has left our shores. I sincerely hope forever."[9]

On various occasions, Gandhi clarified the difference between passive resistance and *satyagraha*. He cited three examples of passive resistance: the opposition offered by non-conformists against the Education Act passed by the British Parliament, the opposition formed by the suffragist movement, and the Doukhobors of Russia. *Satyagraha* is a more dynamic force than passive resistance because it contemplates prolonged mass action in resistance to injustice. Secondly, *satyagraha* can be practised at all levels—domestic, national and international, while passive resistance is contemplated at political level only. Thirdly, *satyagraha* offers continuous purification of mind. It has no place for hatred, while passive resistance may be compatible with internal violence towards the enemy. Gandhi said: 'Satyagraha differs from passive resistance as the North Pole from the South. Passive resistance may be offered along side of arms. It, often, is looked upon as preparation for arms.' But *satyagraha* and violent resistance are absolute antagonists. Passive Resistance was conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end, whereas *satyagraha* was conceived as the weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.[10] In *satyagraha* there is no

attempt to coerce or terrorise the opponent.[11] According to Gandhi, *satyagraha* has two essential constituents: Righteousness of cause— good End and purity of Weapon— good means. End-Means continuum is the base of the Gandhian Way.

Satyagraha inculcates *agraha* or moral pressure for the sake of truth. It is a natural outcome from the supreme concept of truth. Truth is the ultimate reality. It is imperative for the votary of truth to resist all encroachments against it. It is his duty to make endless endeavours for the realisation of truth realised through non-violence. Gandhi states: 'The world rests upon the bedrock of *satya* or Truth. *Asatya*, meaning untruth, also means non-existent; and Satya or Truth means "that which is". If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And Truth being "that which is" can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of Satyagraha in a nutshell.'[12] He said: "The very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha."[13] Gandhi had immense, deep and consistent faith in God as Truth. Gandhi in conversation with Romain Rolland in 1931 told him that since 1929 he had begun saying 'Truth is God,' because former would not exclude even the views of the atheists since they also adhere to the truth.[14]

Suffering serves three purposes: it purifies the sufferers; secondly, it makes a direct appeal to the soul of the oppressor; thirdly, it intensifies favourable public opinion. *Satyagraha* has various forms. Fasting can be one extreme form of *satyagraha*. Gandhi held that fasting and prayer give the required discipline, the spirit of self-sacrifice, humility and resoluteness of will. Fasting has to be applied only against those who are bound by ties of close personal affection. *Satyagraha* in the form of fasting cannot be undertaken against an opponent. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a kind of violence done to him. Fasting can be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him. Fasting can be applied against those who are responsive to moral persuasion. According to J. C. Smuts, it arouses the emotions of fear, shame, repentance, sympathy and humanity.[15] Gandhi held that fasting sets the soul free for efficacious prayer. He firmly believed that the great teachers of the world have derived extraordinary power for the good of the humanity and attained clarity of vision through fasting and prayer.

A *satyagrahi* is not demoralised by defeat, deceit or internal weakness, but they cure his weapon of any imperfection. Deceit concretises his resolve in the ultimate victory of *satyagraha*. The shocking deceit by General Smuts in the June 1908 on agreed terms including repeal of the infamous Asiatic Amendment Act strengthened

his faith in *satyagraha*. Gandhi declares his ultimate faith in the principle that an action performed with pure heart brings pure result whether manifest or latent. Further, a movement based on Truth effortlessly attracts pure and selfless assistance from various quarters.

Among the contemporary practitioners of Gandhian Way, Nelson Mandela is referred to as the leading one. Eulogising Mandela, Harsh Mander says that it would be hard to find a man so free from rancour against his tormentors, despite suffering brutal discrimination and hate under the apartheid, and twenty-seven years of brutal incarceration. Mandela is quoted as saying: "Deep down in every human heart, there is mercy and generosity. No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his/her skin, or his/her background, or his (her) religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."[16]

First *satyagraha* on the Indian soil was to be conducted at Viramgam against *Jakat*, but *Jakat* was withdrawn when preparations for *satyagraha* were under way. The question of repeal of the Indian Immigration Act in 1917 was another opportunity for *satyagraha*. The aim was fulfilled before the *satyagraha* was launched. Champaran *satyagraha* was the third. Gandhi praised the tolerance, endurance and perseverance of the farmers of Champaran. An appalling practice of *teen-kathia* that was century-old could be done away with only because of the self-discipline maintained by the *satyagrahis*. The struggle by the mill-workers of Ahmedabad was the fourth one. But the victory was not unblemished, as Gandhi had to resort to fast that he described as of putting pressure on the mill-owners. Gandhi accepts that workers could not win the hearts of owners as they failed to maintain total peace. Complete peace is three dimensional: *manasa* meaning maintaining peace in heart, *vacha* meaning maintaining peace in thought, *karmana* meaning maintaining peace in action. One who is fearless, free of enmity, impartial and aspires for supreme public interest that is truth can be a *satyagrahi*. One does not surrender before power based on coercion and violence. One who is bent upon to fight the evils and one who accepts truth and truth only can be a *satyagrahi*. *Satyagrahi* should not have any vested interest to protect.

Kheda *satyagraha* was the fifth in the sequence. Gandhi acknowledged that Kheda peasants had not learnt the lesson of peace and Ahmedabad mill workers did not understand the pure spirit of peace. That is why at the time of the sixth *satyagraha* in India against the Rowlett Act people had to suffer hardships. For Gandhi during the struggle the inherent ills of Indian society came into open. Gandhi gladly accepted the wrong and repented for it. His weapon attained

perfection. That black law was never enforced and ultimately it was withdrawn. Gandhi learnt a lesson from the struggle. Thereafter comes the Khilafat Movement, struggles against atrocities in Punjab and struggles for attaining *Swaraj*. Civil Disobedience Movement, individual *satyagraha* and Quit India Movements were the applications of *satyagraha* having momentous importance. Gandhi had also launched and led various *satyagrahas*, including Bardoli. These were focused on local problems, but had national ramifications.

For westerners, non-violence may appear as a negative word. They easily comprehend love, justice, freedom etc. However, it introduced a novelty into the dominant thinking of the western tradition, since it leads to different logical thinking. Non-violence, by lacking a corresponding positive word, leads westerners to think differently, which is based on deductive method governed by classical logic. It would be revealing to see how Jawaharlal Nehru at the time of Non Co-operation Movement had grasped its spirit. He says: "What I admired was the moral and ethical side of our movement and Satyagraha. I did not give an absolute allegiance to the doctrine of non-violence or accept it forever. He took it as a right policy for the prevailing Indian society… That seemed not only a good ethical doctrine but a sound practical politics, for the means that are not good often defeat the end in view and raise new difficulties…the means which satisfied my moral sense and gave me a sense of personal freedom. So great was this personal satisfaction that even possibility of failure did not count for much, for such failure could only be temporary."[17]

Gandhi experienced one of the merits of *satyagraha* that issue for *satyagraha* itself springs up, one does not have to go to look for the issues for *satyagraha*. Gandhi's experiments with truth taught him revealing lessons about *satyagraha*. Writing in Navajivan on 5 July 1925, Gandhi observes that at the beginning of *satyagraha* the enthusiasm, unity and perseverance is witnessed, while during the midst of struggle the tendencies of pessimism, apathy, internal feuds and jealousies are witnessed. And a few handful persons show unwavering faith, steadfastness and tolerance. Gandhi had unstinted faith on sacrifice, truth and non-violence. A person who adheres to truth has all the worldly gifts and he faces God. Hatred, enmity cannot stand near non-violence. For them who can withstand sufferings nothing is unattainable. When recourse to the weapon of *satyagraha* is done away with, the gains of *satyagraha* cannot be maintained.

Gandhi's strongest point is that he attempted to live according to his teachings. The sincere effort for the realisation of his ideas in

his own life, in the lives of the inmates of his *ashram* and in the social, economic and political life of India, imparts to Gandhian teachings a great solidity. The deep and profound devotion of Gandhi to God and the moral code left its indelible impress on his political techniques. Gandhi refused to take advantage of the weaknesses of his opponents and would willingly give up his hard won political victories if that would satisfy the minority.

Conclusion

Gandhi's *satyagraha* was an act of moral creativity. For Gandhi, *satyagraha* was not only a political weapon but a weapon of creativity. *Satyagraha* needs to be put on that pedestal from where it can intervene in politics for good and civil society could take shape. *Satyagraha* is a means of establishing faith in human beings as also in God. The philosophy of *satyagraha* holds every human being capable of doing well and thinking good. Without such faith *satyagraha* is impossible, because its aim is to bear self-suffering in order to generate a melt-down on the part of the other. Possibility of a moral dialogue with him is essential for *satyagraha* to succeed. In this sense, *satyagraha* is a moral act. It recognises the morality of the other. *Satyagraha* is the only means of change that does not make villain of the other. Through dehumanising the other, one ends the possibility of dialogue with him. *Satyagraha* is liberating. It liberates both the oppressed of his bondages and the oppressor of his need to behave inhumanly with others.[18] *Satyagraha* is the best weapon to ensure and sustain human rights. The birth of non-violence as a political theory is seen as a seminal contribution of Gandhi to conflict resolution.[19]

Gandhi's approach to peace is based on *satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* is the moral alternative to war. Gandhi showed us the way to use it for problem-solving and conflict-resolution from micro-level to macro-level. Gandhi's *satyagraha* proved to be an effective means for political redress. It has the potentiality to transform the power relationship. Many of the contemporary challenges related to war and peace, terrorism, human rights, sustainable development, climate change, socio-political unrest, and politico-administrative corruption could be faced through adoption of the Gandhian Way. The twenty-first century world has much to learn from it.

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GANDHI MARG

Quarterly Journal of the
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION

VOLUME THIRTY TWO ❑ NUMBER THREE ❑ OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2010

Published by:
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION
221 & 223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi-110 002
Phones: +91-11-23237491/93, Fax: +91 +11-23236734
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101 Uses for a Dead Mahatma: The Co-option of Gandhi for Non-Gandhian Causes

Thomas Weber

GANDHI HAS AN enduring influence. This is quite obvious from the voluminous literature, from the amount of times Gandhi's name falls from the lips of the powerful and famous, from the use of Gandhi's name in various nonviolent campaigns, from the fact that Gandhi studies courses at tertiary institutions are proliferating in India and elsewhere. Some would argue that Gandhi the publicist had made a brand, even a super brand, of himself; and that the recognition of that brand is still very much in evidence almost seventy years after his death. Why this is so seems fairly obvious, however it may be interesting, even in a very cursory way, to flip the question of Gandhi's influence and possible self-branding on its head.

We all know of people and social movements that credit Gandhi with being an influence on them. What about the use of Gandhi for their benefit by those who are not influenced by the Mahatma, but can use him for their own non-Gandhian purposes because he is still so influential "out there", because he still has cachet, because the Gandhi brand sells? Of course here there may be some question-begging as to what is a Gandhian cause or product, but it would appear on the face that the advertising of khadi with Gandhi's name or picture is qualitatively quite different from using his name or face to advertise firearms or alcohol.

The cooption of Gandhian symbols, or his name or visage is now a regular occurrence.[1] For example in recent times we have seen the substitution of a laptop for the spinning wheel for different thinking Apple computer users, the selling of leather furniture (from cows that died a natural death?) by a French furniture maker ("at this price, I am giving up sacrifice"), the naming of an Indian restaurant in Oslo *Restaurant Gandhi* and serving lamb curry and butter chicken, the Handi Gandi [sic] non-vegetarian caterers offering "Great Curries, No Worries!", the marketing of American beer with his image on the can ("ideal for self-purification and the seeking of truth and love"), and even the selling of $30,000 limited edition fountain pens inspired by

Gandhi's Dandi Salt March (biros were a mere $3,000), and the American marketing company holding a seminar under the title of "selling guns to Gandhi." This, of course, is nothing new. After Gandhi had achieved national prominence during the Non-Cooperation Movement of the early 1920s, he was humiliated to learn that an enterprising company had started marketing "Mahatma Gandhi cigarettes" with his portrait on the packet. And so it goes – the number of products sold, particularly in India, containing Gandhi's name or image as part of the branding process is probably uncountable. None of these products can be likened to khadi. And this says nothing about the controversy generated by Gandhi's great grandson, Tushar Gandhi, when he entered into negotiations with an American licensing company to sell the rights to use Gandhi's image for marketing purposes, with Visa slated as the first customer.[2]

In Indian political circles this co-option translates into dressing in khadi, speaking in front of a large picture of the Father of the Nation, exaggerating outrage at (often unread) foreign publications that are interpreted as having impugned the reputation of the Mahatma, by politicians that no one would consider Gandhian.

But there are also less cynical versions of this. They may even include Narendra Modhi's co-option of Gandhi for his current clean India campaign – a cause the Mahatma would probably have supported. Possibly the best historical example of the uses of a live Gandhi by a non-Gandhian for her own, arguably less than Gandhian, purpose is illustrated by the visit of Margaret Sanger, the birth-control activist, to Gandhi at Wardha in December 1935. Gandhi was totally opposed to artificial means of birth-control but Sanger, who had the support of Rabindranath Tagore and Sarojini Naidu, knew that if she could get the Mahatma even partially on side, the movement, which was gaining strength in India, would receive a large boost.

There was mutual respect between the two protagonists and a serious consideration of opposing views – although Sanger did remark afterwards that Gandhi had put up a "stone-wall of religion or emotion or experience" which she could not "dynamite him over". Sanger came to Gandhi hoping to agree on a fundamental principal about the position of woman in society, something which Gandhi was very concerned about, and on some practical means of helping them. She put hard cases to Gandhi, who had to agree that they were problematic, but in the end he could seemingly come up with little more than advocating celibacy. Seemingly, because, from the point of view of those advocating artificial birth control, there was an advance on Gandhi's previous position. After these meetings he appeared to endorse the rhythm method of birth control, not what Sanger had

hoped for, but a long way from his previous "just say no."

Another example of someone trying to get the endorsement of Gandhi for a cause because of the Mahatma's potential influence was that of venerable Japanese Nichiren Buddhist monk Nichidatsu Fujii. In the early 1930s, Fujii was on a pilgrimage to India to bring about a revival of Buddhism in the country of its birth. In early October 1933 Fujii visited Gandhi hoping for a positive backing response for his quest. One can only guess what the proselytising monk made of Gandhi's response and advice. Gandhi told him that Buddhism was really just a sub-branch of Hinduism and that Fujii should learn Sanskrit and Pali to understand this.

These were benign examples of attempts to tap in to Gandhi's influence. There were of course less benign ones also. Perhaps the most obvious example is afforded by the American author and supporter of British colonialism, Katherine Mayo. Much has already been written about her and her infamous bestselling book *Mother India*, which does not need to be repeated in any great detail. Suffice it to say that she went to India in 1925-6 to research a book on the subcontinent, a place about which Americans knew very little. In March 1926 she interviewed Gandhi for his thoughts on the state of his country and his message for America. When the book appeared a year later it championed the British presence in India not only for political or economic stability but also, and particularly, because of what she saw as Hindu social customs resulting in violence, discrimination, filth, disease, illiteracy, the oppression of women, heartless caste practices, the mistreatment of cows and the sexual abuses that stemmed from the practice of child marriage. In short, India was not ready for independence because of a basic deficiency in, particularly, Hindu culture. Gandhi, who had treated Mayo very cordially, was stunned by the book and her now obviously blatant agenda which had co-opted him for her purposes – and this was not difficult to do as Gandhi was championing reform in areas that she moralised on with relish. He felt used and reviewed the book in an article titled "Drain Inspector's Report."

Arguments still rage as to whether Mayo had her agenda mapped out before her so-called fact-finding tour of India or at least to what degree she went with an open mind. However, there are unquestionably blatant examples of uses of Gandhi that amount to bare-faced lies even if only by omission. One good example is the Japanese use of Gandhi to justify the Japanese war effort in China and then in the Second World War.

The nationalists in Japan saw their country as fighting against Western imperialism, a struggle they thought that all Asian countries

should cooperate in under Japanese leadership. This proved to be a grand case of Japanese wishful thinking as Gandhi characterised the Japanese war against China as being no different to the forms of aggression carried out by the Western imperialist powers.

During the 1930s Japan conquered large areas of China. And following its surprise attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 and rapid conquest of the Philippines, Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies and Burma, Japanese forces were facing the British at the borders of India. Not surprisingly, this started to dominate Gandhi's writings about Japan and the Japanese. He saw the Japanese as aggressors and exploiters of other nations and he began advocating nonviolent resistance to a possible Japanese invasion. To make it clear that he was not pro-Japanese he pointed out that "Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease."

On 18 July 1942, Gandhi wrote an important letter. It was published in his paper *Harijan* on 26 July under the title "To Every Japanese." The letter made it to Japan and was partially carried in three prominent Japanese newspapers (*Nichi Nichi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Miyako*). In his original letter, Gandhi explained that, though he had no ill-will against Japan, "I intensely dislike your attack upon China." He added that, "From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition." Parts of the rest of the letter bear quotation at length as they make Gandhi's attitude to the Japanese war effort clear:

> ... I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us. ...
>
> In the background of these pleasant recollections I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.
>
> It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of the ambition.
>
> If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, maybe my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself.

> But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.
>
> But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago.
>
> Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster.

He signed the letter "Your friend and well-wisher."

Regardless of context, those parts of the letter which were beneficial to Japanese policy were published on the front page of the *Yomiuri* on 18 September 1942 under the heading "An Open Letter to Japan from Gandhi." Rather conveniently, it left out all sections critical of Japanese imperialism. The letter as published in *Yomiuri* is a flagrant example of misinformation. The article ended up reproducing only a carefully selected fraction of Gandhi's original letter and included sentences which did not appear in Gandhi's original at all. The Japanese version read:

> I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us.
>
> If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, maybe my life, to come to your country to talk with your country's politicians. But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest.
>
> Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if you recognise Indian

independence as it is reported, your country will no doubt not attack India. In addition to that, your reported Indian policy is quite different from British imperialism. The purpose of the Quit India demand is to emancipate India from a yoke and to prepare to resist the militaristic and imperialistic British desire.

In short, Gandhi's actual message did not reach the people of Japan. At this stage in his life, Gandhi was one of the most famous people on the planet. He was widely respected but there was no internet and the Japanese people were generally monolingual. Their information came from the Japanese press. Here they were told that Gandhi more or less supported the imperialism of Japan while he detested the imperialism of the British. With very selective quoting Gandhi was brought on side for the most un-Gandhian of causes.

Of course these examples are historical ones and do not specifically demonstrate Gandhi's influence on present-day life. However, as noted earlier, the influence of the Mahatma is enduring. If once it was thought possible to get him to endorse artificial birth control, to promote Buddhism in India, to co-opt him in demonstrating the "evils" of Hinduism, and even to portray him as sanctioning imperialism and war, surely he can be of use to promote computers, restaurants, alcohol, expensive pens and furniture, not to mention politicians of un-Gandhian persuasions. One need only look at the way Gandhi has been and is being used in this regard to realise that there are at least 101 uses for a dead Mahatma, but, with a little considered thought, the uses could and should be centred around what may be called Gandhian causes.

Notes and References

1. On the uses of Gandhi as a brand, see William Mazzarella, "Branding the Mahatma: The Untimely Provocation of Gandhian Publicity", *Cultural Anthropology*, 2010, vol.25, no.1, pp.1-39.
2. In the end the deal was not completed. See Dionne Bunsha, "Marketing the Mahatma", *Frontline*, 2002, vol.19, no.5.

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The Role of Gandhi Ashrams and Museums for Promoting Gandhian values and Peace

Ravi P Bhatia

MANY GANDHI MUSEUMS and Ashrams can be found all over the world. Some Ashrams were started by Gandhi himself and his followers when he was alive. Others have been built over the years to commemorate his teachings and values. Some museums sell books, photographs and other memorabilia of Gandhi including small *charkhas* for making cotton yarn by hand. Some depict his life from birth to his years as a student in India, England and South Africa. The ashrams started by Gandhi were like laboratories where experiments in nonviolent living were conducted. Men and women living in them took vows and worked to lay the foundations of an egalitarian society and economy as well as develop an education system that agreed with Indian ethos.

Gandhi's adherence to non-violence and truth and his method of *Satyagraha* inspired many countries to seek liberation from colonial rule after 1947. Gandhi was at once a champion of basic education, equality, religious harmony, cleanliness, sanitation, and avoiding waste. These precepts, thoughts and actions are often on display in the various Gandhi ashrams and museums. The house where he was born in 1869 in Porbander is a symbol of simplicity and elegance. Next door to this simple house is a modern museum depicting the various teachings of this great soul. Gandhi himself built and stayed in several ashrams.

The *Sabarmati* in Ahmadabad is a wonderful place built simply of local materials like wood and bamboo and where Gandhi stayed with his followers including many foreigners. One of these was the well known English lady Madeleine Slade who is better known as Meera Behn who lived and worked with Gandhi for several years. He also interacted with the many other people who were attracted by his vision and imbibed his values of peace and religious harmony. He taught simple but important values of cleanliness, simplicity, and a healthy life style. He focused on learning and acquiring necessary

skills of life. A number of the vows, including those of truth, non-violence and chastity taken by the inmates of the ashram had universal relevance. The vow to eradicate untouchability and practise fearlessness was specific to Indian society steeped in casteism.

Museums provide sites for informal learning. Generally such learning takes place without one being conscious of it. It is what one obtains as one engages with the exhibits without any explanation or interpretation from a third party. However, the reason for visiting the museum, the extent of background information that one has about a person or an event and the manner in which the exhibits are displayed and labeled for public consumption also matters a lot. Gandhian museums should not merely convey facts as many museums tend to do. The American educationist John Dewey believed that a museum should reflect life experiences outside of the school or museum and enable us to think. There are well-known Gandhi Museums in Rajghat (New Delhi), Ahmadabad, Jalgaon , Madurai and Mumbai and many of them promote Gandhian values of peace and nonviolence.

What do these Gandhi ashrams and museums display to any person who visits these places? They signify a sense of peace, harmony and quiet. They depict the many qualities that Gandhi believed in and struggled with all his life: simplicity, peace, religious harmony, truth, cleanliness, and basic education. Many of the ashrams also have simple cabins where elementary education is provided to children of poor families. They also provide training in carpentry, weaving, pottery and other handicrafts. This is done keeping in view Gandhi's stress on learning skills so that people in villages can become self employed.

These ashrams which are spotlessly clean and made of local materials are open in all directions. In Gandhi's time the word *environment* was not used, but its spirit was present in all of Gandhi's life. It is encouraging to see that sustainable development that does not damage the environment is today receiving worldwide attention. These ashrams and museums demonstrate Gandhi's approach to simple and frugal living and avoiding excessive exploitation of the earth's resources. Gandhi felt that this was necessary not only for the protection of the environment but also for removal of class differences and mutual suspicion that existed between the rich who consume more than required and the vast numbers of poor and deprived who are unable to feed themselves and their children adequately.

Gandhi defined an ashram as "a community of men of religion". Here religion did not mean practice of rituals. It only meant that truth and non-violence were the guiding principles of the ashram and he found inculcating those values as essential for the practice of satyagraha. These ashrams also have several trees and plants that

give a person a sense of being together with nature. These are not just buildings made of wood and bamboo but abodes of peace and harmony.

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Gandhi's Talisman

"Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test:

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him.

Will he gain anything by it?

Will it restore him... to control over his own life and destiny?

In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?

Then you will find your doubts and ... self melt away."

The Sock and the Spinning Wheel[1]

Albert Camus[2]
Translated and annotated by
Mangesh Kulkarni

The occasion for this editorial is the homage paid to Gandhi by Bulganin and Khrushchev, who took off their shoes to put flowers on the tomb of the apostle of non-violence.

WHAT A STROKE OF luck it is to have been born in this exciting century! These words of thankfulness rose to my lips yesterday on reading that Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev [took off their shoes and] went with only socks on their feet to put flowers on Gandhi's tomb. Indeed, never even in my wildest dreams had I hoped to see in my lifetime the marshal and the captain removing their shoes to honour the yogi. However, it is a fact. As the world watched in astonishment, in the person of their chiefs, two hundred armoured divisions and an entire steel apparatus went to pay homage to the great preacher of non-violence.

It is true that these acts of homage cost little. It is true that in order to gain some advantage, none among the great and the good would hesitate to wear out his socks, even if it meant slipping on his studded boots in case a Gandhi were to visit him later. But in this precise instance there is, moreover, an inevitable contradiction. It is not easy to put flowers on the tomb of the man–even silently–who had been described for years by the Soviet Encyclopaedia and by millions of mouths as a demagogue and as an agent of British imperialism.

This piety is even more surprising than the friendship shown to Tito. After all, only formal matters separate Kremlin and Belgrade. For at bottom one was among apparatchiks in charge of construction [*gens du bâtiment*[3]] and marshals. On the contrary, the discord between Lenin and Gandhi touches fundamental issues. Not that Gandhi was less of a realist than Lenin; far from it. Quite simply, he believed that violence stifled the one who embraced it and by definition the latter's mind presided over murders rather than over nativity [*nativités*]. It is ultimately ineffective.

Was it not really this they held against him in Moscow? He was

not reproached for having preached non-violence, which suits those who practise violence, but for having liberated a country of 400 million people without ever killing anyone. Could one forgive him for the reality – the Marxists have turned it into their preserve[4] – which finally proved him right? Indeed from that moment he became an objection and sometimes the guilty conscience of all those who seek an alibi in effectiveness, whether they rule in his name or whether they worship him through cruel masters.

In any case the Kremlin has just saluted this great lesson after having ceaselessly ridiculed and condemned it. Whatever the reversals to come and [despite] people's astonishing capacity for forgetfulness, it will no longer be possible to utter certain words without having them immediately contradicted to prove Gandhi right once again. For he taught that speech was an act, and that it could shape history, provided one brought one's life into harmony with it to the point of death. To Gandhi only the hard obstinacy of gentleness and the force of peace could overcome the cunning stubbornness of violence. Millions of peoples have testified to this – even when the Indian government has fired on them – over the last ten years, as have two Soviet dignitaries over the last three days.

But the latter still ought to take a step forward on the way to perfection. For example, Mr. Khrushchev had informed Prime Minister Nehru that no country was free as long as it did not have its own industry. Gandhi would have agreed with this pertinent observation, having shown by means of his spinning wheel that to live freely one ought not to depend on others for fulfilling one's needs. But he would have added immediately that industrial independence was not enough either, and by far, to define and ensure freedom: one needed something more for it. He would have thus illustrated the distance which separates the partial truths of Marxism from a thought which is at once realistic and universal.

However, let us not ask too much of it. We would be delighted if a breath of this wisdom were to come from the humble cement slab day before yesterday to refresh our penitent officials, if only for a second, and to remind them what was from time immemorial the true greatness of the Russian people. And only by our aspirations, we will call for a general pilgrimage in the course of which, our power-wielders of all colours, followed by their court of philosophers and entertainers, will seek pardon of the greatest man of our times, for having incessantly insulted him over the years by shamelessly covering up acts of war with declarations of peace.

Acknowledgments: This article was translated during my stay as a Guest Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study (Shimla)

during summer 2013. I thank the Institute's staff and its then Director, Professor Peter Ronald deSouza, for their support. I am grateful to Dr. Manfred Stassen for sending me the original French version, and to Mrs. Marie-Paule Mitra for her help in translating it. I alone am responsible for any remaining errors and would be glad to receive suggestions for improvement.

Notes and References

1. This is perhaps the first English translation of Albert Camus's French article entitled 'La chaussette et le rouet.' The latter was published in the newspaper, *L'Express* on 22 November 1955, and was subsequently included in *Cahiers Albert Camus 6: Albert Camus - éditorialiste à L'Express (Mai 1955 –Février 1956*) (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), pp. 105-107. The article bears eloquent testimony to Camus's heartfelt admiration for M. K. Gandhi (1869-1948). For a comparative account of certain key ideas propounded by these thinkers, see Mangesh Kulkarni, 'M. K. Gandhi and Albert Camus: Shall the Twain Meet?', *Gandhi Marg* 36 (1), April-June 2014, pp. 45-62.
2. Albert Camus (1913-1960)–a great Algerian-French writer–was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1957 for his seminal writings which perspicuously and earnestly illuminated contemporary problems of the human conscience. His oeuvre includes fiction (e.g., the iconic novel, *The Stranger*), plays (e.g., the celebrated absurdist drama, *Caligula*), philosophical and political prose (e.g., the widely read works, *The Myth of Sisyphus* and *The Rebel*), and a sizeable body of first-class journalistic and miscellaneous writings (e.g., the representative collections, *Resistance, Rebellion and Death* and *Lyrical and Critical Essays*).
3. The term 'gens du bâtiment' literally means people in the construction industry.
4. This rider probably stemmed from Camus's perception that the Marxists claimed a monopoly on realism, which led them to label rival positions as utopian.

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