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Editorial

THE DRAFT NATIONAL policy on persons with disabilities(PwDs) has been made available in the public domain for comments and suggestions. The new policy is expected to replace the 2006 policy. The policy has been warranted by the country's accession to the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and the expansion of the very definition of disability in the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act. Added to that is the strong bias for including PwDs in the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The 2011 Census of India puts the number of persons with disabilities at 2.68 crores, or 2.21% of the Indian population has some form of disability, compared to the global average of 15%. The new policy is also in line with the worldwide shift from a medical approach to disability to a social one focusing on the disability issue as a human rights issue. The draft policy says that early detection of disability in children can help prevent one-third of such cases. It also discusses the inclusion of a module on disability in all medical programmes of study. While it seeks to focus on conventional areas of inclusion, such as education, health, employment, sports, and social security provisions, enhancing the political participation of the PwDs is yet to be considered seriously. This was a decade-long emphasis on the Incheon goals for the Asia-Pacific region targeted to be achieved by 2022. Ensuring the differently abled have access to election booths, Gram Sabhas, public meetings of political parties, and their offices are needed to make political inclusion a reality. While the quota system was introduced following the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments for women and reservations for SCs and STs, no such provision has been made for the differently abled persons. While Kerala has mandated projects for such categories at the local government level, no formal representation in local bodies has come about. Chattisgarh has recently amended its law to give representation to physically challenged persons. Given their electoral insignificance, political parties hardly take on board the concerns of the disabled. Every policy remains just

a wish unless budgetary provisions are made for its implementation. There is no clue where to find the money needed for the implementation of the policy. The policy document mentions that only 0.0039% of the GDP was spent on PwDs, and there seem to be no signs of improvement. There is also no commitment to an increase in the central contribution to the disability pension, which is a paltry Rs. 300 per month.

This journal issue has five articles in the main section, four in the notes and comments part, and three book reviews. The first article by Hilal Ahmed titled Afterlife of a Text: Hind Swaraj and the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha, examines the connections between Hind Swaraj and the trade union movement in Chattisgarh launched by Shankar Guha Niyogi in the 1970s. Baljit Singh Mann examines the connections between India's Worldview, World Order and Global Commons. The third article by Vedabhyas Kundu explores the significance of the Gandhian Model of Nonviolent Communication. Anagha Babu and Uma Purushothaman examine the role of Indian soft power in Indo-US relations. The final piece by Sanjeev Kumar, Kumar Rahul, and Rubul Patgiri analyse the contemporaneity of Gandhi's principles and praxis. It is hoped that the readers will relish this line-up of articles.

JOHN S. MOOLAKKATTU
Chief Editor

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Afterlife of a Text: Hind Swaraj and the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha

Hilal Ahmed

ABSTRACT

This paper offers a theoretical outline to comprehend the relationship between Hind Swaraj (HS)- a political text by M. K Gandhi in 1909- and a worker's movement called the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (CMM), which was initially started as a trade union movement in the late 1970s. The text of HS is not taken as a theory object. Nor do I take CMM as an empirical case study. On the contrary, I try to understand the political capacity of HS, which makes it relevant for Niyogi in the 1970s and 80s and the political competence of CMM, which produced a new political meaning of HS in such a way, that the arguments of the text merged into the ideological resolve of the movement. HS as a text and Gandhi as an author disappear to give way to a new political vocabulary of liberation- Mukti, which, in any case, resonates with the central concern of HS- Swaraj.

Key words: *Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha, Political Text, political ideas*

Introduction

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN Hind Swaraj (HS)- a *political* text written by M. K Gandhi in 1909- and a worker's movement called the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (CMM), which was initially started as a trade union movement in the late 1970s, could be seen in two very different ways. The first possible route to discover this relationship is the *case study mode*. We have found some serious (and a few *not-so-serious*) studies in recent years which have examined the activities of CMM and/or Shankar Guha Niyogi in detail to find out the empirical uniqueness of this movement.[1] These works recognize CMM either as

a civil liberty movement or as an NGO and often place it into a new conceptual package called 'civil society organization'. Although the specific details related to the movement are given considerable importance in these case studies, the texts like HS are mentioned as a passing reference simply to underline the similarities between the Gandhian text and the experiences of the movement. As a result, the relationship between political ideas and political actions is almost overlooked.[2]

The *theory-action mode of investigation* could be the second possibility. It is often argued that HS offers a theory, which is, to some extent or at least partly, put into practice by Shankar Guha Niyogi, the leader of the CMM in the 1980s. This possible way of exploration is based on a solid assumption that whatever is given in HS is a theory and whatever CMM did could only be understood as political actions. Thus, the only possible method to deal with this relationship is to recognize the similarities between the theory given in HS and the practice of CMM. This line of reasoning eventually introduces us to a *theory meter* by which the political action of unfamiliar political actors such as Niyogi, could be measured and further placed in the existing typologies of political ideologies. Thus, Niyogi, according to this interpretation, can either be treated as a neo-Marxist, who gets attracted to Gandhian thought, particularly towards HS, or alternately a Neo-Gandhian who took up the question of class more seriously in the specific context of Chhattisgarh. One cannot entirely reject such explorations. Such studies somehow try to expand the scope of the given typologies of political forms, theories and actions and, at the same time, quite sympathetically, look at the modes by which new political ideas are generated. This has been the dominant mode of thinking, which is reflected in the existing literature on CMM.[3] Yet, I believe there is a problem with this kind of literature. Such research do not allow us to examine the manners in which political texts are read and re-read not only to understand the complexities of politics at the grassroots level but also to design agendas, make strategies and develop arguments accordingly.

This paper takes a different path to comprehend the political reception of HS. The text of HS is not accepted as a *theory object*. Nor do I take CMM as an *empirical* case study. On the contrary, I try to understand the *political capacity* of HS, which makes it relevant for Niyogi in the 1970s and 80s, and the *political competence* of CMM, which produced a new political meaning of HS in such a way that the arguments of the text merged into the ideological resolve of the movement. HS as a text and Gandhi as an author disappear to give way to a new political vocabulary of liberation- *Mukti*, which, in any

case, resonates with the central concern of HS- *Swaraj*.

Precisely for that reason, the analytically significant questions, exactly when HS becomes an important political source for Niyogi and/or what is actually taken out of HS, need to be reformulated. HS traveled as a process and gradually amalgamated in the political universe of the CMM. Therefore, we have to recognize the specificity of this journey – the afterlife of HS-simply to capture the discursive and momentary essence of a new political-ideological configuration that emerged in Chhattisgarh in the 1980s.[4]

The paper, more precisely, revolves around the following two questions:

(a) How is HS read, understood, and perceived as a political source (along with a variety of other sources, including an *Indian-specific* Marxism) for conceptualizing the empirical realities of late 1970s Chhattisgarh into a political language of justice/injustice, freedom/subordination, and rights/dignity?
(b) How are such articulations later translated into actual political acts?

I take the political slogan of CMM, *Sangharsh aur Nirman* (Struggle and Construction) as a vantage point to study these two questions. The paper is divided into three sections. The first section, entitled as the text, examines HS's capacity to deal with those fundamental political questions often encountered by political movements. This section enables us to find out a specific political universe in which Gandhi and Niyogi seem to interact. The second section, which I would like to call *context*, deals with the political competence of the CMM. This section presents an introductory history of CMM by discussing the movement's struggles and its resolves. In the final section, which I call *Inter-text*, I attempt to examine argumentative continuities between HS and the CMM.

I
Text

Let me begin with a very fundamental question: How to read HS in the context of CMM? I follow Anthony Parel's method of reading this text with a slight modification. I read HS in two contexts- the context of Gandhi and his political activism and the context of Niyogi and his political activism. I read HS in two languages English because this is the language Gandhi chose to write (along with Gujarati) and in Hindi, because this is the language this text was introduced in Chhattisgarh. And finally, I try to read this text through the eyes of Gandhi, a political

activist and look at the imprint this text had on another political activist Niyogi.[5]

What were the political issues for Gandhi, as a political activist, when he was writing the HS? I find three main questions in this regard.

The first question was: how to we deal with existing political values? This question was inextricably linked to the question of moral judgment. Since the mind/soul was the unit of analysis in the Gandhian framework, the notion of moral judgment was crucial for dealing with the existing meanings of Swaraj. The second question was more practical. He had to establish a link between his criticisms of existing political values with larger philosophical questions related to the modern changes introduced by the British. It was not an easy task. As chapters on railways, lawyers, and doctors seem to show, Gandhi tried to trace the problem's roots in modern civilization. But these philosophical arguments are to be communicated in a plain and simple language so that the everyday experiences of modern urban India of the early 20th century could be taken as examples.

It is important to note that HS very clearly makes two distinctions: (a) a distinction between English-educated modern Indians and the rural Indian masses. (b) The distinction between political activists and those common Indians, who were not yet active in the movement. In this sense, every day was shared by the reader and the editor in the text. So, in this schema, the philosophical arguments are told in everyday language.[6]

The third question was very specific. Gandhi had to respond to some crucial events and the role of some important individuals. The partition of Bengal, the debate between extremists and moderates, and the position of revolutionary terrorists are some of the issues Gandhi had to respond to.

Gandhi answers these questions very innovatively. The interesting sequence of the chapters of HS can be taken as an example to trace the trajectory of Gandhi's argument. The book is, we all know, divided into 20 small chapters. The first four chapters contextualize the dialogue between the reader and the editor. In these chapters, the immediate questions such as the partition of Bengal, Hindu-Muslim relations, and the given meanings of Swaraj are discussed. If one closely follows the discussion, Gandhi seems to underline his view about the existing politics of that time. In other words, Gandhi is mainly concerned with *what is* of the Indian politics.

Chapters 5-13 elaborate on the Gandhian critique of the modern civilization simply by going beyond the given meanings of Swaraj. In these chapters, Gandhi seems to proceed in two directions. He sketches out his critique of modern civilization in a broader sense and

simultaneously proposes his outline of Swaraj. Thus, he moves from *what is* to *what ought to be*.

This *ought to be*, it is important to note, not presented merely as a utopia. Rather, a well-thought argument is offered in support of such a possibility. This is what the book does in the last seven chapters. It offers a political mobilization theory reflecting on short-term and long-term political compulsions.[7] This theory of mobilization has three dimensions. Firstly, it underlines the capacity of human agency to change the course of history. We find a radical Gandhi underlining the values of self-commitment and dignity. For example, he writes,

> *'…to believe that what has not occurred in history will not occur at all is to argue disbelief in the dignity of man' (*Hind Swaraj p. 57*).*[8]

Secondly, this theory of mobilization is based on contextual wisdom. Gandhi talks of the political opponent's strengths and weaknesses in designing the appropriate political strategy. Passive resistance and non-violence, in this regard, are presented arguably as the best solution not only because of the moral supremacy of non-violence over violence but also because that is what Indians could adopt at that particular time. Gandhi says:

> *I wish to show that fair means alone can produce fair results and that, at least in the majority of cases, if indeed in all, the force of love and pity is infinitely greater than the force of arms*. (Hind Swaraj, p. 65)

Finally, the mobilization theory in HS tries to concentrate on making political commitment. The political workers are expected to internalize the political message as a religious duty. Gandhi re-reads religion from the point of view of politics and came out with a *politically liberating* interpretation of religion. Thus, opposing the British is not seen as an external act; rather, it is shown as a religious duty. But, how could one internalize this duty? Gandhi does not give any direct answer in HS, but he indicates that handloom and the practice of Swadeshi will keep reviving one's political commitment. In the later years, as we know, the daily prayers became the instrument for this commitment-building exercise. These chapters thus go beyond the questions such as 'what is' and 'what ought to be' and introduce us to 'what is to be done'.

This theory of mobilization introduces us to an important political argument of HS, which is based on four interconnected points.

1. Political questions must be seen from a wider perspective, and their

roots are to be traced in a larger conceptual universe for identifying the '*opponent/exploiter*' on the one hand and the *movement's participants* on the other.

2. Means of mobilization are contingent upon the contextual requirement. One must assess the opponent's strengths and weaknesses to design an adequate political strategy.
3. Successful political mobilization requires an inclusiveness approach so that the issues and anxiety of all concerned groups could be addressed.
4. The success of political mobilization depends on the political commitment of the participants.

II
Context

Chhattisgarh, a tribal region of erstwhile Madhya Pradesh, became a state in 2000. Despite being one of the country's mineral-rich regions, Chhattisgarh is a poor state. The mineral-rich profile of the region has made it the centre of the industries, including the famous Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP). Our story begins in the 1970s. The BSP had two kinds of workers: the regular trained workers, who mostly came to work from outside the region, and the local tribal workers, who worked as casual laborers mainly on contractual basis, which were called *theka mazdoor*. Interestingly, the trade unions such as the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) were mainly concerned with the issues and benefits of the regular workers. They had a very rigid economic approach to workers' rights. The theka Mazdoors, on the other hand, were highly neglected: their livelihood depended upon the availability of work and their relationship with contractors, who used to mediate between the theka mazdoor and the BSP. In this sense, these workers were not directly employed by the BSP and were not linked to any of the trade unions working in the area.

Shankar Guha Niyogi, whose real name was Dhiresh Guha Niyogi, came to work for BSP in the early 1960s from West Bengal as an engineering apprentice. Niyogi was active in the left politics at that time. After joining the BSP, he started participating in trade union activities. He founded the Blast Furnaces Action Committee at BSP and organized several strikes. His growing popularity as a trade union leader became a threat to the management, and consequently, he was dismissed from his job in 1967. Niyogi did not return to his native place and continued to work among the tribes of the region. In the mid-1970s he came to Dalli Rajhara and started working as a theka mazdoor in the Chhattisgarh mines.[9]

The condition of *theka* mazdoor was very bad in the mid-1970s. They were even not paid the minimum wages by the contractors. The growing unrest among the workers had taken many violent forms. These workers were gradually getting organized for some kind of collective action. The March 1977 strike by the theka Mazdoor was an example of this spontaneity. Niyogi, who had been organizing the workers and the peasants in the past, took up the leadership of the workers of this region and founded a new trade union, the Chhattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh (CMSS).

The CMSS demanded that the *theka* mazdoor should be paid the minimum wages along with ideal wages/fallback wages (the wages which were to be paid in case of the non-availability of work) and a bonus in May 1977. [10] The management of the BSP initially agreed to these demands, but no concrete action was taken. The theka mazdoor, as was expected, went on to strike again. Instead of inviting the CMSS for talks, the BSP management went for police action. On June 1, 1977, the police were sent to Dalli Rajhara to break the strike by coercive means. The workers, under the leadership of Niyogi did not move and resisted the police action. The next day, on June 2, 1977, a massive rally was organized successfully. However, Niyogi was arrested on the same day, and another round of police action began in Dalli Rajhara. The police killed 11 people, including a woman and a seven-year-old boy. This incident became national news, and the Government set up an official inquiry commission. Finally, the growing pressures from all parts of the country forced the BSP management to accept the demands of the CMSS. In July 1977, the theka mazdoor won their immediate battle. The management paid the fallback wages, bonuses, and a special allowance for the renovation of houses. This was the first success of the CMSS under Niyogi, who was released from jail in September 1977.[11]

Unlike other trade union movements, CMSS did not focus merely on economic issues related to workers. Instead, the movement started analyzing the negative effects of this early success. In an interview in 1981, Niyogi pointed out that the rise in wages and the extra allowances, such as the fall back wages, affected the household economy of workers in two ways. Firstly, they lost interest in work and became a bit stagnant. Secondly, they started spending money on buying liquor. In order to deal with these two issues, the movement started a two-fold strategy: social reform and constructive work to eliminate the social evils and make new alliances with other workers and peasants. And at this point Niyogi started his politics of Sangharsh aur Nirman[12].

According to Niyogi the traditional trade union movement in India adopted a highly mechanical and rigid approach, which simply ignored

working classes' social and cultural life. As a result, workers' commitment was affected, and the possibilities of collective social action were ruined.[13] Niyogi also criticized the left parties. He argued that the Marxist parties in India failed to articulate an Indian version of Marxism-Leninism. The leaders of these parties did not pay attention to Indian realities, and hence they could not produce any constructive critique of India-specific capitalism.

Sangharsh aur Nirman was seen as a way out. According to this philosophy, the masses are to be involved in a comprehensive struggle for social transformation in such a way that an alternative could be evolved. In other words, for Niyogi, political struggles must be backed by constructive work. If we closely look at the history of this movement, which is very well documented, we can identify five different forms of sangharsh aur nirman. These five forms introduce us to different political techniques adopted by the movement and its constructive resolve.[14]

Struggle for the dignity of labor and the Construction of alternative policy

The struggle for fallback wages, minimum wages, and other demands of the movement about the workers' rights- including the regular workers of the BSP was the very first struggle of the CMSS. The movement, just a registered union at that time, adopted a non-violent method of passive resistance. Even after the June 1977 events, CMSS decided to oppose the police action with non-violent means such as strikes and dharnas. But this was not the end of the struggle. The CMSS, which further expanded into the CMM in 1979, developed an alternative industrial policy for the BSP, which not only discussed the issues and problems of the workers but also introduced a new notion of 'limited industrialization'. In fact, a revised version of this proposal was later developed into an alternative policy on the country's industrial development. Niyogi used Gandhian arguments, especially Gandhi's take on industrialization given in HS.[15] So, the struggle, in this case, is supported by a constructive alternative.

Struggle for social reform and the Construction of alternative healthcare, education, and industrial training

One of the main concerns of the CMM, as pointed out earlier, was to transform the everyday life of the workers/peasants. This was also necessary for the commitment-building exercise and for preparing the common workers for the larger struggle for social transformation. In 1978, the movement launched its anti-liquor campaign. The newly formed Mahila Mukti Morcha, the women's wing of the CMM, led

this campaign. The male workers were persuaded to give up alcohol. The workers, who did not stop buying liquor, were socially boycotted. The public health campaign followed the anti-liquor movement in the early 1980s. A series of discussions took place on the question of pubic health and the better lifestyles of the workers. It was decided to form public health committees, and finally, a self-financed *Shahid Hospital* came into existence in 1982. The establishment of two schools and a self-financed garage, which was later converted into a technical training centre, were the other two constructive programs of the CMM.[16]

Struggle to make alliances and Construction of various identity-specific wings

The movement was also interested in making a grand coalition of workers, peasants, Adivasis, Dalits, religious minorities, and women. CMM focused on the common issues of these sections of society and tried to work out a common minimum program. For example, independent unions or wings (such as women's wing and youth wing, etc.) were established to look after the specific issues related to a particular section/group of workers and peasants. These small wings or unions had a well-defined area of operation. This was a kind of 'sharing of responsibilities', which was more broadly guided by the larger concerns of the movement. Although CMM was projected as a kind of umbrella organization, these wings were not at all autonomous. This organizational setup worked well, and the unity of different sections continued to contribute to the movement's success, at least until Niyogi's assassination. We may find two reasons behind this *triumphant unity*. First, the movement did not ignore the intrinsic contradictions of Chhattisgarhi society. For example, the women's question was seen in relation to the wider operation of patriarchy and its relationship with capitalist exploitation. The Mahila Morcha, therefore, was encouraged to 'enhance the capacity of leadership among women'.[17] This approach not only helped in mobilizing women in the social reform program of the movement but also, in a larger sense, settled the internal contradictions of the movement, at least for some time. Secondly, the context of the 1980s also played a very significant role in the consolidation of the movement. The question of livelihood and survival was the most pressing concern of the population living in the Dalli Rajhara region of Chhattisgarh. In such a politically charged context, CMM's strident opposition to the BSP made the question of livelihood/class the most central political issue.[18] Consequently, the issues such as communalism, p*atriarchy, social and natural environment*, and public health are gradually linked to the

'prime' contradiction of class.[19]

Struggle for Mukti and the Construction of alternative vision of Chhattisgarh

The movement also had to respond to the demand for an independent Chhattisgarh state, which was projected as the reflection of the aspiration of the people of this region.[20] In this context, the CMM issued a document in which the idea of Chhattisgarh is defined. According to this document,

> Who is a Chhattisgarhi? One who
> *(1) honestly works in the territory of the region.*
> *(2) is dedicated to the liberation of the region.*
> *(3) does not involve in any type of feudal exploitation*
> *(4) believes in eradication of capitalism*
> *(5) wants a progressive (janwadi) development of the region*
> *(6) maintains brotherhood (bhaichara) with the international working class (sarvhara)*
> *(7) was originally born in the region but has gone to some other areas in search of livelihood and does not exploit others*
> *(8) although belongs to some other nationality (jatiyata) but lives and works in the region and is intended to stay in the region on a permanent basis.'*[21]

The document further defines the enemies of the Chhattisgarh. 'Those who are feudalists (*samanti, malguzar, sahukar*- the money lenders), semi-feudalists or *adhrdh-samanti* (contractor and bureaucrats), are the enemies of Chhattisgarh. Whether they are born in this region or speak the 'Chhattisgarhi language' does not matter. The document also identifies three reasons behind the backwardness of the region. These are '(a) the industrial structure and the industrial policy imposed by the colonial powers and massive mechanization introduced by the postcolonial Government later. (b) Feudalized village economy and semi-feudalized contractual system. (c) Less productivity of land'.[22]

This was linked to the question of liberation or Mukti. In an interview in 1981, Niyogi very clearly pointed out: 'We do not have pistols or any other weapon…but we do have a weapon of morality, which is more powerful and effective. He further says: 'today people are not aware enough to make a difference between the roads of liberation shown by Sanjay Gandhi or by others… the context will determine the possible route of the struggle'.[23]

This context-specific determination of the CMM led it to participate in electoral politics in later years.[24] The CMM won two assembly elections. However, it is important to note that the movement did

not stop its other activities, including the trade union-related work, even after the assassination of Niyogi in 1991 and maintained its basic character as a social movement.

Struggle for alternative intellectual tradition and the Construction of counter- hegemony of the people

The struggle to create an alternative intellectual tradition was another important aspect of the movement. This was begun with the publication of a newspaper in Hindi/Chhattisgarhi called *Mitan* in 1979. The members of the union were encouraged to contribute to this newspaper. This experiment was followed by the formation of the cultural wing of the CMM, the Nava Anjor, which was used to spread the movement's message through street theatre and songs. In 1982, another campaign, *know your jungle* began, and the members of the movement were encouraged to protect the biodiversity of the region. A land behind the union office in Dalli Rajahar was devoted to planting rare and useful plants found in the Chhattisgarh region.[25] The *people's history campaign* also began around this time. Niyogi collected stories about Vir Narayan Singh, an Adivasi leader who fought against the British. With the help of some intellectuals, the movement produced a history of this local hero. December 19 was recognized as the martyr day of Vir Narayan Singh.[26] These examples show that the movement worked out a counter-hegemony to challenge the dominant intellectual traditions, which Niyogi found anti-people.

III
Intertext

Does this discussion on the political ideology of Niyogi and the activities of CMM demonstrate any linkage between HS and the CMM? To find out the answer to this poser, let us revisit the two main questions of this paper- how was HS read in Chhattisgarh, and how did this re-reading correspond to the political actions of CMM. In the first section, we noticed that HS offers an interesting theory of political mobilization, which clearly makes it relevant for socio-political movements and political ideologues. In a broader sense, this mobilization theory draws our attention to HS's unique political capacity- the capacity to address some of those fundamental political questions often faced by social and political movements in their bid to mobilize the identified social group(s).[27]

It is important to mention that HS's political capacity differs from its reception as a 'classical text in modern politics'. HS's treatment as a classical text simply underlines its philosophical significance in

academic discourses. In fact, through this recognition, we get to know a 'philosopher Gandhi', who articulates a powerful and substantial critique of modern civilization. However, HS's political capacity, on the other hand, symbolizes how Gandhi's political ideas are read, re-read, and internalized in popular ways.[28]

Our discussion in the previous sections shows that CMM reinvents a 'political Gandhi'. It reminds us that political movements read the political text in a very different way. Niyogi, a reader, in this case, absorbs the political arguments of HS through a rigorous and multifaceted process of reading/writing. It seems he reads HS in his own context, and at the same time, he writes his own text based on a synthesis of his reading of HS and his specific political compulsions. In this sense, this reading was more like 'writing upon writing'.[29] Perhaps for that reason, we find a few references to HS in his writings. But, in the political practices of CMM, an overtone of HS's political argument could easily be seen. The five forms of struggles and Construction, which we just discussed, introduce us to a refined form of this argument. In other words, the mobilization theory, which we find in HS, is further cultivated, experienced, and politically expressed by CMM/Niyogi in the following four ways.[30]

First, CMM redefined political questions in a wider perspective and traced the roots of the problems of workers and Adivasis in the larger conceptual universe. Going along with HS, the movement conceptualized 'the opponent/exploiter' of Chhattisgarh on the one hand and the movement's participants on the other. This approach helped the movement to establish a link between BSP's anti-worker policies and the India-specific capitalist development. The apathetic attitudes of conventional trade unions were also seen in this framework, and political energies were devoted to searching for alternative modes of politics. HS's critique of modern civilization based on massive and inhuman progress also found a new form. CMM's demand for limited industrialization and decentralized polity based on small states seems to draw inspiration from Gandhi's critique of modern progress.

Second, Niyogi's emphasis on appropriate political strategy also underlines an interesting continuity between HS and the movement. A careful analysis of Niyogi's writings and interviews shows that the question of political strategy had been one of the central concerns for CMM. Since its inception in 1977, the movement followed passive resistance and did not go for any violent struggle. This political strategy was compatible with the strength of the movement. After all, local workers and peasants were to be organized against the powerful opponents- BSP management, contractor lobby, local liquor

mafia, the police, and the Indian state. These opponents were capable of destroying any kind of arms resistance in the region. Therefore, it was important to design political strategy in such a way that the interests of workers and peasants could be secured, and at the same time, the relative strength of the movement could be increased. It does not mean, however, that the question of political violence was altogether ignored. Violence as a form of politics was shown as a 'dangerous practice' mainly associated with those who exploit the 'common people' (Aam Adami). In this sense, HS's political radical and morally justifiable argument is re-developed in favor of non-violent means of political struggle.

Thirdly, CMM's inclusive approach and successful creation of a grand coalition of different deprived sections of the Chhattisgarhi society also reminds us of HS's appeal to create a true 'national' unity. The concept of '*Mukti*' (liberation) was actually developed to offer a broad political answer to different competing identities. The liberation of one group was seen as the liberation of the entire society. The concept of Mukti seems to echo Gandhi's use of the concept of 'Swaraj' in HS. In a letter written to different socio-political movements in 1989, entitled *Azadi ka Asli Matlab kya hai*? (What is the real meaning of independence?) Niyogi says:

> No one has asked why did Gandhi, who had been fighting for Azadi throughout his life, refuse to participate in the Independence Day celebration?... Why does the Government, which claims to abide by Gandhian principles and publicly condemn liquor, distribute licenses to liquor contractors?... At this particular historical juncture I ask (some) questions in order to search an alternative: (1) what kind of industrialization do we need...(2) How to provide better irrigation facilities to farmers and what could be the mode to determine the prices of agricultural products? (3) How could the different sub-nationalities protect their culture and identity and how could we establish unity among them? (4) What should be our health policy? (5) What should be our environment policy? (6) What should be our education policy? (7) What should be our import and export policy? What should be our policy towards neighboring countries? (8)Keeping in mind the tribal forests and the available electronic resources, what should be our communication policy? (9) What should be our employment policy? (10) What kind of programs we need for the cultural development of people? …Now the time has come that we, particularly those who are associated with various people's movement in the country, must come forward to ask (these) fundamental questions so that we could go beyond this 'politics of waves' and offer a right alternative to people.'[31]

Fourthly, CMM's 'commitment building' programs establish a

unique connection with HS. Gandhi, as we discussed in the first section, gives extraordinary emphasis on the making and consolidation of political values. The political acts are supposed to be carried out in a moral-religious manner- not only for wider social change but also for self-purification. This 'conviction of self-criticism' is also evident in CMM. Unlike other popular social-political movements of the 1980s, such as Narmada Bachao Andolan, and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, CMM developed an interesting tradition of self-criticism. The worker's commitment was seen at two levels- (a) his/her commitment to work and workplace and (b) his/her commitment to family, locality, society, and nation and above all to the movement. For Niyogi, the active participation of workers in the production process makes them committed to their work. This approach was very different from the conventional trade union discourse, which was not concerned with the production process. Niyogi argues that the higher productivity and democratic distribution of goods would also positively impact the material life of workers. In addition, this would also help the worker to establish a moral relationship with his/her workplace.[32] The social commitment of the workers was also considered to be equally important. CMM's constructive work programs, including the '24 hour union campaign' and the anti-liquor campaign, made a successful attempt to create an environment in which moral values and political action complimented each other.

These continuities demonstrate a distinctive *intertextual* relationship between Hind Swaraj and the CMM. The author and the text are read through discourses of radical politics and transformed into a lived political experience. Gandhi's text, thus, becomes one of the many texts CMM read and internalized while producing its political text- the text of *Sanghrash aur Nirman*. Perhaps for that reason, I would like to argue that the political ideas generated by the CMM in this interesting intellectual process cannot/should not be reduced to any kind of Marxism or Gandhism. Nor do we need to treat it as a unique political tradition. In my opinion, we need to explore the existing political ideas generated at the grassroots and revisit the established political categories.[33] That could be a possible way to understand the afterlife of texts like HS.

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Notes and References

1. I use Niyogi and CMM interchangeably through out this paper quite deliberately for two reasons. First, it is virtually impossible to differentiate between the political ideas of Shankar Guha Niyogi, the leader of the CMM, and the political activities of the movement. For detailed discussion on this point, see: Chandhoke, Neera and Ahmed, Hilal, *Politics of People's Rights: A Report to ICSSR*, Developing Countries Research Centre, University of Delhi, Delhi, 1996. Secondly, the decline of the movement in the late 1990s also suggests that the movement could not get out of the influence of Niyogi. In fact, his political memory was often evoked by different fractions to accelerate the constructive work of the movement. For an analysis of Niyogi's memory in Chhattisgarh, see: Bakshi, Rajni, 'A Year after Niyogi's Murder', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 27, No. 40 (Oct. 3, 1992); Dogra, Bharat, 'Chattisgarh People's Movement after Niyogi', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, N0.43 October 1991.
2. We find two kinds of *case studies* on CMM. The fact-finding reports published by the civil liberty groups such as the People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) is one such example. These reports, quite plausibly, take 'critical events' as a vantage point to map out the ideological universe of CMM. See: *Shankar Guha Niyogi and the Chhattisgarh People's Movement*, PUDR, New Delhi 1991. The other kind of case studies offers a very different image of CMM. The movement, which actually grew out of a long multifaceted struggle, is simply reduced to a *civil society* organization. See: Chandhoke, Neera, 'When the Voiceless Speak: A Case Study of Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha', in Tandon, Rajesh and Mohanty, Ranjita (eds.) '*Does Civil Society Matter: Governance in Cotemporary India*, Sage, Delhi, 2003, pp. 198-242.
3. A. K Roy's article on Niyogi could a good example in this regard. See Roy, A. K., 'Vampanth ki teen Dharaon se Alag Chothi Dhara', in Sadgopal, Anil and Namr Shyam Bahadur, (Eds) *Sangharsh Aur Nirman: Shankar Guha Niyogi aur Unke Naye Bharat ka Sapna*, Raj Kamal, New Delhi, 1993.
4. It is important to clarify that I am primarily concerned with a particular historical moment, which, as a lived experience, has internal complexities and disorders. Our interpretative quest- in this case locating HS in the experiences of CMM at a particular context of 1980s- transforms this historically lived experience into an object of analysis. We identify a sequential order of a few 'critical events' (e.g. police firing in Dalli Rajhara in 1977), and key actors (Niyogi and Gandhi) to find out a logical coherence in our narrative. In this

sense, we dig up the 'sublime nature' of historical process. But the question arises: what could be the appropriate mode to excavate the identified moment of history? Dipesh Chakrabarty offers an interesting argument. He says: 'recognition of the sublime nature of historical process …show(s) us a way of staying on the cusp. How we visualize this cusp is a formal question but… formal questions are of the utmost importance in narrating an agency that is necessarily fleeting and real, and archaic and modern at the same time. However we execute it, it is only by staying on this cusp…' (p. 107). Chakrabarty's argument reminds us that one has to be historically sensitive in dealing with historical processes. This is precisely what I am trying to do in this paper. I do not make any attempt to find out exactly 'what happened when'; rather I explore the processes by which a text is read and in broader sense 'lived' in a historical moment. See: Chakrabaty, Dipesh, 'Subaltern History as Political Though', in Mehta V. R. and Pantham Thomas, (eds). *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, Sage, Delhi, 2006.

5. For a detailed discussion on 'how to read Hind Swaraj?', see: Parel, Anthony, J., 'Introduction', in Parel, Anthony, J., (ed.) *Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007. I also use the Hindi and English versions of HS published by the Navjivan Press in this paper. See: Gandhi, M.K. *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule Hind*, 19th reprint, Navjivan, Ahmedabad, 2006./ Gandhi, Mohandas Karmchand, *Hind Swaraj*, (Hindi), Navjivan, Ahmedabad, 1984.
6. It is important to make a conceptual difference between 'everyday' and 'critical events'. 'Critical events', as Veena Das seems to suggest, are the crucial moments of history when different social actors and institutions interact each other in an 'extraordinary, unusual, and often, bizarre situations' and produce new forms of social, cultural and political engagements in a long run. The *everyday*, in contrast, symbolizes the 'normal routine of daily life'. Since the urban elite of early 20th century India was almost ignorant about the political existence of rural India masses, it was important for Gandhi to highlight this crucial difference by picking up examples from the everyday life of urban elite. This distinction is further complicated when Gandhi underlines the everyday of the *nationalist* movement in the later chapters of HS. Importantly, Gandhi and the reader seem to share the everyday of the nationalist movement primarily because the questions as well as the answers are politically charged and there is a consensus that India could achieve home rule or swarj through political activism. For a discussion of critical events, see: Das, Veena, *Critical Events,* Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1995, pp. 1-6.
7. In Gandhi's schema, political mobilization is not seen as an external act which is supposed to be carried out by a vanguard party/group or enlightened leaders; rather 'mobilization ' is recognized as an

internalized collective responsibility. In this sense, 'political mobilization' becomes a multi-dimensional process, at least theoretically, by which leaders, workers and the masses are expected to interact with each-other in such a way that the wider objective-the attainment of *swaraj*-could become a *social* agenda.

8. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the modern idea of history and Gandhi's own position on India's past, see: Khilnani, Sunil. 'Gandhi and History', *Seminar*, Annual No. 461, January 1998.
9. Dalli Rajhara is an important mining region of BPL, which has emerged as an important city of the state of Chhattisgarh.
10. For an excellent discussion on the CMSS's struggles for fall back wages, see: Seabrook, Jeremy, *Victims of Development: Resistance and Alternatives*, Verso, London, 1993, pp. 124-146.
11. For a detailed discussion on this event See: Sadgopal, Anil and Namr Shyam Bahadur, op.cit., pp, 354-374.
12. This interview was later published by the CMM. See: *Comrade Niyogi se Trade Union par Do Batcheet*, Shahid Shankar Guha Niyogi Yadgar Samiti, Lok Sahitya Parishad, Dalli Rajhara, 1993.
13. Ibid.
14. It is important to clarify that these five forms of Sanghrash aur Nirman are based on a broad overview of the well documented history of the movement. This classification, I believe, will help us in understanding the activities of the movement in an analytical manner. It does not mean that the CMM followed any set pattern to execute these activities. CMM, like any other political movement, responded to the short term immediate political concerns and evolved gradually. The idea of Sanghrash aur Nirman, therefore, needs to be seen as a broad evolving argument. For an interesting discussion on relationship between 'context' and 'movement', see: Frank, A.G., Fuentes, Marta, 'Nine Theses on Social Movements', *Economic and Political weekly*, 29 August 1987.
15. See: Niyogi, Shankar Guha, 'Akhir Dalli Rajhara ki Loha Khadon ki Samsya Kya hai?', in Sadgopal, Anil and Namr Shyam Bahadur, op. cit., pp. 167-175.; Niyogi, Shankar Guha, 'Vaikalpik Audhoyogik Niti', in Sadgopal, Anil and Namr Shyam Bahadur, op. cit., pp. 175-181.
16. See: Chandhoke and Ahmed, op. cit., pp. Chapter 4.
17. See: Leelabai and Bhardwaj, Sudha, 'Mazdoor Andolan me Mahilaon ki Bhumika, in Sadgopal, Anil and Namr Shyam Bahadur, op. cit., pp. 428-431.
18. For an excellent discussion on the ways in which a particular issue becomes the central theme for political mobilization for social/ political movement, see Frank, A.G., Fuentes, Marta, op. cit.
19. This socio-political configuration might be called a 'perfect' condition for developing a classical Marxist movement based on the notion of centrality of class. However, CMM did not take the class question as the determining factor for other forms of exploitation. Rather, the

Chhattisgarhi identity was presented as an overarching framework for its activities. See, Singh, N.K. 'Trade Union with a Difference' in *On a Rainbow in the Sky: The Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha*, CEC, New Delhi, 1998.

20. Unlike other regional movements, the 'independence of Chhattisgarh' never acquired the form a movement. The relative backwardness of this region was often highlighted as a justification for an independent state. A few elite politicians, who wanted to curve out a space for themselves in regional politics of Madhya Pradesh, converted it into an important political discourse in the 1980s.
21. Document published by the CMM. An edited version is also included in Sadgopal and Namr, op. cit., p. 68.
22. Ibid
23. *Comrade Niyogi se Trade Union par Do Batcheet, op. cit.*
24. CMM started participating in the electoral politics since 1977. For a detailed discussion on CMM's position on elections Niyogi, Shankar Guha, ' Zarurat hai Sansadiye Pranali me Jan Akankshaon ke Amrit ko Sich Kar Sachcha Janwad Lane Ki', in Sadgopal and Namr, op. cit., pp. 212-216.
25. See: Niyogi, Shankar Guha, 'Our Environment: Perspective of Chattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh, (Translated by Rajni Bakshi), in *Shankar Guha Niyogi: His Work and Thinking*, Published by Jan Vikas Andolan, Raipur, 1992. pp. 6-20.
26. For a discussion on Vir Narayan Singh and people's history campaign see: Niyogi, Shankar Guha, 'Aaj ki Piri Aur Vir Narayan Singh ki Wasiyat', in Sadgopal and Namr, op. cit., pp. 122-132.
27. I do not wish to make a sweeping generalization here. The category called 'social and political movements' itself is problematic because every form of association, which aims to do some kind of collective action, has its own specific logic of mobilization. Nor do I recognize HS as foundational text of some kind. On the other hand, I am trying to say that the political capacity of Hind Swaraj lies in its larger argument related to political mobilization.
28. One interesting reading of Gandhi is offered by commercial Hindi cinema, popularly known as Bollywood. The film *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* (Directed by Raj Kumar Hirani, Hindi/2006) is a good example in this regard, in which popular representation of Gandhi is re-used to create a new theme for popular cinema. Although such readings of Gandhi are highly remarkable in reinventing Gandhi as a popular figure, such narratives do not go beyond the given and some times stereotypical images of Gandhi. Thus, such experiments simply fail to recognize the potentials of Gandhi's political ideas.
29. I borrow this term from Sudipta Kaviraj, who uses it to demonstrate various modern but not essentially western forms and practices. Kaviraj argues that the specific historical trajectories of different societies determine the ways in which 'newness' of modernity is

amalgamated. In this process, 'practices are 'written' upon pre-existing practices' and produce various new and specific modernities. I use this argument in a slightly different way to understand how Niyogi, who was acquainted with Marxist literature and was active in left politics, reads HS as a radical political text. In this sense, Niyogi's pre-existing practice of left politics discovers HS as a text based on practice and this encounter, in broader sense, produces a synthesized prism for developing new practices of radical politics. See: Kaviraj, Sudipta, 'An Outline of a Revisionist Theory of Modernity', *European Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 46, Issue 3, December 2005.

30. These four forms of interesting continuities between HS and the CMM become also very relevant when we find that the movement somehow *appropriated* Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Nelson Mandela, and a local tribal hero, Vir Narayan Singh for historicizing its political resolves. During my initial fieldwork in Chhattisgarh I also discovered that local workers and adivasi are well aware of the struggles of Gandhi, Bhagat Singh and Mandela. I found that the movement tried to develop a people-oriented image of these figures, which was very different from the official appropriation of Gandhi and Bhagat Singh.
31. *Azadi ka Asli Matlab kya hai?* Niyogi, Shankar Guha in Sadgpal and Namr, op. cit., pp. 462-464. (translated by the author)
32. See: *Comrade Niyogi se Trade Union par Do Batcheet, op. cit.*
33. Nivedita Memon and Aditya Nigam's recent book on contemporary Indian politics, which also has a brief discussion on CMM, is relevant here. This kind of initiatives encourages us to explore the existing political categories and typologies from the vantage point of actual politics. See: Menon, Nivedita, Nigam, Aditya, *Power and Contestation: India Since 1989*, Fenwood /Zed Books, Halifax and Winnipeg/ London and New York, 2007.

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India's Worldview, World Order and Global Commons

Baljit Singh Mann

ABSTRACT

India's worldview has been adjusting to the changing domestic and external scenarios. India's quest for a representative and just world order and global commons have occupied the central stage in India's worldview. The world peace, just international economic order, non-discriminatory nuclear order, and democratic functioning of the United Nations (UN) decisively shaped India's worldview and its conception of world order in the Cold War era. In addition, some new global commons, such as fair trade, climate change, and security of sea lanes of communications (SLOCs), figured prominently in India's worldview and shaped its concept of world order in the Post-Soviet World. India contested the bipolar world order during the cold war and the unipolar world order in the post-cold war era. Accordingly, its position on these global commons has been consistent and logical, notwithstanding the challenges emanating from the prevailing world order. New Delhi continues to nurture its strategic autonomy and freedom in foreign affairs while adjusting to international pressures while negotiating real-time challenges.

Key words: *Worldview, World Order, Global Commons, Neoliberalism, Hegemonic World*

Introduction

INDIA'S CHANGING DOMESTIC and external settings have constantly been shaping its worldview and notion of world order. Two critical changes in India's domestic environment since the 1990s decisively reshaped both. First was the change in its economic policy and strategy for economic growth. The second was the demise of one party-dominant system that set the era of coalition politics in motion.

India introduced neoliberal reforms like Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG) to save its crisis-ridden economy in 1991, which resulted in a significant ideological shift in its worldview. The LPG reforms brought a change in the philosophy of the Indian State from liberal to neoliberal, thereby changing its foreign policy orientation and vision of world order. Former advocated welfare economics and an interventionist state, and the latter promoted a regulatory and non-interventionist State. This paradigm shift in the economic philosophy of the Indian State demolished the ideological barriers between New Delhi and the capitalist world. Soviet demise further facilitated the capitalist world to propagate its neoliberal economic policies to the developing nations, to which India has already subscribed and thereby created space for west dominated world order to expand. While adjusting its foreign policy, India has strengthened its ties with Western industrialized countries, including the US, and gradually liberalized its economy. This adjustment is based on the conviction that India cannot solely rely on coalitions with countries from the Global South to promote its interests in global politics but must also engage the Western powers[1]. This change indicates that India has aligned with the world order dominated by the west.

India's subscription to the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) indicated a u-turn in its worldview as New Delhi forcefully advocated the cause of NIEO till the 1980s. By subscribing to SAP, India not only accepted the EIEO based on the three pillars established by the Britton Woods System, IMF, IBRD, and General Agreement on Trade & Tariff (GATT) but also undermined its quest for a just international economic order. Developed nations, World Economic Forum, and the USA used the IMF and IBRD to sell SAP to the developing nations, including India. In addition, aid, trade, and investment have become the most potent instruments for promoting globalization. The emergence of coalition politics led to the collapse of consensus on foreign policy matters, apart from keeping the coalition governments busy with their survival. This coalition era was characterised by political uncertainty, as the conduct of general elections, and changes of governments became quite frequent. From 1989 to 1999, the five general elections were conducted, and eight governments were formed. Due to that, foreign policy issues could not get the desired attention and priority.

Two cataclysmic changes in its external setting were the Soviet demise and thereby a significant change in the world power structure from bipolar to unipolar, characterised by hegemony. The demise of the Soviet Union (SU) created a vacuum by bringing a paradigm shift from bipolarity to unipolarity in the world power structure. Moreover, the third world solidarity outlived its utility, and categorisation of

nations into the first, the second, and the third world became obsolete as the second world disappeared. The third-world identity got disarticulated in the west-dominated world order. The US emerged as a hegemonic power and asserted its hegemony at the global level when it invaded Iraq with the mandate of the UNSC to liberate the territory of Kuwait from it. Washington got an opportunity to use the world body as an instrument of its policy because the US attacked Iraq with the mandate of the UN to save its ally Kuwait. After 9/11, the US again asserted its hegemony through its Global War on Terror (GWOT) against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The US invaded Iraq (2003) on the flimsy ground that the latter possessed the weapons of mass destruction and supported Al Qaeda, whereas the real motive was to change the Saddam Husain regime, which stopped listening to the dictates of Washington. The creation of Kosovo as an independent state on February 17, 2008, by the intervention of NATO forces without the prior authorization of the UNSC, was another case in point wherein the US asserted its hegemony.

The prevailing world order was constructed primarily by and for the west and meant to defend and spread liberal institutions, values, and practices such as liberal democracy, capitalism, and open trade[2]. India emerged as an essential veto-player that stood up to the west in many policy fields such as climate, trade, and non-proliferation[3] and contexted the Western dominance in international financial institutions such as IMF & IBRD. This paper explores how India has been contesting the existing world order besides negotiating and responding to the real-time challenges without compromising the core of its national interest, i. e. strategic autonomy and freedom in foreign affairs. Is India's multiple partnerships a continuation of its policy of non-alignment, which was also the defining code of its worldview during the Cold War era?. It also explores India's conception of contemporary world order and how it corresponds with its national identity.

Strategic Autonomy & Freedom in Foreign Affairs

On the strategic issues, India asserted strategic autonomy by conducting nuclear tests at Pokhran on May 11th and 13th, 1998. Its atom and hydrogen bombs were tested contrary to the international community's pressures, which led to the nuclearisation of South Asia as Pakistan followed suit by conducting nuclear tests on May 28, 1998. However, its process of nuclearisation was set in motion in 1964 when China developed nuclear weapons. The realist explanation for India's nuclear detonation was China's threat, but a relatively less recognised answer than that was the use of the nuclear apartheid argument[4]. This argument underlined the discriminatory nature of the

international nuclear order instituted through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG). They created an elite club of 'nuclear haves' with exclusive rights to maintain nuclear arsenals that were denied to the majority of the 'nuclear have-nots.'[5] Due to that, India has neither signed the NPT nor the CTBT; however, India has been eagerly aspiring to obtain membership in the NSG.

Notwithstanding these justifications, the international community, including the US, Japan, and Canada, reacted sharply by imposing sanctions on India. However, these sanctions could not last long because of India's increasing relevance in Asia, IOR, and the world's evolving political, economic, and strategic landscape. Subsequently, the international community acknowledged India's responsible nuclear behaviour, including the US. The process to remove sanctions was set in motion, followed by the signing of India's nuclear deals with some countries such as the US and Australia, Kazakhstan, Canada, etc. India's nuclear tests of 1998 transformed its status from a threshold nuclear state to a weaponised nuclear state, which added to its calculus of national power and improved its standing in the comity of nations. India also contested the existing nuclear order by not signing the NPT and the CTBT. It got the India-US Civil Nuclear Deal (2005) approved by the NSG (2008) and thereby came out of nuclear apartheid as it lifted the embargo on India's nuclear trade with the nuclear haves.

New Delhi was eager to engage Washington as the LPG reforms and the Soviet demise created the enabling environment. However, its relations with the US remained estranged until the mid-1990s due to a vast divergence of interests on various issues like Kashmir, human rights, trade law Super-301, the nuclear issue, etc. India's relations with the US changed from estrangement to engagement in the mid-1990s. Due to Pokhran-II, it got derailed again but came on track with the visit of US President Bill Clinton to India (2000). Evolving Indo-US engagement was elevated to a strategic partnership on July 18, 2005, when they signed the Civil Nuclear Deal (CND). Another significant agreement signed by India and the US was the Defence Partnership Agreement (DPA) in 2005, renewed for another ten years in 2015. The strategic partnership has been expanding at various levels, including in the Indian Ocean (IO) maritime theatre and the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR). Indo-US CND was not only a bilateral agreement but has been a path-breaking development as it enabled the former to come out of the nuclear chill it had suffered since May 1974. On the strategic front, India has developed proximity with the US as New Delhi has signed three key defense agreements with Washington: the

Logistics Exchange Memorandum Agreement (LEMOA) in August 2016[6], the Communications, Compatibility, Security Agreement (COMCASA) on September 6, 2018, and the third key agreement, the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), was signed on October 27, 2020. Still, the divergences of interest in defense production, trade, immigration, Russia, Iran, and China persist and lead to bitterness in their ties. The above discussion shows that India's foreign policy has shifted from a nation-centric approach to the issue and interest-specific partnerships in shifting coalitions and policy networks. Inter-state relations are today characterised by a complex mixture of cooperation and competition. Instead of having apparent allies and enemies, states are thus embedded in far more complex relationships, which require striking a balance between competition and cooperation with various actors[7].

Another significant development in the Post-Soviet World has been the emergence of the European Union (1992) as a supra-national entity. India's ties with the European Economic Community (EEC) can be traced back to the 1960s, and their relations were only confined to trade and economic cooperation. Although a cooperation agreement (1994) took India-EU relations beyond economic cooperation, India was seen as an important partner for the west in a world order in flux. But India has proved to be a problematic partner for the EU[8] and other Western actors. It has shown little interest in actively promoting, together with the Western democracies and the liberal world order[9]. India is also a member of potential "counter-hegemonic coalitions" such as the BRICS, which opposes the "Western hegemony" in world politics[10].

Notwithstanding this, India-EU relations cemented with the institutionalisation of their summit-level partnership at Lisbon on June 28, 2000, which turned out to be a watershed in their evolving equation, elevated to a strategic partnership at Hague during the fifth India-EU Summit (2004). Indo-EU relations traveled another milestone when they adopted Indo-EU Agenda-2020 at the 13th India-EU Summit in Brussels in March 2016. The expanding political horizon of the India-EU partnership continues to be based on solid trade and investment relationships and increasing two-way flows of goods, services, and investment. The EU remains an important trade and reliable strategic partner for India. The EU has been passing through a difficult transitional phase due to the Brexit when India aspired for a bigger role at the global level. However, in a post-Brexit European scenario, India must simultaneously focus on the EU and the UK with equal sincerity[11].

At the 15th India-EU Summit held on July 15, 2020, they endorsed

"India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025" as a common roadmap to guide joint action and strengthen their strategic partnership for the next five years. They agreed to cooperate in implementing the UNFCCC and its legal instruments, including the Paris Agreement and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and formulate long-term low greenhouse emission development strategies following the principle of CBDR-RC in the light of different national circumstances[12]. They also welcomed the India-EURATOM agreement on research and development cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy[13]. India and China have agreed to create a more open and fair global trading system[14]. India and China's collaboration has contributed to the ultimate failure of the Doha round for the further liberalization of world trade. Despite this international cooperation, they compete for power and influence in Asia, and an unresolved border dispute regularly creates tensions in their bilateral relations[15].

Free Trade versus Fair Trade

India subscribed to neoliberal reforms in the early 1990s, but it started contesting the same on the issue of free trade, which has been the core of neoliberalism at the WTO from the mid-1990s onward. Since the first ministerial meeting of the WTO, India has advocated the cause of fair trade, keeping in view its national interest as free trade serves the interest of developed nations. In contrast, fair trade does that of the Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) and developing nations. India has been an active member of the G-20, which did not allow the developed nations to frame the trade rules at WTO to promote free trade without addressing concerns about fair trade. It has led to a deadlock in preparing free trade rules at WTO. India has been contesting neoliberalism and thereby registered its opposition to the west-dominated international economic order. India's resolve for fair trade got strengthened with the formation of the IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) Forum (2003) and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in 2009. The formation of IBSA and BRICS has been an attempt by the Global South to evolve an alternative model of international economic order to serve the interests of the NICs and developing nations. Fairtrade has been a global common good for which India has been arguing and fighting since 1995. In the joint communiqué of the IBSA Dialogue Forum issued on September 27, 2018, the members of the forum underscored the need to continue to make positive efforts to ensure that developing country members, and especially the least-developed country members of WTO, secure a share in the growth of world trade commensurate with the needs

of their economic development[16]. The joint statement of BRICS Leaders' Informal Meeting held on the Margins of G-20 Summit at Osaka (2019) stated that they are committed to transparent, non-discriminatory, open, accessible, and inclusive international trade order. However, protectionism and unilateralism counter the spirit and rules of the WTO. They reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism, international law, and a rules-based multilateral trading system under the aegis of WTO. They agreed to work constructively to reform the WTO to enhance its relevance and effectiveness, provided the reforms preserve the centrality, core values, and the fundamental principles of the WTO and consider the interest of all members[17].

Climate Change: A Shift from CBDR-RC to INDCs

Another global common reflected prominently in India's worldview has been the issue of climate change. India played a vital role in framing the text of the first international treaty–the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC-1992), by ensuring the incorporation of the principle of equity named the Common but Differentiated Responsibility–Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC). India played a crucial role in framing the operating protocol of UNFCCC, i. e., the Kyoto Protocol, while keeping the principle of equity. While participating in the various Conference of Parties (COPs) of UNFCCC, India did not allow the developed nations to compromise the CBDR-RC principle for quite a long time. India's position on climate change started changing at COP-19 held in Warsaw (2013). The COP-19 articulated the principle of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The developed world argued that instead of the principle of equity termed CBDR-RC, the mandate of INDCs should be the base of the international legal regime that would regulate the behavior of states on this matter after 2020.

The developed nations made a deliberate attempt at COP-20 (2014) in Lima to exclude the principle of CBDR-RC principle from the draft agreement to be finalised at COP-21 in Paris (2015). In Paris, the developed nations prevailed upon the developing countries to have their way by primarily focusing on the principle of INDCs, which do not impose any binding obligations on the behavior of nations about climate change. India has also been conceding to INDCs as ground reality concerning the release of Green House Gases (GHGs) has changed substantially as per the fifth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report (2014). According to this report, India has emerged as the third-largest polluter after China and the US. Hence, India changed its approach to climate change from Per-capita

Convergence to Per-capita Convergence Plus. The three factors were primarily responsible for India's changing position on climate change. First, the IPCC reported the dynamic global reality concerning GHG emission in its fifth report, wherein a quantum jump in GHG emission from the developing world was documented. Second, as the ground reality relating to GHG emissions changed considerably, the argument for keeping the wall of differentiation intact between the developed and developing nations started losing ground. Third, including India, the NICs registered a significant jump in their GHG emissions, increasing differentiation between NICs and the other developing countries within the Global South. India has not hesitated to share responsibility for this global common concerning the survival of human civilization as it launched the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008, apart from other national initiatives. At COP-24 (2018) at Katowice in Poland, India again strongly argued for the principle of CBDR-RC; thereby, its position has been to use both the INDCs and CBRD-RC to address the problem of climate change effectively.

The COP-25 (2019) held in Madrid has significance as the members of UNFCCC are preparing to move from the Pre-2020 environmental regime led by the Kyoto Protocol to the Post-2020 environmental authority that the Paris Agreement would shape. India's position at the COP-25 was guided by the provisions and principles of UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, particularly the principle of equity termed CBDR-RC. India stressed the need for fulfilling Pre-2020 obligations by the developed nations and argued that the Pre-2020 implementation gaps should not impose an additional burden on the developing countries in the Post-2020 era[18]**.** Parkash Javadekar stated that Indian negotiators have pushed for the carryover of millions of unsold carbon credits from Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under Kyoto Protocol to the new carbon markets to be developed after 2020, yielding the benefit of nearly Rs. 5000 crore to industries holding these credits[19]. However, COP-25 has failed to build consensus on crucial issues for meeting the Paris Agreement goals of keeping global mean temperature rise below 2 degrees celsius. While commenting on the outcome of COP-25, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, stated that "the international community lost an important opportunity to show increased ambition on mitigation, adaptation & finance to tackle the climate crisis."[20] India has collaborated with like-minded developing nations and Brazil, South Africa, India, and China (BASIC) during the negotiations at COP-25. At the COP-26 held at Glasgow (UK) from October 31 to November 12, 2021, India presented five elements of its climate action termed *Panchamrit,* which include:

attaining 500 GW of non-fossil energy capacity; meeting 50% of energy requirements from renewable energy; reduction of the carbon intensity of the economy by 45% on the level of 2005 and achieving the target of net-zero emissions[21].

India has articulated the concerns of developing nations at COP-26 (2021) of the UNFCCC. The transfer of climate finance and low-cost climate technologies has become the utmost necessity for implementing climate actions by developing nations. It was conveyed to the developed nations that India understands other developing countries' suffering, shares them, and raises its voice. India's *Mantra* of LIFE-Lifestyle for Environment to combat climate as also shared in COP-26[22]. The message conveyed through this *Mantra* is that the world needs mindful and deliberate utilization instead of mindless and destructive consumption. India highlighted the foundational principle of equity termed CBDR-RC, equitable access to the global carbon budget, a finite global resource for keeping the temperature increase within limits set by the Paris Agreement. It emerges from the above discussion that India, along with developing nations, has constantly tried to frame the rules of the game on a vital global common of climate change by resisting the tremendous pressure of developed countries/the west.

Securing the Sea Lanes of Communications

Security Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs) have been another globally common priority in India's foreign policy. It has assumed more significance in the neoliberal era as nation-states have been pursuing the outward-oriented strategy of economic growth wherein the SLOCs have occupied a vital place. India, a resident state of IO, cannot afford to ignore the security of SLOCs passing through it. Indian Ocean littoral states constitute India's maritime neighbourhood, and it has tried to have friendly relations and equations with them. Being an emerging power, India needs space to project its power which the IO has provided. India's growing interests in the IOs have been driven by its three significant needs: elementary security, developmental, and power projection[23]. To realize these needs, India has formulated its Maritime Military Strategy-1998. New Delhi has also been continuously revising and updating it besides improving its hardcore naval capabilities. On October 26, 2015, New Delhi updated its naval doctrine by notifying India's Maritime Security Strategy (IMSS-2015), wherein India expanded its maritime space in the light of its increasing stakes. India has been consistently augmenting its complex naval capabilities because they share a symbiotic relationship with the elementary maritime security, development, and power

projection needs as they reinforce each other[24]. It has also been using naval diplomacy to serve these needs by conducting bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral naval exercises with IO's coastal states and external powers. India has been conducting multilateral naval activities such as MILAN with Southeast Asian nations. The MALABAR used to be a bilateral maritime exercise with the US, which became trilateral with Japan's joining in 2015. Other examples are India's bilateral naval exercises such as the KONKAN with the United Kingdom, INDIRA with Russia and VARUNA with France, and DOSTI with the Maldives and Sri Lanka. India has also established the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as multilateral forums to construct oceanic space to serve its national interest. However, China's strive to penetrate the IO through its littoral states like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives has been a real-time maritime challenge for India. The IO constitutes the central area of the emerging balance of power competition, which involves the US, India, China, and smaller coastal states. However, the balancing activity may be a complicated process as the fragmented threat environment involving many unstable coastal countries of the IO makes it difficult for any of these states to play an intense balance of power game[25].

Indo-Pacific-A New Area of Interest

India has been discovering new spatial spaces to expand its maritime presence in its dynamic worldview. Early known as Asia-Pacific and now Indo-Pacific region (IPR) has figured prominently during the last decade. The US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, used this term in 2010 to bring India into the strategic theatre of IPR. The practical imperative behind the word Indo-Pacific has been to underline growing connectivity between the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the operational realm, whereas the strategic imperative reflects naval cooperation with India. The word "Indo" in the term "Indo-Pacific" referred geographically to the Indian Ocean and geopolitically to India. India and the US are to form the two bookends of the regional order[26]. By using the term Indo-Pacific, the US brought India into the strategic theatre of Asia-Pacific as a part of its balancing strategy to counter China which has been perceived as a threat to the free and open Indo-Pacific order. Another vital aspect of the Indo-Pacific is cooperation with Australia in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Japan is an ally of the US, whereas India is a partner of the US in the strategic theatre of the IPR. The significant shift from the Pacific to Indo-Pacific security arrangement made by the US primarily focuses on India. The LEMOA agreement further opened the way for mutual use of their bases in

both oceans[27] **.** The strategic space in the Indo-Pacific theatre had been worked out much before the construction of the IPR when India and US institutionalised the Malabar naval exercises. The security aspect of the Indo-Pacific has been initiated with Japan permanently joining the annual Indo-US Malabar naval exercises in 2015, which alternate between the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean[28]. The quadrilateral format between the US, Japan, Australia, and India originally surfaced in 2007 and was revived in 2017. This format is committed to deepening cooperation, which rests on shared democratic values and principles. It continues discussion to strengthen the rules-based order in the IPR[29]. India and Australia also share a vision of a free, open, inclusive, and rule-based order IPR to support the freedom of navigation, over-flight, and peaceful and cooperative use of seas by adherence of all nations to international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and peaceful resolution of disputes[30]**.**

An analysis of India's position on the above global commons indicates that, although India has redefined its relations with the western industrialized countries in the post-Soviet world, it does not want to be merely co-opted into the Western-liberal World order and follow existing rules and norms, wishing instead to pursue its world-order policy. As a victim of Western imperialism, India's priorities are preserving freedom in foreign affairs and strategic autonomy while dealing with discriminatory practices in the international economic, nuclear and political order. Accordingly, India is framed in the discourse as a non-Western democratic, pluralist developing country with multiple identities and interests[31]. This has enabled India not only to pursue a policy of multiple partnerships but also to benefit from the opportunities and address the challenge of what Indian policy-makers describe as –the emerging polycentric world order, in which multiple powerful actors with different political systems, cultural traditions, and interests are interlocked in interdependent relations and must find an institutional framework for peaceful co-existence[32].

Challenges Confronting India's Worldview

India's worldview and its idea of polycentric world order have faced various real-time challenges in fluid situations. First, a critical challenge is to engage China and the US simultaneously without conceding the core of its national interest, i. e. freedom in foreign affairs, and without confronting either. China has been asserting itself in Asia and the rest of the world through its strategy of Belt Road Initiative (BRI) plans to link Asia to Europe and the rest of the world. New Delhi's objections are primarily grounded in the economic corridor in Pakistan

passing through contested Kashmir, although there are geopolitical reasons for not giving Beijing a free pass[33]. India's objections to BRI are many folds. The first objection, of course, is the violation of sovereignty because CPEC is one of the corridors of BRI, which is passing through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Second, the BRI has become a legitimate tool in China's hands to institutionalize its presence and expand its influence in South Asia and IOR. Third, the possibility of China-sponsored infrastructure projects under the ambit of BRI leads to the host countries' debt trap, as has already happened in the case of Hambantota port and airport projects in Sri Lanka. Hence, the BRI for New Delhi is an imperial design of Beijing to expand its area of influence apart from the project's viability. Beijing has been arguing that BRI is a development and connectivity project; however, its geopolitical implications are tremendous. It is a Chinese project launched to link the Chinese economy with Europe through the Eurasian landmass. Therefore, India's participation in BRICS, SCO, and AIIB could not change its perception of BRI. Further, BICM-EC has become the victim of the geopolitics of BRI[34] because it is considered its part. This again reflects India's issue and interest-centric approach in consonance with its polycentric world order perspective.

India's position on the South China Sea (SCS) has again upset China during the last couple of years. It has become pertinent in the light of the award delivered on July 12, 2016, by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) instituted by the Philippines against China over the latter's claims on SCS. India's official response has been closer to the ASEAN claimant countries on the Spratly Islands in the SCS. Arbitration award emphasizes freedom of navigation and over-flight and unimpeded commerce based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the UNCLOS. It articulated that all parties show the utmost respect for the UNCLOS. India's concerns about the safety of navigation routes and the stability and security of the entire neighborhood region are the basis for its Act East policy, where maritime security cooperation with the ASEAN member states is an important dimension[35]. India has also been evolving its equation with the US, Japan, and Australia in the maritime domain. Simultaneously, it has recently launched a naval dialogue with China to discuss all issues of interest to both sites[36]. China is now fully positioned to contest the existing Post-World War II financial, commercial, and geostrategic architecture created under the US leadership[37]. The US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) intends to impose a US-centric trading and global values zone around China[38]. India's only option is to play a balancing game in this complex international and regional scenario, with due strategic planning and careful diplomacy[39]**.** India

wants to eliminate its unipolar predicament and feel more confident about its strength and uniqueness inside the BRICS. But that requires a fine grasp that development–not geopolitics is the leitmotif of international relations in contemporary world politics. The trajectory of ASEAN relations with the US and China is a telling example[40].

Interestingly, China has offered to assuage India's sovereignty concerns on the BRI. Beijing has also proposed to start a series of dialogues for an "early harvest" on the disputed border issue, provided India agrees to consider finding common ground between its Act East policy and other development strategies and the BRI. Both Chinese proposals have come from its ambassador in India, Luo Zhaohui[41]. Luo stated that:

> We can change the name of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and create an alternative corridor through Jammu & Kashmir, Nathu la (pass), or Nepal to address India's concerns[42].

China attaches great importance to its relations with India as both are NICs and face common tasks of developing their economy to improve people's well-being and their standings in the comity of nations. They must foster a favorable external environment to facilitate and consolidate economic reforms and advance modernization. China and India are the next-door neighbours entangled in a complex boundary dispute with a considerable divergence of strategic interests. India and China are committed to advancing negotiated globalization, multi-polarity, and upholding democracy in the international order. Interestingly, they have engaged each other according to the mandate of engagement and containment. However, the engagement has been happening in explicit form, whereas the containment has been occurring in implicit manners. India-China has been cooperating in multilateral forums such as the WTO, UNFCCC, SCO, and BRICS because they have faced similar challenges. Developed nations challenge India and China on the issues of exchange rates, free trade, and monetary policies. They have long been arguing for reforms in the international financial institutions. The voting rights of India and China in the IMF and IBRD have increased. Still, the decision-making powers of developed countries have not been decreased[43], and thereby, their influence remained intact in the decision-making process of Britton Woods institutions (BWIs). India, China, and other emerging nations (Brazil, South Africa, and Russia) from the Global South have been trying to work out the alternative of BWIs in the form of the New Development Bank termed BRICS Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). On July 16, 2014, Brazil,

Russia, India, China, and South Africa signed an agreement to establish the New Development Bank (NDB) in Fortaleza[44], apart from establishing a Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) on the pattern of IMF. However, India's and China's positions have not always been similar on multilateral issues. India has successfully established its credentials as a responsible nuclear power in the comity of nations as it has not been indulged in nuclear proliferation. China has emphasized that India needs to sign NPT and CTBT to get the membership of NSG as every member of NSG has signed NPT and CTBT. India and China also have a divergence of interests in South Asia, Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific, Asia, and IOR. Notwithstanding China's opposition to its membership in NSG, India has gained space in the global non-proliferation regime as it was granted membership in MTCR (2016). The major challenge confronting India's diplomacy on this count has been taking China into a loop and removing the barrier to its membership in NSG.

Second, retaining strategic autonomy has become another significant challenge for India's policy-makers as the US pressured to stop oil imports from Venezuela; however, New Delhi approved the proposal of buying weapons from Russia. However, the US granted India, China, South Korea, Turkey, and Japan a waiver to import oil from Iran until May 2019. India succumbed to US pressure in March 2019 as it stopped buying oil from Venezuela, hoping the Trump Administration would extend a waiver favoring India to continue importing oil from Iran[45], but that did not happen. India's national interest demanded to continue to import crude oil from Iran as it was receiving it at discounted prices. The Indian National Congress (INC) stated that the US move was "a direct assault on India's political and economic sovereignty" and "a failure of Modi's personalized style" of diplomacy. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) articulated that any move to stop importing Iranian oil and gas "will harm India's energy security and national interest."[46] Besides its energy security needs, Iran has been a vital state for India regarding its West Asia, Central Asia, and Afghanistan policies. In December 2018, Iran handed over part of Chabahar port's operation to India. However, Tehran is unhappy with the slow pace of infrastructure development there. This port has been vital for India's trade with Afghanistan apart from being the starting point of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Moreover, it would substantially reduce India's trade with Europe's time lag and overhead costs once it becomes fully functional. India has developed strategic proximity with the US by signing four key defense agreements with Washington the DPA, the LEMOA, the COMPASA, and the BECA. Still, the divergence of interests in trade,

immigration, and defense co-production has continued. India's import of weapons and oil from Russia and Iran, respectively, has led to the growth of bitterness in its relations with the US.

Another challenge emerging on the count of India's territoriality is due to China's rise because the regime of peace and tranquillity along with the Line of Actual Control (LAC) has collapsed. China's incursions with this de facto border between India and China have increased frequently. China's Gulwan Valley incursions of June 2020 are a classic case wherein 20 Indian soldiers, including a colonel, lost life. The disengagement has been reported, but the three major friction points in the Gulwan Valley are hot springs, the Fingers area, and the Pangong Tso Lake. The PLA had occupied territory up to Fingers 4 in the Pangong Tso area in May 2020 and wants the Indian army to confine its patrolling up to Finger 2. Beijing argues that the Gulwan Valley has been part of China since the Qing Dynasty.

In contrast, India strongly defended its claim on the Gulwan Valley by stating that its troops regularly went on patrol duty. There is pictorial evidence that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi addressed troops in the Gulwan Valley after the 1971 war with Pakistan. Although the talks between senior military officers resumed on June 22, 2020, they remained deadlocked as the Chinese side did not incline to vacate recently occupied areas[47]. China's assertion needs to be understood in the larger canvas wherein its simultaneous assertions across its periphery ranging from the SCS, with Japan in the East Sea, raising the eastern Bhutan claim, the crack-down in the Hong Kong, and the actions in the east of Ladakh. These assertions indicate the perfect moment for Beijing to assert its hegemony in Asia. A sense of history has driven this assertive Chinese behaviour, and it sees its dominance as the natural order of things[48]. According to Kurt Campbell and Mira Rapp-Hooper, the foreign policy of restraint introduced by Deng Xiaoping is at the end. The first thing Xi Jinping did after coming into power was talk of a 'New Model of Great Power Relations,' a code to get the US to accept a sort of a condominium or a 'group of two' (G2) arrangement. This new model was about getting the US to accept China as an equal, which would signal an acceptance of Chinese dominance in the Western Pacific. Instead, the US began to talk about the 'pivot,' which later became the Indo-Pacific policy[49]. India stands nowhere in this power arrangement of G-2 perceived by China. China talks about friendly relations with India but wants to contain India.

India's quest for its due place in the world order continued from the cold war to the post-cold war period instead of being co-opted into the existing world order either controlled by the West or China or any other power or entity. India still defines its identity as opposed

to the west and its practices in global politics. Though Indian policy-makers desire recognition of India by the western states, they simultaneously seek to assert India's political and cultural distinctiveness, sovereignty[50], and right to freedom in foreign affairs and strategic autonomy. The post-cold war discourse represents India not as a direct stakeholder of the western liberal world order but as an independent multi-partner actor striving hard for a polycentric world order locating itself as one of the poles of power. Its conception of world order can be characterized through five interrelated social logics: international unity in diversity, state sovereignty, enlightened self-interest, non-violence, and non-discrimination[51]. Accordingly, India seeks partnerships with a wide range of states and cooperates with multiple actors in shifting coalitions and different issues while avoiding strategic entanglements and one-sided dependencies[52]. India's dominant foreign policy discourse takes polycentrism as the essential feature of world order and represents India as a pluralist, multi-aligned actor that can engage all significant powers. It is argued that the discourse has used foreign policy and world order as sites for the reproduction of a particular representation of Indian identity. India is a secular, pluralist nation-state that can accommodate differences in its internal and external affairs[53]. Hence India's conception of polycentric world order corresponds to its plural national identity as the former is essential to accommodate diverse power centres and civilisations at the global level and the latter is required to represent the diverse cultural identities at the national level. Both have symbotic relationship with each other.

Conclusion

This paper argues that India pursues a policy of multiple partnerships by having relations with all the relevant actors in the world while avoiding overly close or one-sided ties with some countries or groupings, reflecting its resistance to the unipolar/western world order and quest for a polycentric international order. India's worldview has always been shaped by the changing domestic and external settings, apart from fulfilling its national interest globally. It has been driven by the core of its national interest, such as territoriality, freedom in foreign affairs, and strategic autonomy on the one hand, and global commons like fair trade, climate change, and security of SLOCs on the other, besides its expanding aspirations to be realised at the worldwide level. India's position on the global commons, such as free trade versus fair trade, climate change-CBDR-RC versus INDCs, and security of SLOCs in the letter and spirit of UNCLOS, has always been informed by its enlighted national interest. India's

convergence of interest with China on free trade versus fair trade and climate change and divergence of interests with Beijing on the security of SLOCs and territoriality and freedom in foreign affairs.

Similarly, India and the US have a convergence of interest in protecting SLOCs and strategic partnership in the IPR region but a divergence of interests on other global commons such as free trade versus fair trade and climate change. Notwithstanding the occasional adjustment to the pressure of the US by cutting oil imports from Iran, India went ahead with importing military hardware from Russia, contrary to the wish of Washington. India continued to exercise freedom in foreign affairs on the global commons, posturing with the Global South's other nations.

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Exploring the Gandhian Model of Nonviolent Communication and its Significance

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ABSTRACT

The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication is such a powerful nonviolent alternative that needs to be assimilated at all levels of our communication process. This paper will aim to analyze and develop an understanding of the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication and its significance for constructing a healthy communication ecosystem. It will try to decipher its different elements and try to understand why it is a holistic communication approach that can be a counter to an environment of toxic communication.

Key words: *nonviolent communication, Gandhi and communication, communication ecosystem, nonviolent narratives*

Introduction

MORE THAN THE threat of bombs and bullets, the more dangerous trend of the 21st Century is the weaponization of hate narratives, mistrust, intolerance, racism, alienation, and various other dimensions of trauma and dysfunctional communication. In the context of these rising incidents of narratives of hatred and intolerance, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, while launching the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech in 2019, noted, "Hateful and destructive views are amplified exponentially through digital technology and extremists are gathering online, radicalizing new recruits". He urged everyone to treat hate speech "like any other malicious act: by condemning it unconditionally; refusing to amplify it; countering it with the truth; and encouraging the perpetrators to

change their behavior".[1]

Further in this backdrop, La Rue (2016) argues, "The world is witnessing an unprecedented increase of polarization, hate speech, radicalization and extremism happening both offline and online."[2] Mansouri and Zapata-Barero (2017) reiterate this concern, "Internationally, the last two decades have witnessed an upsurge in intercultural tensions, xenophobia and social disharmonies, in particular inter and intra-state conflicts driven by religious, sectarian and ethno-cultural disagreements. Indeed, since 9/11, new forms of extreme ideologies, radicalization, populism, and estrangement have dominated national and global agendas."[3]

The fulcrum of all these violent narratives is communication. The world has already witnessed the dangerous effects of violent communication. The Rwanda genocide of 1994 is a grim reminder of what violent communication can do and the role of Radio Rwanda and Radio Television des Miles Collines in spreading the genocide. The Srebrenica Genocide of 1995 was also the result of false propaganda, and the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia had recognized this.

Hence, the challenge for communicators in the 21st Century is to assiduously and systematically work to promote a healthy communication ecosystem at all levels- from individuals to families, institutions, societies, nations, and the global level. A healthy and nonviolent communication ecosystem is the only answer to the narratives of violence and hatred. In this context, senior Gandhian Natwar Thakkar, in a dialogue with Kundu (2018), talks of the challenge communicators face in the contemporary world:

> The need for communicators today is to challenge the attempts to divide people on the basis of class, religion, and race. … So, right from a young age, we need to teach children to use communication to promote human values, which contributes to a spirit of solidarity. Communication education should integrate the values of pluralism, mutual respect, and inclusivity. It should not be a vehicle to sensationalize or incite passion but a lesson to practice self-restraint and principles of nonviolence in all aspects.[4]

Here Thakkar underscores the essence of integrating values of pluralism, mutual respect, and inclusivity in our education in communication. He feels it should be a lesson to practice self-restraint and principles of nonviolence. However, in general, we find that violence finds greater space in our education in communication instead of giving space to nonviolent alternatives. In this context, Gorsevski (2014) argues, "Explorations of

discursive, rhetorical, interpersonal, symbolic, group, cultural, and other forms of communicative violence tend to take precedence in terms of the general lens that is used to discuss and theorize communication as it relates to various kinds of conflict." [5] She opines that terms like nonviolence and peacebuilding seem to be 'less well understood by researchers in communication'. She observes that present discussions on communication and conflict are more focused on the 'conflict's stated or implied relationship with violence'. According to Gorsevski, communication " is a means of managing and resolving normal, everyday conflicts at home, at work, in families, in communities, and in other routine places where communicative interaction occurs."[6]

Concerned at the centrality of violent communication, which seems to engulf 21st Century societies, Natwar Thakkar underlines the need for nonviolent communication education right from a young age. He argues that citizens need to understand and practice the art and science of nonviolent communication in every aspect of their lives. He uses the Gandhian communication praxis to articulate his understanding of nonviolent communication. Thakkar notes (Kundu, 2018):

> To me, nonviolent communication literacy would mean how our communication efforts should be nonviolent; how our ability and capacity to communicate not only with ourselves but with our family and society be nonviolent in all aspects, and overall, how the entire process of communication, whether between individuals, groups, communities and the world at large should be nonviolent in nature. This would entail a deep understanding of the art and science of nonviolence and its centrality in our daily actions. It's not just verbal and nonverbal communication; nonviolent communication literacy would also include whether our thoughts and ideas are nonviolent or not. This would also mean how we can get rid of our preconceived notions of individuals or groups with whom we want to communicate and stop evaluating them to suit our own ideas. We are often attuned to thinking in terms of moralistic judgments, which may be our constructions. By developing a deep understanding of the art and science of nonviolence and integrating it in our communication practices, we could get over biased and moralistic judgments, which could contribute to emotional bridge building.[7]

By arguing about the need to encourage nonviolent communication literacy, Natwar Thakkar echoes the situation's criticality. He argues for the need to understand the art and science of nonviolence in every aspect of our lives to become nonviolent communicators.

Meanwhile, Martin and Varney (2003) argue how communication is central to the effectiveness of nonviolent action. If the methods of protest and persuasion are fundamental means of communication, forms of non-cooperation and nonviolent intervention have crucial communicative dimensions. While discussing the dimension of nonviolence as communication, Martin and Varney outline that nonviolence as communication can usefully be divided into five dimensions. These include:

(1) Conversion, persuasion, symbolic action: dialogue with opponents.
(2) Power equalization via non-cooperation and intervention: preparation for dialogue with opponents.
(3) Mobilization of third parties: the chain of nonviolence.
(4) Collective empowerment: dialogue within activist groups.
(5) Individual empowerment: inner dialogue. [8]

Martin and Varney suggest that "examining the communicative dimensions of nonviolence can alert both activists and researchers to the fact that nonviolent actions do not speak for themselves."[9]

In the backdrop of the explanation of nonviolent communication by Natwar Thakkar using the Gandhian praxis and the analysis of the communicative dimensions of nonviolence, it would be apt to explore and understand the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication and its significance in contemporary world society. This paper will explore the significant elements of the Gandhian nonviolent communication model and why it matters in the 21st Century.

Exploring the Gandhian Model of Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent communication is a holistic communication approach that underscores the significance of human interconnectedness. It encompasses our intrapersonal communication, communication with others, communication in the society at large, communication with nature, and communication with other living beings. Its premise is that in the event of dysfunctional communication, whether it is destructive self-communication, interactions with others, society, nature, or other living beings, there would be disruptions in our relationships. (Kundu, 2022)[10]

Delving into the different approaches to nonviolent communication, Kundu (2020) talks about how the ancient Indian tradition has given credence to a pluralistic communication process. This includes our thought process, which is the primary form of communication.

An important aspect of nonviolent communication is how we can communicate by grasping an idea from different perspectives or lenses. In this context, for instance, the Jain doctrine of *anekantvada* **(**many-sidedness or relative pluralism**)** also echoes the pluralistic tradition of the Indian communication ecosystem**.** This Jain doctrine helps us understand the principles of pluralism and the significance of a multiplicity of viewpoints**.** (Kundu, 2020)[11]

Nonviolent communication is an integral part of Buddhist traditions. Amongst the eight-fold path given by the Buddha, right speech or *sammâvâcâ*is one of them. The Buddha mentioned it in his very first *sutta* after awakening, **"**The Discourse on Turning of the Wheel of Truth**" (***Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta***).** What then constitutes right speech? Magga-VibhaE ga Sutta *(*SN 45:8*)* explains it, "And what is right speech? Abstaining from lying, abstaining from divisive speech, abstaining from abusive speech, abstaining from idle chatter."

Meanwhile, American psychologist Marshall Rosenberg provides an in-depth understanding of nonviolent communication in the contemporary context. He argues (2015), "NVC is founded on language and communication skills that strengthen our ability to remain human even under trying conditions." Rosenberg points out how using nonviolent communication helps those practicing it reframe how they express themselves and hear others. He notes that its use helps perceive relationships in a new light as "we hear our own deeper needs and those of others."[12]

In the backdrop of different approaches to nonviolent communication, it would be apt to explore and aim to construct the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication. Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest proponents of nonviolent communication, and in the context of contemporary conflicts, the Gandhian approach needs to be explored and promoted at all levels of our society. It has become uniquely relevant in the backdrop of the increasing use of toxic communication, promotion of fake information, misrepresentations, and stereotyping.

One of the earliest attempts to develop an understanding of the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication was by Bode (1994). Using the life, philosophy, principles, and actions of Gandhi's life, Bode (1994) attempted to construct a Gandhian theory of nonviolent communication. According to this theory, there are four theoretical units: (1) nonviolent speech and action; (2) maintenance of relationships and enrichment of personhood; (3) openness; and (4) flexibility. Arguing on the basis of this theory, Bode noted, "Gandhi predicted that from violent communications

harm would result, and that nonviolent communication contributes to the maintenance of peaceful relationships and to the enrichment of personhood."[13]

Bode (1994) further points out, ""For Gandhi, the goal of communication was to build and maintain human relationships and thus enhance personhood. Gandhi's insistence on nonviolence recognized the importance of others, valued humanity, and appreciated the importance of human relationships and personhood… Gandhi's nonviolent communication theory included the valuing of personhood throughout the world, but he also stressed the importance of individual relationships and friendships. ...Openness was manifested in Gandhi's rhetoric and is a characteristic of his nonviolent communication theory. For Gandhi, openness included communication practices such as free speech and press, public discussion, and direct negotiation."[14]

In the context of the scholarship of work advanced by scholars like Bode, the perspectives of senior Gandhians like Natwar Thakkar, and in the framework of contemporary challenges like conflicts and environmental degradation, it would be apt to explore the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication as a holistic communication ecosystem. This would entail not just verbal and nonverbal communication, our thoughts and ideas, and human-to-human communication but would be expansive in its approach to furthering the symbolic communication between humans and nature and humans and other living beings.

This holistic approach to nonviolent communication stems from Gandhi's ideas of a nonviolent society based on a cosmocentric approach to human nature. Parekh (1997) aptly explains the cosmocentric approach to human nature followed by Gandhi:

> The cosmos was a well-coordinated whole whose various parts were all linked in a system of yajna, or interdependence and mutual service. It consisted of different orders of being ranging from the material to the human, each governed by its own laws and standing in a complex relationship with the rest. Human beings were an integral part of the cosmos and were tied to it by the deepest bonds. In Gandhi's favourite metaphor, the cosmos was not a pyramid of which the material world was the base and the human beings the apex, but a series of ever-widening circles encompassing humankind, the sentient world, the material world, and the all including the cosmos.[15]

Parekh explains the key dimension of Gandhi's idea of a nonviolent society which underlined, 'as human beings were interdependent, should discourage all forms of exploitation, domination, injustice, and

inequality…and should find ways of institutionalizing and nurturing the spirt of love, truthfulness, social service, cooperation and solidarity'.

Parekh (1997) further delves on Gandhi's prescriptions of a nonviolent society which should 'cherish epistemological pluralism'. He notes: "It should appreciate that reason, intuition, faith, traditions intergenerationally accumulated collective wisdom, and emotions are all valuable sources of knowledge, and make their own distinct contributions to understanding and coping with the complexities of human life. The good society should encourage dialogue, a creative interplay between them, and not allow one of them to acquire a hegemonic role or become the arbiter of all others."[16]

This cosmocentric approach to human nature and the prescriptions of a nonviolent society should guide the construction of the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication. Keeping in mind the deep fissures in human-human relationships, the crisis of climate change and environmental degradation and the problematic relationship between human and other living beings which gets accentuated due to materialistic greed and in the name of development, the essence of human interconnectedness which Gandhi advocated needs to be the central idea of our times. This spirit of human interconnectedness also needs to be assimilated in the construction of our communication ecosystem.

Gandhi's nonviolent communication also hinges on the impermanent nature of violence. He had said, "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent." In the context of the communication process, violent communication does immeasurable damage, it is never sustainable. It can lead to long-term fissures in relationships and is the reason of all conflicts. Hence, there is a pertinent argument for the need to inculcate nonviolent communication in all our relationships.

An important aspect of the Gandhian nonviolent communication model is its dynamism and action-oriented approach. Unlike other communication scholars who mostly delve on the theoretical aspects of communication, the Gandhian model is practical, persuasive, and motivates the masses to take up positive, constructive work. The thrust of the Gandhian model was how the Gandhian workers were motivated to go and work with the poor and marginalized and be their own.

> The volunteers are called upon to enlist themselves in order to do village reconstruction work, and this village reconstruction work is nothing but

> the organization of the peasantry and workers upon an economic basis. We want to enter the heart of the peasants. We want to intensify ourselves completely with the masses. We want to make their woes our own.. ..We must therefore make common cause with the workers.[17]

The depth of the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication necessitates its practitioners to make common causes with whom they work and enter their hearts, practice compassion and make people's problems their own. In the context of the contemporary discourses, this action-oriented, dynamic communication with an endeavour to enter the hearts of people seems to be missing. The aim of communication to nurture constructive work as an important dimension of the Gandhian model needs to be revisited in the context of current discourses.

Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha offers the fulcrum of his model of nonviolent communication. A cardinal principle of Satyagraha was that adversaries were never considered eternal enemies but essentially potential friends. There was no place of bitterness towards others or any trace of violence in speech or action in the work of a Satyagrahi. For Gandhi, truth and nonviolence were supreme. Hence for a Satyagrahi, it was essential to adhere to truth and nonviolence in all circumstances. For a Satyagrahi, the object was 'not avoidance of all relationship with the opposing power' but the 'transformation of relationship'. Reaching out to one's opponents or those with whom we disagree is important when we think of resolving differences through strategies of nonviolent communication. In Gandhi's Satyagraha, in situations of dispute or differences, the aim should be to see the validity of the opponent's position. The aim was not to push only one's point of view but to respect other viewpoints with empathy. Empathetic understanding of the views of others, including our opponents, is a salient feature of nonviolent communication. The Gandhian method underlines the essence of empathy in resolving differences. In Young India (19-3-1925), the Mahatma writing in this context says:

> Immediately we begin to think of things as our opponent thinks of them, we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless, for a satyagrahi it is absolutely essential. Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.[18]

This aspect of empathetic communication in Gandhi's communication has been underlined by Joseph (2022), who points out, "Gandhi's writings in Indian Opinion were exercises in truth, nonviolence, and bridge building. He sought and advocated stepping into the shoes of the adversary to find out points not only of difference but also of agreement."[19]

An important attribute of Satyagraha was the use of nonviolent persuasion. Pelton (1974) noted, "An essential ingredient of nonviolent persuasion is the honest and straightforward dissemination of information…the withholding of information, the making of unsubstantiated charges…the packaging of an issue, and appeals to greed, prejudice and hatred cannot under any circumstances be reconciled with the philosophy of nonviolence."[20] Nonviolent persuasion was a powerful strategy to reach out to adversaries and is a key element of the Gandhian nonviolent communication model.

Again in the context of Satyagraha, Bondurant (1958) points out how the propagation of the objectives was a fundamental rule of Satyagraha in action. She notes, "Propaganda must be made an integral part of the movement. Education of the opponent, the public, and participants must continue apace." [21] Here, propaganda is considered nonviolent rhetoric aimed to create awareness and understanding of the issues and the different strategies a nonviolent activist could take to overcome the perceived injustices. In the context of communication and media studies being taught in different universities and colleges, the study of nonviolent rhetoric as a significant element of communication is sadly missing. The Gandhian approach to nonviolent rhetoric offers a valuable alternative to violent rhetoric in many contemporary discourses.

Besides, as Bondurant (1965) points out, the mechanism of nonviolent resolution of conflicts was an intrinsic part of this communication approach:

> The objective is not to assert propositions, but to create possibilities. In opening up new choices and in confronting an opponent with the demand that he make a choice, the satyagrahi involves himself in acts of 'ethical existence'. The process forces a continuing examination of one's own motives, an examination undertaken within the context of relationships as they are changed towards a new, restructured, and reintegrated pattern.[22]

Openness and flexibility in one's communication was important feature of Gandhi's nonviolent communication. From this, we learn a lot about his approach to conciliation, mediation, and negotiation.

Nanda (2004) aptly encapsulates how these principles transformed Gandhi into the Mahatma:

> Gandhi told a correspondent in April 1939, the satyagrahi's object was 'not avoidance of all relationship with the opposing power', but 'the transformation of the relationship'. In South Africa, Gandhi had negotiated, fought, and finally reached an agreement with General Smuts. His parting gift to his chief antagonist was a pair of sandals which he had himself stitched…In India through a quarter of a century, Gandhi corresponded with all the Viceroys- Chelmsford, Reading, Irwin, Willingdon and Linlightgow- keeping his lines of communication open even while he engaged them in nonviolent battle.[23]

Gandhi succinctly describes how nonviolent persuasion is an integral part of his nonviolent communication (Ahimsa or the Way of Nonviolence):

> Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which otherwise are shut, to the voice of reason . . . if you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword.[24]

Gandhi's nonviolent communication entailed nonviolent rhetoric and a strong commitment to the rule of law. For instance, the Mahatma's statement in front of the Magistrate in Champaran is a powerful example of nonviolent persuasion with a strong adherence to the rule of law. In The Story of My Experiments with Truth, he says:

> With the permission of the Court, I would like to make a brief statement showing why I have taken the very serious step of seemingly disobeying the order under Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. In my humble opinion it is a question of difference of opinion between the local administration and myself. …I have, therefore, come to study it with the assistance, if possible, of the Administration and the planters. I have no other motive, and cannot believe that my coming can in any way disturb public peace and cause loss of life….The Administration, however, have thought differently. I fully appreciate their difficulty, and I admit too that they can only proceed upon information they received. As a law-abiding citizen my first instinct would be, as it was, to obey the order served upon me. But I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I have come.[25]

Communication analysis of this statement suggests how Gandhi was using his tools of nonviolent persuasion bringing in elements of conciliation, yet adhering to his primary objective of helping the ryots. He also underlines his respect for law and the difficulties of the administration. This lesson in nonviolent communication tells us how to stick to one's ethical objectives without being disrespectful to those who may have different views. The efficacy of nonviolent communication lies on how we are able to persuade those having different views to join us in our ethical endeavour. This was aptly captured by Gandhi when he says, "Before I could appear before the Court to receive the sentence, the Magistrate sent a written message that the Lieutenant Governor had ordered the case against me to be withdrawn, and the Collector wrote to me saying that I was at liberty to conduct the proposed inquiry, and that I might count on whatever help I needed from the officials."[26]

Gandhi's adherence to the use of nonviolent communication was also reflected in his journalistic endeavor. He practiced strict self-restraint and advocated its use in all forms of his communicative efforts. In The Story of My Experiments with Truth, he writes:

> I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact the tone of Indian Opinion compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen.[27]

When problems arising due to hate speech and hate narratives seem to be escalating, this prescription from Gandhi's nonviolent communication, the essence of self-restraint, is critically relevant. On the significance of self-restraint in our communicative efforts, he further writes:

> To be true to my faith (in Satyagraha), therefore, I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary. It is training for me. It enables me to peep into myself and make discoveries of my weaknesses. Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds.[28]

Some critical challenges communicators face today are misrepresentation of facts and promoting fake information and stereotypes. The Gandhian model helps communicators from falling

into the trap of misrepresentations. Joseph (2022) elaborates on this perspective, "Right from his first writings in The Vegetarian, there was consistent regard for the truth with a correspondingly strong urge to dispel common misperceptions and fight misrepresentations."[29]

The first President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi, encapsulates the eternal value of Gandhi's nonviolent communication. He writes:

> Here are the words of the Master covering some six decades of a superbly human and intensely active public life- words that shaped and nurtured a unique movement and led it to success; words that inspired countless individuals and showed them the light; words that explored and showed a new way of life; words that emphasized cultural values which are spiritual and eternal, transcending time and space and belonging to all humanity and all ages.[30]

Conclusion

In a world that is witnessing conflicts of varying kinds, many of which are due to a dysfunctional communication architecture, the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication can play a pivotal role in encouraging nonviolent alternatives and counter-narratives. For a genuine culture of peace to emerge, nonviolent communication needs to be promoted and taught right from childhood. It should be the defining communication system in all spheres of life- at individual levels, families, educational institutions, administration, judiciary, police, politics, and of course, in the relationship between human - nature and human-all other living beings.

To conclude, in the backdrop of the discussions elucidated above it would be apt to encapsulate the Gandhian model of nonviolent communication. Kundu tries to summarize it as:

1) The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication necessitates use of nonviolence in all aspects of communication, whether verbal or nonverbal, our thoughts and ideas. It underlines how the mind, heart, and body remain disciplined at every stage.

2) We learn the art and science of nonviolent persuasion and efficacy from the Gandhian approach. It explains how nonviolent persuasion is a key component of a nonviolent communication ecosystem.

3) The Gandhian model teaches us the significance of self-discipline and self-restraint in all aspects of our communicative efforts.

4) Gandhi's nonviolent nonverbal symbolism, like fasting, tells us about its efficacy in nonviolent action. We learn how nonverbal

symbolism aims at encouraging self-introspection.

5) The Gandhian approach to empathy in nonviolent communication teaches us how to emotionally connect with the people, even the adversaries, and build bridges.

6) The Gandhian nonviolent communication model encompasses principles of human interdependence and its relevance in a holistic communication ecosystem. It talks on the importance of the cosmocentric approach to human nature.

7) Mahatma Gandhi's communication strategy was to reach the hearts of the masses through constructive work for social and economic emancipation. For instance, his Talisman is a powerful statement about how each needs to introspect on what they are doing for the last person of the society. It underscores the essence of empathetic connections.

8) Mahatma Gandhi's five pillars of nonviolence- respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciation, and compassion- can be considered the foundational architecture of a nonviolent communication ecosystem.

9) The Gandhian model of nonviolent communication entails the evolution of an individual to a higher plane of values and ethics and respect for human dignity.

10) His communication model underlines the importance of being morally disciplined, strictly adhering to the principles of ahimsa and truth.

11) Openness and flexibility were the hallmarks of Gandhian nonviolent communication. These attributes are important for the constructive resolution of any conflict.

12) Using the strategies of Gandhian nonviolent communication enables communicators to avoid getting into the trap of misrepresentation, fake information, and wrong stereotypes.[31 & 32]

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The Role of Indian Soft Power in Indo-US Relations

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ABSTRACT

India's soft power and its application in its foreign policy have been the subject of many studies. This study focuses on the role that Indian soft power has played in US-India relations. It argues that soft power has had a great role in bringing the US and India together. It describes the sources of India's soft power in general and specific sources of soft power in Indo-US bilateral relations, including the American fascination for ancient Indian texts and spiritualism. It also examines the history of bilateral relations through a soft power perspective, from the days of the Cold War to the present times. It ends with some recommendations to make India's soft power more effective in the US.

Key words: *India-US, soft power, diaspora, culture, democracy*

Introduction

JOSEPH NYE, THE Harvard professor who proposed and propagated the concept in the1980s, defined soft power as 'the ability to attract people to our side without coercion'[1]. Since then, the concept has caught on, and much scholarly work has been done on it. This paper examines the role of India's soft power in India-US relations. The paper is divided into four sections. Section one deals with the sources of India's soft power in general. Section two examines the role of soft power in bilateral relations between India and the US. The third section examines bilateral ties from a soft power perspective. The fourth section comprises the conclusion and policy recommendations.

Sources of India's Soft Power

That India is a powerhouse when it comes to soft power is well known and examined in great detail in many scholarly works. Its soft power has been of enormous advantage for its foreign policy. The prospect of India becoming a world power today is considered a possibility due to its vast and varied soft power elements and the Indian efforts to shed off the Third World tag. Though criticised at times for its social inequalities and poverty, India has successfully portrayed itself as a nation of rich culture, history, heritage, and unique philosophy. Though blessed with necessary and essential tools to become the pioneer in the soft power arena, India has not fully explored its potential yet.

Indian soft power is now finding a more extensive application in public diplomacy. Elements of India's art and cultural heritage and architecture involving aspects of films, dance, music, painting, philosophy, yoga, mysticism, traditional knowledge, and literature have brought India closer to many world nations. Yoga has now become a way of life. In almost all the nations, the International Day of Yoga, June 21, is witnessed as the means for physical well-being and a celebration of Indian art and culture.

Indian political values and social concepts which promote equality, fraternity, social inclusion, and democratic values tend to boost the image of India abroad. India's foreign policy that respects and promotes international cooperation and acknowledges the role of international organizations in achieving the same and ensuring international peace has given it the image of a leader in the age of democracy. Even though it was a developing country, India became the leader of the Third World and the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War primarily due to its soft power. The legacy of not entering into wars and violence and being a non-aggressive nation made India a friend of many. The neighbours in the region were once part of India, while the extended neighbourhood, especially in southeast India and Central Asia, were influenced by the Indian culture, history, and heritage, which got transported to the region through traders and political conquests. The similarity between Central Asia and India cuisines demonstrates the same [2]. A major export item along the classical Indian Ocean trade routes was religious thought and philosophy, especially the ideas of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Islam spread through the merchants and trade relations rather than missionaries and wars alone. This political, cultural, and economic advent turned out to be effective in building relations with the immediate and extended neighbourhood in the region.

The most important and effective instrument for soft power is

the Indian diaspora. The respect and command it enjoys in the resident countries can help the Indian government execute policies. Canada, the USA, Britain, and Ireland are a few nations where individuals of Indian origin play influential and crucial roles in administration and governance. What makes the Indian diaspora unique and desirable is the skill and education that proves beneficial to the host country. Globalisation and the advancement of science and technology have further made the Indian diaspora appreciated by the international community.

The change in India's economic aspirations and attitudes since 1991 has influenced the global acceptance of India as a partner in economic integration and development. The International Monetary Fund says India is on the road to becoming one of the top five economies in the world by 2030 [3]. Indian innovations, technology, and scientific accomplishments have surprised the world. India's technological advancement— especially in space and nuclear energy, has been a shock for many and a surprise for a few nations. 'It is emerging as the fifth or sixth of the leading space powers in the world' [4]. The success of the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) and Chandrayan has further ratified the Indian advancement in astronomy. Dinshaw Mistry attributes the Indian rise in space science as one of toil, research, and constructive criticism and believes 'only Israel and Brazil are likely to follow India's evolutionary route to advanced satellite-launch capability' [5]. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme initiated by the Ministry of External Affairs in 1964 should be seen as an Indian attempt to harness power by aiming at the economic growth of the South Asian region and beyond through cooperation and trade[6]. Though initially the programme focused on South Asian and Asian nations, the extended purview has now brought African and East European nations under the programme. The objective of the programme, as stated on the official website of ITEC, points at economic power used to establish relations and cooperation, which is a clear example of economic activities being transformed as agents of soft power [7].

Indian Soft Power in India-US Relations

A Bit of History

Move on, O Lord, in the resistless path!
Till thy high noon o'er spreads the world,
Till every land reflects thy light,
Till men and women, with uplifted head,
Behold their shackles broken, and

Know, in springing joy, their life renewed!

- To the Fourth of July from
The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,
Vol 5 by Swami Vivekananda [8]

Swami Vivekananda's address at the Parliament of World Religions held at Chicago in 1893 proved to America and the world the richness of Indian culture and heritage. The poem above was written in commemoration of American independence by Swami Vivekananda. This poem would later serve as the string that would renew the Indo-US relations when the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee recited it a century later at the Asiatic Society in New York, at a time when there was a great degree of discomfort between the two nations.

The initial cords of cordiality between India and US were struck through their mutual antipathy towards imperialism. The US, as a nation that had fought and won against imperialism, and India, a nation fighting against imperialism, shared common interests and goals. This inculcated an interest in each other's social and political history. Americans like William Jennings Bryan, in his work *British Rule in India* (1906), vehemently attacked the British for their actions in India.

The Second World War initiated a wave of sympathy and solidarity for Indians in the American community. The Japanese threat and the course of World War II further necessitated American intervention in the British policies and actions in India. Against this backdrop, William Phillips came to India as the President's Personal Representative in India. 'Roosevelt was known to be a supporter of greater concessions to India leading to her independence' [9]. Despite the sympathy for India, the US administration's proximity to the British administration forced the Roosevelt administration to frame decisions and policies in favour of Britain. Thus, the personal representative in India remained an administrative reporter. The decision to remove India from the purview of US food aid in 1943 resulted from the US administration seeking to remain cordial with the British.

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Despite these circumstances, the US sheltered associations and leaders demanding independence for India in its territory. The visit

of Vijaylakshmi Pandit to the US in 1944 should be viewed in this context. The American media gave extensive coverage to her visit and the independence movement in India. The Atlantic Charter, which started the Anglo- American camaraderie towards establishing democracies and eradicating imperialism, gave renewed hope to Indian nationalists. The speeches of President Roosevelt further reiterated this. The then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, interpreted that the Atlantic Charter was meant for the European colonies and that the application of the same in Asia and Africa required much thought, adding that it would be a matter of grave embarrassment 'to the defense of India at the present time'[10].

The following are the mechanisms through which India never failed to break the contact or disengage from the relationship once created with the United States of America.

Indian Heritage, Traditional Knowledge, and Lifestyle

Indian literature was a source of inspiration for many American writers, including the famous Henry David Thoreau. Elihu Yale (founder of Yale University), Ralph Emerson, and Thoreau relied on the European translations of the ancient Indian texts. 'Indian books, with their emphasis on inner spiritual resources, evoked a deep response from Emerson's idealistic temperament at a time when sensational philosophy reigned supreme in the United States'[11]. A professor of Sanskrit at Yale University, Edward Elbridge Salisbury, developed a conducive atmosphere for studying India and Indian literature. He founded the American Oriental Society in 1842 to assist and advance studies on India. He tutored William Dwight Whitney, a scholar in Sanskrit and German alike, whose contributions to the progress of Indian literature in the West are tremendous. He published works based on the Atharva Veda like Index Verborum of Atharva Veda (1881), translation of Atharva Veda Pratisakhya (1862), and others. The John Hopkins University too developed a centre for the study of Indological studies, especially Sanskrit. Harvard followed suit and developed a research-oriented study centre for Sanskrit and Hindi. Professor C R Lanman at Harvard introduced the Harvard Oriental Series. This book series by Harvard has now published over t93 volumes[12]. The American Institute of Indian Studies, with its headquarters at the University of California, is now the US's leading proponent of Indian studies. Since 1961, the centre has been funding and encouraging research and studies on India and Indian languages. The initiatives of the American Institute of Indian Studies has further persuaded many American students and scholars to pursue studies on India and various Indian languages (AIIS). The Columbia

University Press, under the project titled the Library of Bengal literature, aims to print Bengal literary work spanning over 1000 years in both English and Bengali[13].

The museums at Boston (Museum of Fine Arts), New York (The Metropolitan), Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art), Cleveland (Cleveland Museum of Art), Detroit (Detroit Institute of Art), Kansas (William Rockhill Museum), and Ohio (Toledo Museum of Art) house an enormous collection of Indian art and artifacts. Americans were introduced to Indian sculptures, paintings, and architecture through these[14].

Indian culture received widespread attention and affinity through Indians like Swami Vivekananda and Rabindra Nath Tagore. Rabindra Nath Tagore greatly impacted the American minds through his close interactions and visits to the US. The Indian philosophy and Hindu religion that Swami Vivekanada introduced to the Americans through his speeches and the Vedanta Centres opened across America, drew the communities in the US closer to India. A resolution was initiated in the US Senate in the 1930s against the British atrocities in India. Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission became instrumental in depicting India as the Great Treasure House of spiritualism [15]. Henny David Thoreau and Walt Whitman took immense interest in Indian philosophy and political thought. The former had a special affinity for ancient Indian texts like the Upanishads, Bhagavat Gita, and the Vedas. Drummer Glen Velez is famous for incorporating Indian percussion techniques, with the kanjira being his favourite instrument. The Americans have a special love for saxophone. Kadri Gopinath is famous for illustrating Carnatic music through the saxophone. American jazz musician John Handy recognized and appreciated his talent, and Gopinath accompanied him on music tours around the world.

Shared Democratic Values

India is perceived in the US as a country with more similarities and common interests to the United States compared to other countries in Asia. As the oldest and largest democracies, the two countries have much in common, including multi-ethnic and multilingual populations. Even on the official website of the US Department of State, the bilateral relations fact sheet on Indo-US relations says: 'The U.S.-India partnership is founded on a shared commitment to freedom, democratic principles, equal treatment of all citizens, human rights, and the rule of law. The US and India have shared interests in promoting global security, stability, and economic prosperity through trade, investment, and connectivity'[16].

The former American ambassador to India, Robert Blackwell, remarked, 'India is a plural society with democracy, rule of law and individual freedom, community relations and cultural diversity. What a place to be an intellectual!' further adding ¯I wouldn't mind being born ten times to rediscover India (Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Modi of India in a Joint Press Statement 2017). The relationship between India and United States is developed on the foundation of shared values and democratic culture. The constitutions of both these countries begin with the words: 'We the people'[17].

It is unlikely that the US would have chosen India as a partner in its quest to manage China's rise had India not been a democracy. As Tanvi Madan (2021) argues, 'While their shared democratic nature has not been the only driver, it has certainly contributed directly and indirectly to the development of the U.S.-India partnership over the last two decades'[18]. She argues that 'It could be in the future as well, with the two democracies working together to ensure (1) democratic resilience in the Indo-Pacific region and (2) the resilience of the rules-based international order' (Ibid). She describes democracy as the 'force multiplier' in the relationship.

India's membership in the Quad and the D-10 group are all the outcomes of it being a democracy. Indian foreign policy has always given special focus to the preservation of democratic values and ideals. Still, its commitment to the promotion of the same as political precedence has been missing[19]. Incorporating both— preserving and promoting democracy- could further help in Indian engagements with the US and abroad.

Science and Technology

The yearning for technology, especially information technology, has paved the way for a new thrust area of cooperation between India and the USA. A majority of the Indian population residing in the US associate themselves with the hub of US IT — Silicon Valley. During the second half of the 1990s, Americans began to worry about the Y2K problem. They worried that computer language and coding would have to be rewritten and redefined in the new millennium. The Indian software engineers were brought to make the American hardware function. New codes were devised for the American Information Technology (IT) industry to develop in the era. America comprehended the efficiency and intellect of Indian engineers, and India was no more a country that could be ignored[20]. Bengaluru in Karnataka has been aiming to be a unique IT hub of India and South Asia, earning itself the title 'Silicon Valley of Asia'[21].

The US Federal Reserve Board praised India's Unified Payments

Interface Scheme (UPI) and wants the US to establish 'Fed Now' along the same lines. Google stated the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) as a 'thoughtful planner'. Google requested Fed Now to be developed with consultation with UPI and NPCI. Fed Reserve has followed Google's advice as it has decided to approach the Reserve Bank of India and NPCI for help in developing a user-friendly digital payment platform[22]. This is an instance where Americans have appreciated Indian technological skills.

Economic Activities and Trade

Indo-American relations started off through trade. British rule in the American colonies was jeopardised by the American war of independence and Napoleon in Europe. The tea trade was then the most important element of Indo-U. S trade. Until 1990, the United States had considered India to be nothing greater than a regional power. After the US subjected India to economic sanctions following the nuclear tests at Pokhran in 1998, Frank Pallone pointed out that the US sanctions on certain institutions which engage in private research that do not threaten US interests and security would only cause US companies to lose opportunities to do business with India', adding that 'America's loss could well be the European Union's or Japan's gain'[23]. The Glenn Amendment and the sanctions imposed by it on India were eventually removed by the Bush administration. Since 2000, both countries have engaged in economic relations through the 'India-US Economic Dialogue'.

The change in Export Administration Regulation (EAR) 43 of the US to accommodate Indian interests was a major victory for India in trade diplomacy. With this, the Indian requests for access to the knowledge of sensitive technologies, once treated with suspicion and denial, are usually authorised. The EAR comprises an approval for India to be a Verified End User (VEU) for military and commercial exports, thereby reversing the significance of individually validated licenses for approved VEU applicants'[24]. The United States, by placing India in Strategic Trade Authorization (STA)-1, has acknowledged trade with India to be as significant as trade with Britain, Australia, Canada, Poland, and Norway[25]. India and USA aim to reach the $500 billion mark in bilateral trade of goods and services by 2024[26].

The Indian Diaspora

It was in 1889 that Indian merchants first visited the United States, reaching Philadelphia to trade in silk, linen, spice, and other Indian products[27]. Along with this trade, they also introduced Indian culture and religions to the US. This period saw a growing interest in Indian

culture, philosophy, and religions among the academic circles, theologists, philosophers, and social theorists of the United States. The number of people interested in India and its culture grew to a large extent in Boston that they came to be referred to as the 'Boston Brahmins'[28]. Oregon in the US saw Indians forming an organised attempt to form an association for 'Hind' under the leadership of Guru Dutta Kumar in 1910. Free Hindustan, the periodical, was published to let the West know of the atrocities and difficulties faced by Indians under the rule of British imperialists. The Indo- American Association was believed to be in charge of the publication of Free Hindustan, which was initially the effort of Guru Dutta Kumar and Dr. Har Dayal. Associations in US, like the Young India Association and Indo- American Association with headquarters at California, also focussed on the same issue. Indians in America became unofficial envoys raising the issue of Indian freedom and India's right to self-government. The Indian League of America became a torch bearer for the Indian Diaspora in this goal. Being sympathetic towards the demand for Indian independence, the Indo-American National Association society for the Advancement of India, Friends of Freedom for India and similar organizations were founded in the US 'Yugantar Ashram' which had started functioning with its headquarters at San Francisco, had a revolutionary tinge as it housed the Ghadar Party, which had intentions of fighting for India's liberation through violent means. America was least bothered by the nature of the organisation. This could have been for various reasons, a major reason being that India was seen as a fighter against colonialism like America[29]. The American interest in Indian independence could be traced to this. All these could be considered the initial steps by the Indian diaspora to garner support and affection for India.

Indian engineers in Artificial Intelligence and advanced robotics are seen as contributing to the American economy. Their skill and technical knowledge have forced Silicon Valley to include more Indians in the workforce. It is not just the prospect of cheap labour but skilled labour that forces many American firms to employ more Indians. It is 'hard work, dedication, and cheap labour which attract the industry to hire them. Most of these people can speak and communicate well with clients and bosses, which gives them an upper hand compared to other countries'[30].

The history of Indian immigration to the United States of America, though old, is different due to the 'human capital relative to both the destination country and the country of origin'[31]. The pre-1965 phase saw Indians coming to America to be labourers in the majority with few students and educated persons. As a change in the American

attitude was visible through the policies encouraging family unification and higher skills, immigration from India increased. Sanjay Chakravorthy classifies them as (i) Early Movers — associated with the mid-1960s to early 1980s who tried to blend into American society with their professional degrees, especially in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); (ii) Families Cohort identified with the period of early 1980s to mid-1990s which saw the Indian entry to the US taking advantage of the family unification policies introduced by the American administration; and (iii) The mid-1990s to present-day Indian immigration wave could be identified as the Information Technology population (IT); STEM population is also growing. The number of Indians reaching America post-1980 'grew more than eleven-fold, roughly doubling every decade'[32].

The initial effort at lobbying by Indians was by the National Federation of Indian American Associations in 1987, which was successful in denying the sale of American Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) planes to Pakistan. In 1999, when Kargil War broke out, the US Congress saw many of the offices of its important members subjected to 'e-mail flooding'. This could be considered the first indirect lobbying of Indian Americans as it prompted the then-American President Bill Clinton to demand that Pakistan withdraw its troops.

The Indian presence in the corporate and service sectors has had a constructive effect on the perception of India. 'As reputational intermediaries and as credibility- enhancing mechanisms, Indian Americans have favorably influenced India's image worldwide'. This was vital, and the 'reputational role of Indian Americans was more important when information about India was still meager; it is much less now as investors and marketers have greater knowledge about India' [33]. Rather than a 'brain drain, they turned out to be a 'brain bank' for India. Rakesh Gangawal (CEO, US Airways), Rono Dutta (President of United Airways), Indra Nooyi (CEO, PepsiCo), Ajay Banga (CEO, Master Card), Shanthanu Narayan (CEO, Adobe Systems), Satya Nadella (CEO, Microsoft), Sundar Pichai (CEO, Google) and Vikram Pandit (CEO, Citigroup) are examples of this.

The role of the Indian diaspora in the US has been significant in altering perceptions of decision-makers in both the countries, as the Indians consider it a priority to always connect with the homeland. Unlike other parts of the world, the Indians who migrated from India to the United States were not 'refugees or asylum seekers to escape political chaos or persecution'[34]. As there were no flight and escape narratives associated with the Indian immigration to the US, Indians were always attached to their homeland. This has helped establish a

new trend in Indo-US relations — where the social, economic, cultural, and political background of the Indian community not only influenced the US citizens, but these citizens of America, in turn, facilitated the establishment of relations between the US government and Indian community. This was a key factor that aided in the Indian community emerging as a major force in deciding the power equation in American politics[35]. The Indian diaspora enjoys a better social position than the natives of other nationalities and is often referred to as a 'model' community because of high education levels and low crime rates.

The Indian diaspora, with its higher levels of education and economic ability, has easily legitimised its entry into the US administrative and political arena, getting recognised as a community with political participation. The history of Indian influence in politics could be seen evidently from the early 1990s, especially since the formation of an Indian caucus in the House of Representatives in 1993. Today, it is the largest country-specific caucus in US Congress. Americans started electing Indians to the Congress in 1957 when Dalip Singh Saund was elected to the House of Representatives from California. Since then, Indians in the US have been closely associated with the political process in the country and held vital posts in the administration.

The most popular Indian lobby group is the US India Political Action Committee. The USINPAC pointed to the potential of trade and broader partnership through a nuclear deal. The grouping argued that if India is free to handle nuclear energy and technology, it could help India explore energy sources other than coal and petroleum. 'While economic and environmental arguments were placed at the fore, USINPAC also continued to stress India's solidarity with the US against terrorism'[36].

The US Presidential elections in 2004 marked the coming-of-age for the two million Indo-Americans, not only regarding their fundraising acumen for both Republican and Democratic parties, but also regarding their participation at the grassroots level [37]. The Bush administration was quick in creating a Caucus in Senate for the Indian diaspora called 'Friends of India'. The Indians in America have ensured that the differences between the two countries do not affect the bilateral engagements. This is a major reason these democracies stay together even during times of tension and disappointment.

Economic Potential

1991 saw a transformation of the international power structure, and India was forced to relook and reassess the policy of non-alignment after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Along with restricting the policy

framework towards the Soviet bloc countries, the introduction of the New Economic Policy in the period had a positive impetus on economic and political ties between India and the US. The US saw India as a large market where it could sell its goods. It also saw the enormous potential of the Indian economy after India's economic reforms. Though non-alignment had encouraged Indian independence and ensured Indian self-reliance in security concerns through these reforms, non-alignment was 'moulded, bent and recast'[38]. The economic reforms made India a rising power, enabling it to cast aside its 'Third World' image and become a useful partner for the US.

Bilateral Ties from a Soft Power Lens

Despite sharing common values, India and the US remained estranged until the end of the Cold War. The Non-Aligned Movement, US involvement in Vietnam in the 1960s, India's stand on Korean War, India's proximity to USSR in the 1970s, the US-China rapprochement in the early 1970s, and the US' tilt towards Pakistan in the Cold War all had a detrimental effect on the Indo-US relations. John Foster famously described India's non alignment as "immoral". Even as relations became stronger in the light of India's economic liberalization in the early 1990s, in the late 1990s, they became strained again owing to India's nuclear tests in 1998.

The US, under Bill Clinton, with the then Chinese President Jiang Zemin, immediately after the Indian nuclear tests of 1998, issued a joint communiqué critical of India. The then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had called world attention to the necessity of upholding Indian security and acquiring nuclear power technology and access for the sake of regional security and stability when the military administration in Pakistan was receiving aid from China and the US alike. He suggested that if the terrorist tendencies in the Indian neighbourhood could not be dealt with by the US, the least US could do was to not support Pakistan and hinder the efforts of India towards combating terrorism. 'We are the two largest democracies in the world, and have similar political cultures, a free press and the rule of law. We both have a tradition of private enterprise and free markets', he said, stating that it was agonizing that America failed to realise India as a dependable and accountable member of the international community[39]. Atal Bihari Vajpayee restated throughout his speech the idea of mutual gain and benefit through cordial Indo-US relations: 'Indo-US ties based on equality and mutuality of interests is going to be the mainstay of tomorrow's stable, democratic world order'.[40]

President Bill Clinton had explicitly expressed his support for India in 1999 during the Kargil conflict. In his meeting with Nawaz Sheriff

on July 4, 1999, Bill Clinton said, 'Your army is in the wrong here. If Sharif withdrew Pakistani troops from Kashmir, the United States would express relief without praise. If Sharif refused to withdraw, the United States would be forced to shift its historic alliance with Pakistan publicly towards India'[41]. During a telephonic conversation with A.B Vajpayee, Bill Clinton said that as the leaders of two of world's largest democracies, they were dutybound in 'a special responsibility to demonstrate that democracy provides the best foundation not only for domestic prosperity and stability, but for cooperation and harmony among democratic nations'[42]. The same Clinton administration that had denied Vajpayee a meeting with the US President in his first official visit to the US as the Prime Minister of India in September 1998, gave Vajpayee a warm welcome in September 2000. The reference to India and the USA as 'natural allies' by Vajpayee in his 1998 Asiatic Society address in New York, was acknowledged by US Vice President Al Gore during the former's second visit to the US.

The newly established amiability in the relations was reassured when the then Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice stated India was an emerging power that could turn to 'a pillar of stability in a rapidly changing Asia'[43]. The 9/11 attacks also prompted the US to view India in a different light. The U S non-proliferation policy recognised there are 'certain states that cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons technology given the nature of their domestic political regimes' while it also appreciated and delivered examples of countries like India, which in spite of having acquired the technical knowledge of nuclear energy and technology have displayed a peaceful behaviour[44]. For the U.S, India emerged as an attractive target to be wooed[45].

The Bush era focused on realigning the US with South Asia. Bush wanted to surpass the Chinese and encourage a 'power balance', which US believed would 'favour freedom'[46]. India, having gained the tag of the world's largest democracy, was deemed fit to play the role. Therefore, Bush declared US support for India's rise.

2008 saw the beginning of a new phase in Indo US relations with the signing of the Indo-US nuclear deal. This was historic as the US had signed an agreement to enter into nuclear engagements with a country that was not a signatory of the Nuclear Non- proliferation treaty[47]. This was made possible due to the 'shared democratic and secular values of the two countries' and the regional and geopolitical aspirations that had destroyed the roots of India being labelled as a 'third world military threat'; or a country vesting hard on its military and hard power resources[48].

Barack Obama followed Bush's footsteps in wooing India and said,

> America wants to be your partner in igniting the next wave of Indian growth. As India pursues more trade and investment, we want to be first in line. We're ready to join you in building new infrastructure — the roads and the airports, the ports, the bullet trains to propel India into the future. We ð"dð" re ready to help design ¯smart cities ð"d ð" that serve citizens better, and we want to develop more advanced technologies with India, as we do with our closest allies[49].

Barack Obama wanted India to be 'a valuable partner' in the changed scenario of international affairs[50]. Obama did not hesitate to acknowledge the shifting of world order to multi-polarity. He believed creating a space for the rise of emerging powers in the power struggle would help. The US was keen on curbing the threats and 'bad spots' in different parts of the world. He saw this as an opportunity to shed off the 'world police' tag on America[51].

Seen from the campaigns of Modi, both in 2014 and 2019, it is evident that India considers the US as the Uttar Pradesh of India's international affairs[52]. 'One cannot but notice that Trump and Modi are natural allies. Much like Obama and Manmohan Singh were natural allies'[53].

'I am a big fan of Hindu, and I am a big fan of India' and similar statements were made by Donald Trump as the Republican candidate for President in October 2016 while addressing gatherings of Indian Americans. 'Trump loves Hindus', 'Indians love Trump', 'Trump bringing Ram Rajya', 'Make America great again' were statements and slogans echoing outside the White House in February 2018 as the Indians were insisting on faster processing of their green card applications[54]. In his 2016 campaign, Trump reiterated that, if victorious, the US would remain a 'true friend' of India.

There are various meeting points in the course of regional and global interests for India and the US, and this would, without any incertitude, prove that both these democracies have a larger role to play in rewriting and redrawing international priorities and global order. The recent trend of Indo-US relations validates the assumption that the relations are now on a strong base and need to be developed further. The journey from 'distanced democracies' to 'natural allies' should be made more active, stronger, and devoid of mistakes.

Indo- US soft power diplomacy can be better summarised through the words of Barack Obama:

> When Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was protesting racial segregation in the United States, he said that his guiding light was Mahatma Gandhi. When Dr. King came to India, he said that being here — in "Gandhi's land" — reaffirmed his conviction that in the struggle for justice and human dignity, the most potent weapon of all is non-violent resistance. And those two great souls are why we can gather here together today, Indians and Americans, equal and free. And there is another link that binds us. More than 100 years ago, America welcomed a son of India — Swami Vivekananda. And Swami Vivekananda, he helped bring Hinduism and yoga to our country. And he came to my hometown of Chicago.
>
> Remarks by President Obama in Address to the People of India on January 27, 2015[55]

He goes on to add that his hope that what India and the US can achieve together is 'rooted in the values' shared by the countries. It can be incurred that India and the US –sometimes suffer from the tyranny of inflated expectations[56]. India should definitely take the opportunity to engage with the United States of America in this scenario through economic and commercial ties and the soft power tools of culture, technology, movies, and diaspora. Indian soft power is becoming successful in the upward trajectory of Indo-US relations, as is evident from the words of Barack Obama: 'As Americans, we believe in the promise of India. We believe in the people of India. We are proud to be your friend. We are proud to be your partner as you build the country of your dreams'[57]. India should achieve to maintain this equation in Indo-US relations, and soft power would be the best tool for this.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Thus, despite being the oldest and largest democracies, India and the US faced several obstacles in establishing a credible and synergizing relationship. Exchange programmes have had an immense influence on the trajectory of Indo-US relations for the better. Through these programmes, the participants have been gaining skills in a particular topic and an invaluable understanding of the nuances of culture that helps in understanding the people of another country. 'The Passport to India' programme is part of the US government's initiatives to encourage American students to study in India. India's decision to introduce visa-on-arrival for US citizens in 2015 was an attempt to make the United States 'Global Entry Program' available to Indian citizens. This was fulfilled in 2019. The Science and Technology cooperation and partnership have further strengthened the soft power diplomacy in Indo-US relations.

The focus on education, especially pursuing courses related to (STEM) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, has provided Indians with a more conducive environment in the US. The Indian diaspora has been one of the most contributing agents of Indian soft power in the US. Hindi radio stations like RBC radio, Radio Humsafar, Desi Junction, and Radio Salaam Namaste are available in the US. Indian national and regional television channels too are accessible and popular in the US. Many Indian-origin artists like Priyanka Chopra, Padma Lakshmi, Kunal Nayyar, Aishwarya Rai and others are part of Hollywood. There are American cities showcasing Indian movies in theatres. Most Indian festivals, especially Diwali, are celebrated by conducting public celebrations in popular American cities with Bollywood dances. These events have reported enthusiastic participation from Americans. These are credible examples to show the entry of India into the American minds.

However, despite their closer alignment, India's soft power in the US has been affected by a few factors like its treatment of the Rohingya refugees, Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the abrogation of Article 370 and the unpreparedness to face the second wave of the Corona virus pandemic. Several leading newspapers and magazines have been critical of India on these issues. The 2020 Factsheet by US Panel on Religious Freedom shows an India different from India's portrayal as a country promoting religious tolerance and freedom. These have been detrimental to India's image as a country promoting peace and religious tolerance.

Recommendations

America has always been proud of its multicultural population. India could use this trait of the US in increasing its soft power potential and should use the US as a ground for launching many of its global outreach programmes. Indian public diplomacy and cultural outreach programmes conducted in the US like the 'India Calling', 'Maximum India festival' are successful experiments in developing the cultural veracity and attributes of an evolving India in front of an international audience. Indian missions in the US should focus on developing more such programmes.

To be better deliverers of soft power, it is necessary that the diaspora is more enlightened in the values, culture, and ideas representing India. Special focus should be given to how the philosophy and literature of India could be transmitted to the younger generation of the diaspora community.

It is important that the momentum gained in maintaining the personal relationship with the President of the United States is

sustained. India should ensure that an individual relationship is established between the leaders of these two countries and primarily between the White House and 7, Lok Kalyan Marg. A change in the incumbent of the Oval Office in the US or the Prime Minister's Office in India should not affect bilateral relations. Amiable and reliable friendly relations with the second line of leadership of both countries should be fostered properly to maintain the sustenance of the bilateral ties. The relations should remain stable and positive irrespective of personalities.

Shorn of its diplomatic soft pedalling and etiquette, the US reaction— during and after the 2020 aggression on Indian borders by the Chinese - is the most reassuring result of Indian soft power. Having a partner who has attempted soft power diplomacy successfully would only add impetus to India's journey in soft power. India should see the US as a confidante for its soft power diplomacy and further endorse the bilateral ties using trade and public diplomacy measures.

Thus, soft power diplomacy has been of great advantage in establishing and maintaining relations with the US even in an antagonistic atmosphere for India in the US. Another arena where the two countries agree and support mutually is in achieving their common aim of managing China's rise and their faith in a liberal international order. Thus, soft power is one of the key factors that has transformed India and the US into strategic partners and will continue to remain so.

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Contemporizing Gandhi: Some Reflections on Principles and Praxis

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ABSTRACT

The central thesis of this paper is to argue that Gandhi's moral project and politics was to take on 'civilizational violence'. The paper examines contemporariness of some of his key principles and methods and dispels doubts on his relevance. It tries to argue that a cosmopolitan dharma and impulses of deliberative democracy are overwhelming in his writings.

Key words: Civilizational violence, Cosmopolitan dharma, principled voluntariness, contemporising satyagraha, deliberative democracy.

Introduction

GANDHI'S ASSASSINATION IN 1948 at the hands of a fanatic stirred the conscience of the entire nation. Much water has flown since then. His assassination cannot be dismissed as a sporadic act of individual violence. It was an act of organized violence, a product of deep-sheeted conflict. India's claimed development story has also exposed other conflicts that range from individual violence to civilizational violence. Gandhi's life has been a saga of his struggle against such conflicts that reflect various forms of violence in society. Much of the contemporary conflicts are recurrences of the past. The central thesis of this paper is to contemporize Gandhi, oscillating between 'his time' and 'ours', amid spells of despair and doubts on his contemporariness. To this end, this paper describes initiatives undertaken by individuals and groups, which later acquired the

currency of a Gandhian movement.

Interpretations of Gandhi are contested. The interpretative plurality of his politics and writings problematizes a canonical understanding of Gandhi. For example, in his lifetime and after, he has been understood and interpreted both as a conservative and a radical; as a saint and a politician; as a liberal Hindu and a secular-socialist. His iconography ranges from being messianic to a persistent problematizer. Many in India and the West, especially a section of the youth, cast doubts on his relevance today. Some dismiss 'Hind Swaraj', his seminal text, as a lost discourse. This article intends to take issues with such views. Realizing the voluminous nature of the Gandhian literature, the article stresses a re-reading of Gandhi, both textually and contextually. Our view is that Gandhi's re-reading is not a choice we can afford to ignore, it is rather an ontic necessity today for philosophers and political practitioners alike. Resisting the temptation to touch upon many flagrant contemporary issues, we limit to discussing just three. First, as against attempts to Hindutvize Gandhi in the political discourse of community and culture, this paper makes a case for a cosmopolitan Gandhi. Second, it stresses the value of Satyagraha in the face of continued structural and cultural violence. And, third, amidst hyper majoritarianism, it underlines the value of deliberative democracy that Hind Swaraj has on offer.

We find that a populist generality mar claims to Gandhi's legacy. Social workers, politicians across the polemic spectrum, social movements, government agencies and corporates are claiming him indiscriminately. He is a brand ambassador of Government policies and business entrepreneurs. For example, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, popularly known as MGNREGA, was enacted in deference to his socialist-egalitarian ethos of Gram-Swaraj and his concern for the livelihood security[1] of the rural poor. 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan', one of the widely acclaimed flagship programmes of the Government of India, is a tribute[2] to Mahatma Gandhi in pursuit of his constructive programme. Bihar Chief Minister, Mr. Nitish Kumar, profusely invokes Mahatma Gandhi as a preface to the Government's ban on consuming liquor. While speaking in Bihar Legislative Council, he says that "those who drink liquor are sinners……. those who are not following Mahatma Gandhi are not even Hindustani".[3] In several parts of India and the world, social movements and new social movements, small and big, fighting for tribal rights, ecological rights, Dalit rights, acclaim Gandhi as an inspiration. Their imperativeness is understandable. It is troubling, however, to see mindless industrialists and corporates, who Gandhi thought were products of the satanic civilizations, also swearing by Gandhi and

using him as a marketing ambassador! For example, in 2009, Mont Blanc, a Swiss company, used Gandhi's image to promote the sale of a fountain pen priced at £ 15,500[4]. It marked a huge controversy. It was contrary to the spirit of asceticism that characteristically defined the civic virtue of Gandhi's life. Amit Modi, the then Secretary of Sabarmati Ashram, which Gandhi had founded in 1915 on his return from South Africa to promote the values of radical egalitarianism and simplicity, expressed dismay at the product and remarked, "if he (Mahatma Gandhi) had seen this, he would have thrown it away"[5]. Vijay Mallya, a liquor baron, an industrialist accused of multi-crore bank fraud, bided in the auction of Gandhi's memorabilia, such as his glass, watch, and sandals, and bought them for 1.8 million US dollars[6]. What a travesty! When Gandhi was going abroad for higher studies, his mother had given the vow to stay away from three vices. Mallya represents all of them in one! It is indeed an interesting phenomenon: the encroacher and the encroached, the violator and the violated, the exploiter and the exploited invoke Gandhi with brazen generality.

Contemporizing Satyagraha

In February 2019, invoking a 2013 land acquisition law, the Jharkhand government acquired a huge piece of fertile land (about 2385.28 Acre) for the Adani group to establish a 1600 MW power plant in Godda district, one of the poorest regions of Jharkhand[7]. The power generated in this plant is meant to be sold to Bangladesh. According to a report, it has displaced 5339 persons from 841 families[8]. Each displaced family was given Rs. 50,000 as one-time compensation and Rs.3000/- per month for one year[9]. *Santhals* are worst among the displaced communities. They are an aboriginal indigenous tribe, culturally and spiritually connected to the land for thousands of years. According to an Amnesty International Report, "Adivasis have suffered disproportionately in India's development-induced displacement and environmental destruction[10]." Hundreds of protestors have been forcibly put behind the bars. According to another report titled, 'Homeless in Our Own Homeland', about 20 million people have been displaced in India, mostly Dalits and Adivasis, in past 50 years on account of industrial investments, mines corporates, dams, etc.[11]. Adivasi and Dalit villagers have sought justice from the High Court, accusing that irregularities and illegalities marred the entire land acquisition process. An environmental scientist[12] has also moved to the National Green Tribunal, challenging environmental clearance for the Adani group thermal power project. Even the Gram Sabha resolutions against land acquisition have been ignored and flouted[13]. As a reward, cops raided the house of the report's author and slapped

him with sedition charges. In 2018, several Human rights activists were raided and imprisoned in Yerwarda Jail. Coincidentally, Gandhi was a frequent visitor to the Yerwada Jail. In 1922, he was sentenced 6-year imprisonment for similar charges, i.e., writing three articles in *Indian Opinion*. He was kept in Yerwada Jail. Gandhi was again arrested in 1932 and 1933 and put there as a prisoner.

If we could phenomenalize the imagined conversation between Gandhi and these rights activists in Yerwada, Gandhi would have certainly invigorated them of their resolve to praxis Satyagraha in times when the power-elite and the oligarchy have seemingly joined hands to perpetrate systematic, structural and civilizational violence over the weak and destitute. Contemporizing Satyagraha today, therefore, calls for a nuanced understanding of violence.

Satyagraha in the face of 'civilizational Violence'

Manifestation of violence today is much more complex and insidious than it's Hobbesian understanding. It has many dimensions[14]: individual violence, psychological violence, structural violence, cultural violence and civilizational violence. The fear of individual violence, i.e., a person killing another, has been all-pervasive. More subdued than the former is the fear of domination, an example of psychological violence. When a large section or group of the society is deprived of their due share in economic resources, societal heritage, honour, respect, and dignity by systematic subjugation; this is structural violence. When we close our eyes and allow such injustices to happen, this is cultural violence. And, when the 'self 'or our agency is denied to acquire the cognitive capacity to discover bestness in long-cherished ethos of the antiquity and moralities founded in 'dharma', we may call it 'civilizational violence'. Gandhi, both as a colonial subject and as a citizen of an independent nation, underwent all forms of violence. Hence, his exposition about Satyagraha should be conceptualized by recovering the historicity of all forms of violence he has been subjected to. Evidently, he is most worried and serious about the civilizational violence. No wonder, he turned out to be one of the most ardent critics of modern civilization. He thought it distorts the true picture of the self, denying individuals the possibility of 'knowing themselves'. 'Knowing oneself' was Gandhi's prime project in Hind Swaraj. He tells us, "Civilization 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 mind and our passion. So doing we know ourselves."[15] This is the core idea of Swaraj. He further clarifies, "…if we become free, India is free. And in this thought is a definition of Swaraj. It is Swaraj when

we learn to rule ourselves. It is therefore in the palm of our hands. Do not consider this swaraj to be like a dream. ….Such Swaraj has to be experienced by each one for himself[16]."

It is important to assess how we stand today in the face of the enormity of structural and cultural violence. The Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science, carried out a nuanced piece of ethnographic research, which mainly investigated reasons that account for the pauperization of Dalits and Adivasis across India. It was known as the Programme of Research on Inequality and Poverty[17]. The research concluded that the exploitation of Dalits and Adivasis occurs through three interrelated processes: 1. Inherited inequalities of power, 2. Circular seasonal migrant casual labor, 3. Subjection to conjugated oppression, which means that their social exploitation is intertwined with exploitative class relations[18]. They are the worst-off group in terms of access to land, education, jobs, and power. They are subjected to land alienation by the governments, which they charge behave like agents of corporates rather than as the elected representative. Vigilante beatings, rape, and even killings of Adivasis and Dalits, reinforce their conjugated oppression. The report also suggests that even though they want to resist, they are intimidated by the dire consequences of protesting. Even intellectuals and human rights activists protesting these oppressions have been raided. The report says that their voices are silenced and even dubbed as 'anti-nationals'.

The Planning Commission of India also set up an 'Expert Group' in 2006. The report, titled as 'Development Challenges in Extremist Affected Area', was submitted to the Commission in 2008 and published by the Government of India in the same year. The summary of the report is a painful story of gruesome structural violence. Even after more than seven decades of India's Independence, Dalits "continue to face wide-ranging economic, social disadvantages, and day to day humiliation and degradation, denial of justice and violent atrocities in India"[19]. The condition of Adivasis and women is similar. A whopping "80 percent of Dalits and 92 percent of Adivasis live in rural areas[20]". Additionally, women undergo triple jeopardy. They suffer economic, social and gender injustice on a daily basis. These groups have been victims of all forms of displacement: physical, occupational, and cultural. The Report says that "whereas the tribals constitute 8.08% of the country's population, they are 40% of the total displaced/affected persons by the projects. Similarly, at least 20% of the displaced /affected are Dalits, and another 20% are OBCs. The resettlement record [of the government] is also very dismal. Only a third of the displaced persons of planned development have been

resettled[21]."

This is indeed a sad state of affairs. Successive post independent governments till today, of the union and the states, have simply used the iconography of Gandhi in a discriminately selective and symbolic manner. Naming certain welfare schemes after Gandhi is driven more by instrumental courtesy than a genuine deferential tribute. We wish to flag two issues here: First, Gandhi's India lived in villages. For him, villages were the microcosm of happiness to be achieved through ethics of 'voluntary simplicity', participatory democracy, and multiculturality. Today, Gandhi's villages are in more distress than ever. Doors are wide open for foreign capital investment, which requires huge piece of cheap land and cheap labour usually available in rural areas. These areas are predominantly populated by the poor and the destitute, Gandhi's 'last man'. It is easier for the governments to acquire land for the foreign capital investors by quelling resistance, as they continue to be the most vulnerable sections of the society. Eventually, they lose access to their land and homeland, furrow and forest, ecology, and environment.

Our second concern in this paper is to underline the infection of cultural violence today. It is breeding at a fast pace. The urban population seems happy with the capital investments and labour migration. Probably because they think they are not affected and are not losing their land. They are either happy or have closed their eyes at the enormity of the rural distress, which is symptomatic of an insidious process of cultural violence. We have ignored Gandhi's picture of the nation, drawn in Hind Swaraj. Basic moral sensibilities to empathise with the distressed people, victims of the othering process underlying dehumanising development, are fading away. The worse, the institutionalisation of indifference in deriving pleasure out of 'others' pain is what we may call 'cultural violence'. Furthermore, the acculturation of the dichotomy between the self and the other solidifies cultural violence.

Notably, infliction of cultural violence is an offshoot of civilizational violence. In passages of Hind Swaraj, Gandhi spotted the malaise in the body of Indian civilization. However, he is short of saying that the disease has infected its moral fibre. If Gandhi were to write a revised edition of Hind Swaraj today, he would probably add a full chapter on the Critique of Indian Civilization as well. Although in the 1909 edition, he attacked some of the continuing corrupt and oppressive traditions of the Indian Civilization, he would be more scathing in his critique in the revised edition. Quoting Edward Carpenter, who calls civilization a disease, Gandhi says, "civilization is not an incurable disease"[22]. Given Gandhi's propensity to accept critiques, he would

argue the same thing about the Indian civilization today. Gandhi lived under the Independent Indian Government just for five months and fourteen days. Based on what we see today, a large populace under a spate of structural violence would attack the successive Indian governments more scathingly than he did against the British government, for inadequate anti-discrimination, anti-deprivation, and anti-displacement frameworks for the most vulnerable sections of the society.

In the face of all this, the works of noted Gandhians, Ela Bhatt and Himanshu Kumar, are like what can be truly called contemporary satyagraha. Reasons for mentioning their works here are twofold: the purity of principles and methods they employed and principled voluntariness with which they internalised disruptions to their lives as the foreseen aftermath, much akin to what Gandhi did and faced. However, the mention of the two cast doubts on the purity and integrity of other professed Gandhian initiatives and movements underway in several parts of India and elsewhere. Such stories deserve academic mention. We strongly believe that Gandhi belongs as much to the arena of praxis as to the academic texts.

Himanshu Kumar, a young scholar-activist, inherited the Gandhian value system in pedigree. His father lived with Gandhi in Sewagram and travelled across India with Vinoba Bhave during the Bhoodan movement[23]. At the young age of 27, he put in practice Gandhi's advice to go and live in villages and work for the poor. Gandhi was well aware of structural unfreedom, a disgrace of Indian society. Some social and economic practices over time, acquire legitimacy; thereby, they become norms. In turn, they become part of our daily social life and cultural ecosystem. This is when we start calling them structures. Quite some time, they obstruct the fuller realization of our 'self' and pursuit of autonomously defined goals. For example, 'poverty and social inequality' is a stark condition of 'structural unfreedom'. Gandhi was well aware of it, which is why he romanticised 'voluntary poverty'[24] and 'voluntary simplicity'[25]. They are necessary components of Satyagraha. They enable persons to embrace the truth. Imbued with Gandhi, Himanshu's father, a true satyagrahi by volition, wanted the country's youth to work in villages and bring about freedom from poverty, deprivation, and discrimination in homes of the poorest of the poor, Gandhi's 'last man'. He told us about his visit to Dantewada along with his father and noted Gandhian Nirmala Desh Pandey[26]. In 1992, he chose to work in a remote village of Dantewada, one of the country's most Maoist violence-affected regions. He chose Dantewada because he wanted to experiment if the Gandhian principle of non-violence works in one of the country's most violent regions. Himanshu

notes that the region was one of the worst victims of structural violence. He founded *Vanvaasi Chetna Ashram* there and started providing elementary education, community health services, and advocacy for Adivasi rights. Gandhi's critique of modern education, modern medicine, and his views on Adivasis informed his initiatives. He filed about 600 cases on behalf of Adivasis against state atrocities. When asked what happened with those cases, he replied that the state had managed their successive adjournments in the last twenty years[27]. Hence, experiments in democratic, legal, non-violent, methods of seeking justice for them proved to be ineffective. In 2009, his *Vanvasi Chetna Ashram* was demolished by the state. His answer to the final question is most interesting. So how does he think Gandhi would have acted in today's situation?. He replied, "Gandhi believed in two basic principles: one, nobody should endure injustice. Two, we should not remain silent when we see injustice being done to others. Gandhi would definitely have spoken out. [But] If Gandhi was alive today, he'd be in jail in Dantewada"[28], [for being with the Adivasis' cause]. In these lines lies the essence of Satyagraha. It is not about achieving the targeted result. It is, instead, about training people against enduring injustices. It is about self-informing about taking a considered call on bringing about civic and social change through self-purification and constructive programme. Such training requires what we call 'principled voluntariness' to bear the consequences, not to run away from them. Himanshu Kumar's work is stirring. As a young lad at 27, he chose to do what many of us would not even imagine to do. That too, in a region that has tragic history of the most dreadful violence. It is a living example of satyagraha. It requires courage and fearlessness, essential attributes of a satyagrahi. It affirms again that it is not a weapon of the weak. It is a method of securing rights by personal suffering. It's not simply a theory of social and political change. Rather, it is a theory of ethical change. Gandhian ethics rivulets from *dharma,* which is to govern Individual self-rule (Swaraj) and social and political institutions.

Another example is that of Ela Bhatt. A Gandhian by volition, Ela Bhatt has been honoured with Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Ramon Magsaysay awards. She founded SEWA-Self Employed Women's Association in 1972 with the aim to bring about economic swaraj for millions of women[29]. SEWA was born out of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, whose constitution was written by Mahatma Gandhi himself. Her story of how she suffered ridicule and harassment of the bureaucratic machinery whenever she wanted to poor women's cooperative bank registered, association of wage labourers, a cooperative of ragpickers, midwives, vegetable growers and vendors

etc. raises questions on the self-claimed role of the state as an agent of social change. Notwithstanding the ridicule on innumerable occasions, as Gandhi too faced in his days, with more than 100 such cooperatives, SEWA has ushered into the mainstream of nation's economy. Like Western industrial countries, India has also imitated the practice of categorising trades, she laments. What it means is that for an economic activity to be called a trade or a business, it must qualify definitional standards. It was difficult to withstand Indian occupational realities, where a large number of the working population in the unorganised sector changes the nature of activity with the change of season. In an interview with Katherine Marshall, she laments that 'poverty is violence and it happens with the consent of the society'[30], which the country's armchair policymakers should be mindful of. Ela Bhatt's works are truly inspiring. Amidst despair, her relentless efforts give us the hope that the possibility of swaraj is not farfetched. Swaraj is empowerment; it is a climate of freedom; it is an imagery of economic possibility. Her endeavours of 'constructing a language of economic diversity'[31] and 'cultivating subjects for community economy'[32] give us hope for a swaraj-driven economy in the face of a welfare-liberal claim that the state is a viable economic moderniser to trust and the counter-claim that the neoliberal project of competitive individualism is the sole harbinger of economic prosperity.

We need a cosmopolitan Gandhi

A parochial narrative of nationalism is underway in India and elsewhere. Intuitively, it is too farfetched to believe that people at large in India are buying this narrative. We have no procedural devices to estimate the 'popular will'. In aggregative democracies, psephological devices can gauge the mood of the electorate; incapable, however, to estimate quantifiably and qualitatively the 'popular will', as Rousseau and Gandhi[33] premised it. While the popular will is expressed only if the individual can form an enlightened understanding of the issue, as swaraj entails, the political will always rest on a tailor-stitched majority. The latter reduces democracy to a game of strategic behavior. This is not the kind of democracy Gandhi wanted. Some argue[34] that a conformist politics of militarizing nationalism as the nation's political will is underway. The refusal is fraught with fear, hatred, trolling and dreaded violence[35]. Politics of exclusivist majoritarianism often justifies instrumental violence. Gandhi disapproved both, the idea of exclusivist nationalism and majoritarian democracy, and the means of fear and violence for effectuating them. Textualizing a few passages from his writings will help. The

epistemology of textualizing, however, is such that it produces contested hermeneutic interpretations. Gandhi too, has not been spared from the politics of epistemic appropriation. To textualize Douglas Allen's observation, "there are multiple Gandhis and multiple ways of analyzing his thought and action"[36]. Gandhi's writings are overtly mired in religious language, and he frequently draws on the metaphysical sources of Hinduism. Hence, some fall prey to the temptation of canonizing him under Hindu Political Thought. To reclaim him against such canonization is both an epistemic necessity and a nationalistic duty. In Hind Swaraj, Gandhi held the view that India was an undivided land unified by holy places located in all directions, therefore, one nation[37]. Problematizing the idea of 'one land-one nation', Gandhi's 'reader'[38] in Hind Swaraj asks, "you have described to me the India of the pre-Mahomedan period, but now we have Mahomedans (Muslims), Parsees and Christians. How can they be one nation?[39]" His 'reader' in the dialogue comprises his friends, including Pranjivan Mehta, Shyamji Krishnavarma and V.D. Savarkar, to whom Gandhi is responding[40]. "….those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one-another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland. The Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsees, and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow countrymen, and they will have to live in unity. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms: nor has it ever been so in India"[41], he wrote in Hind Swaraj. From this thought springs up the idea of 'unity in diversity', which alone is the foundational principle of Indian nationalism. Gandhi recurrently echoed this idea of nationalism throughout his life. In 1927, he wrote in 'Young India': "I do not expect India of my dream to develop one religion, i.e., to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian, or wholly Musalman, but I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another."[42] In 1931, he warned us: "It has been said that Indian swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, i.e., Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I would refuse to call it swaraj and would fight it with all strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all people, is the rule of justice"[43]. In 1932, he wrote again in Young India: "The rule of majority has a narrow application. …. It is slavery to be amenable to the majority, no matter what its decisions are. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy, individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I, therefore, believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the

majority."[44] In these lines lies a Gandhian conception, rather Indian conception of nationalism. Cosmopolitan impulses in him are arresting. In Hind Swaraj and elsewhere, he stretches his idea of nationalism beyond the Hind. His swaraj is not to be confined to the Hind. It is borderless. He supplies us with a cosmic framework for thinking and theorizing. As he puts it, humankind is like a cosmos, where all bodies are connected with each other with some cosmic (life) energy. All humans are endowed with souls. It is a repository of cosmic energy. It is the thread of moral spirit through which a person's self is organically connected with the selves of other persons.[45] Dwelling on the *Gita* as a metaphysical source, he advises us to see "our 'self' in all creatures, and all creatures in our 'self.'" So doing he provides the self-other framework of relationship an egalitarian and cosmic outlook[46]. This thought has immense empirical value. Uncritical nationalism based on fear, hatred and violence can potentially unleash a process of 'othering'. Gandhi wrote in 1921, "For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive."[47] His nationalism is inclusive to the extent of embracing the humanity into its arm. "My love for nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free, that if need be the whole of the country may die, so that human race may live. There is no room for race hatred there. Let that be our nationalism."[48]

He has turned alive theorizing around the idea of cosmos. Thus, we have a Gandhi pointing us to what we call a 'cosmopolitan dharma'[49]. Gandhi's usage of the concept of 'dharma' has not received nuanced treatment. Some see in Gandhi's preoccupation with dharma a Hindu thinker, others bring him closer to Kant's categorical imperative, and yet others describe him as a reformed liberal, privileging a liberal doctrine of political obligation. These are essentialist framings. This won't allow us to fathom the cosmopolitan dharma. Key to the understanding of the cosmos are twin notions of the self and the other, sharing the same spiritual plank, the same source of energy (life), the same sense of origin, and rootedness. Gandhi's dharma is supreme religiosity[50], not religion. It is luminosity, which goes beyond light. For, religion as faith can be territorially barriered while religiosity travels across borders. A light source cannot see the 'other' side of the object, but luminosity can. This world where we live is like a cosmos. Each unit in the cosmos is important because it has the same amount of cosmic spirit. The moral value of each life therefore is equal; each nation has equal sovereign worth. The point is to be cognizant of this egalitarian cosmopolitan doctrine. Gandhi advises us to acquire cognitive capacity to recognize this egalitarian cosmopolitan impulse, which has been eclipsed by civilizational

violence. It has a message for hegemonic nations to stop 'othering' smaller nations, within and outside. This is, according to Gandhi, our 'dharmic-duty'. It enables us to know 'what we owe to each- others'[51], a question that has set the tone for today's global justice debate. We need to reaffirm the normative commitment that we owe others a lot, therefore we need Gandhi today more than ever before. Gandhi's dharma has a cosmopolitan moral theory in which 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[52].

Gandhi has a cosmopolitan presence both in terms of readership and iconography. We need him today for the normative commitment to be legitimately accepted and practiced. We live in a global order in which economic and hegemonic asymmetries mark our lives. Asymmetries are not only inter-regional or inter-national. Rather, they are intra-regional and intra-national. While some nations and regions prosper, others fight the demon of structural deprivation and hegemonic domination. Even within a nation, some groups are facing structural violence. We need Gandhi today to continually remind us what we owe others and why.

Gandhi as a deliberative democrat?

Inklings of deliberative democracy in Gandhi's writings are visible. There is a danger, however, in conceptualizing Gandhi this way. He is a persistent problematizer. His writings refuse to fit in essentialist framings supplied by the Western political theory. So, to say that he sounds like a deliberative democrat, we again fall back in the essentialist trap. We are familiar with a Western conception of deliberative democracy, developed most notably in the writings of John Rawls, Habermas, Joshua Cohen, Seyla Benhabib, Dryzek etc. We may lose a bit of Gandhi's originality in attempting to fit him in the essentialist framework of deliberative democracy. Our attempt is, therefore, limited to outlining the premise of deliberative democracy: 1. It encourages effective participation of the people in the democratic process by way of enabling them to gain an enlightened understanding of the issue at hand. 2. It critiques majoritarian democracy for being excessively aggregative, which reduces democracy to the strategic management of the majority vote at any point of time. 3. It believes in the power of public dialogue, democratic dissent, appeal to the public reason and informed criticism. Deliberative democrats believe in the transformative potential of dialogue, which can evoke a change in the views of the overwhelming majority by making a rational appeal to public morality. Given this yardstick, impulses of deliberative

democracy are overwhelming in Gandhi's writings. The literary genre of Hind Swaraj is dialogical. Gandhi harps on the argumentative tradition of the Indian civilization; therefore, he chose to present his views in the form of a dialogue. The 'reader' in the text is supposedly his critics, with whom Gandhi is having a dialogue. Throughout the dialogue, he consistently and patiently appreciates his critics and tries to converse by appealing to public morality. He wanted his writings to undergo informed criticism so that the truth may be filtered on successive revisions. "The only motive is to serve the country. If my views are proved to be wrong, I shall have no hesitation in rejecting them,"[53] Gandhi wrote in the Preface to Hind Swaraj. He further opines, "it's a bad habit to say that… those having different views from ours are enemies of the country"[54]. His views sound so contemporary as if he brought out Hind Swaraj only yesterday!

Hind Swaraj can never be a lost discourse. It is as contemporary as it was in 1909. Every successive reading is more revealing than the earlier. All immersive readers even today would get goosebumps as if he is scolding them for not doing as much as they can and they should; as if Gandhi was portraying the picture of contemporary Indian society, as if he is describing the present Indian middle class, the present political class and the contemporary exercisers of political authority. From hypocrite religious leaders to self-proclaimed nationalists, from the power elite to the majoritarian democrats, from lawyers, judges, educationists to modern medical professionals-everyone would receive Gandhi's chiding even today! The politics of fear alongside symbolic appropriation of Gandhi through the length of post-independent India, as expressed and argued by Gandhians and critics alike, that Gandhi would have been jailed even today for voicing the concerns of Adivasis, for critiquing a development model that distances and displaces the indigenous people from their dwelling, for speaking against exclusivist majoritarian nationalism and for making a case for a cosmopolitan dharma, for being sensitive to the ecology, for training the citizenry in the virtue of conscientious dissenting, is to contested by a transformative politics of satyagraha, which is why we need Gandhi today more imperatively than ever.

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Notes & Comments

Gandhi's Legacy and Reception in Hungary

Anna Aklan
Tibor Kovacs

ONE AUTHOR OF the present lines had the privilege to live in New Delhi for many years. The compound where he lived on one side was bordered by Tees January Marg, a stone's throw away from the venue of the Mahatma's martyrdom. This proximity gave him the freedom and opportunity to visit Gandhi Smriti as often as possible to pay tribute to the Great Soul of India and the world. It was always touching to see how the simple visitors one comes across there, even seventy years after the demise of the Indian nation's giant, still keep him respected and loved.

Gandhi's impact is enormous throughout the world, and there is even further potential for how it could bring about peace and reconciliation in our peaceless world. If we consider, for example, vegetarianism, one of the fundamental manifestations of his teaching of non-violence, or in Sanskrit, *ahiA sâ,* two significant results would follow that are highly relevant today. Firstly, we will understand that he was a visionary, a prophet, who foresaw a radical but manageable solution for feeding the people of the 21st and 22nd centuries, thus putting an end to famine. On the other hand, environmentalists today,

who are truly keen on reversing the harmful effects of climate change, also propagate vegetarianism (or, in terms that are more acceptable for the majority, reduction in meat consumption) as an important way of diminishing the harmful effects of the massive meat industry. We can consider it a justification of the Mahatma's teachings which he started to propagate more than a hundred years ago.

The fact that India's independence was gained relatively peacefully – apart from the bloodshed that followed later – proves his political conviction was correct. Although he died of aggressive hands, his death added one more point to the relevance of his life: he died for what he believed in, thus becoming the icon of the non-violent resistance movement that may gain more and more followers worldwide, namely peaceful solution to economic, political and military problems among conflicting partners.

Also, his approach to the poor is widely admired and respected. Similar to another saintly person of India, Mother Teresa, whom he never met personally, he shared the same love for the downtrodden, the destitute, the lonely, and the poor. This spiritual greatness contributed largely to the respect he won in each corner of India and elsewhere.

Gandhi's legacy and reception in Hungary

In Hungary, Gandhi's activities, his philosophy, and ideas were conveyed by well-read and popular authors like Ervin Baktay, Amrita Sher-Gil's maternal uncle, who visited India between 1926-29 and later. Baktay was one of the major Hungarian Indologists who did extensive research in India and whose pioneering writings and books contributed greatly to the knowledge of India in Hungary. His book entitled *Gandhi: A Book on Mahatma Gandhi, the Hero of India's Freedom*[1] was a milestone in making the Indian philosophy and Gandhi's thought available for the Hungarian public in the 1930s.

Other important characters of Hungarian origin who were known to Gandhi are Elisabeth Sass-Brunner and her daughter, Elisabeth Brunner, who had the privilege to meet Gandhi personally. The two eminent painters were devoted artists who travelled to India from Hungary following their visionary call. Due to the sincere respect they had both for Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, they obtained permission to paint their portraits. They visited the poet in Santiniketan and stayed in Gandhi's Sabarmati ashram. Unfortunately, at that time, the great freedom fighter was imprisoned. They finally met the Mahatma in 1934 in Bangalore, and the younger paintress gained Gandhi's approval of the picture.[2] Elisabeth Brunner's Gandhi-portrait is the only known painting that Gandhi posed for in his life.

Gandhi and his freedom movement appear in one of the most popular novels about India from the 1930s, the *Fire of Bengal* by Rózsa Hajnóczy. Her husband, Gyula Germanus, a historian and orientalist, was invited by Tagore to set up and teach at the Islamic Department at his Santiniketan University. Germanus and his wife spent some three years in India, allowing them to look into the social and political happenings of the times. The novel positively depicts Gandhi's peace movement. During his stay in India, Germanus published several books like *Modern Movements in Islam*, and *India Today*. In his book entitled *The light of India - Mahatma Gandhi*[3] published in 1934 in Budapest, he describes Gandhi's life, his character, and his teachings. He was also fortunate to meet the independence movement's leader in person.

Let us not forget to mention another Hungarian who, although always in the background, was present during several changes in India's 20th-century history: Shobha (Fori) Nehru, wife of Braj Kumar Nehru, who throughout her long life assisted and took part in the formation of the country's history. B.K. Nehru was a cousin of the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. Shobha Nehru, called Magdolna Friedmann at that time, left Hungary after the *numerus clausus* law[4] was introduced in Hungary to study at the London School of Economics, where she met her future husband. As part of the Nehru family, "she grieved beside the body of Mahatma Gandhi."[5] She revealed in personal interviews that following Gandhi's assassination, in the absence of her husband, she was always ready to receive foreign dignitaries coming to pay respect to the martyred hero of India.

So far, we have talked about contemporaries of Gandhi, several of whom had the privilege to meet the Great Soul in person. His death, however, marked the end of an era. Parallel to the bloodshed and difficulties of the birth of three countries in the territory of former India, Europe, too, got divided along the Iron Curtain. Information and books were censored, and the tyranny of the Soviet regime gloomed Hungarians' interest in India for several decades. However, India as a non-aligned state was not completely banned in Hungary. In the 1960s, Gandhi's message was kept alive and presented in various studies by the poet and translator István Jánosy,[6] who saw Gandhi as an example to follow and who did follow him in his own way.

Knowledge about Gandhi was revived in the 1970s especially due to the writings of Vera Gáthy. A historian and sociologist, Gáthy gave a detailed description of the independence movement and Gandhi's paramount role in her scholarly works. In 1970 she published a monograph on the great leader.[7] She also wrote extensively on modern India and was considered the first and most reliable authority on Gandhi in Hungary until she died in 2017. She also co-published a

book on Gandhi with András Balogh, an eminent historian and a diplomat to India and Thailand, in 2000.[8] In the 1980s another important work was written by György Kalmár, a well-known political journalist who lived in India: *Gandhi. Dreams – Politics – Reality.*[9]

In the new millennium, a new generation of Hungarian scholars is emerging who are shifting their focus from the Mahatma's political activism and historical activities to his political and religious philosophy, or else from practicalities to theory. The most prominent representative of these scholars is Dezsõ Szenkovics, whose doctoral research on Gandhi was published under the title *Central Concepts of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's Philosophy*.[10] Szenkovics publishes in Hungarian, but lives in Romania, in the Hungarian-inhabited Transylvanian area. Another smaller publication aimed more at the general public, reflects other aspects of Gandhi's teachings, namely his holistic approach to human life: his views on the environment, division of labour in society, gender roles, healthcare, etc. The book is a careful selection of his quotations assembled by Anna Aklan.[11] In 2021, a special Gandhi issue of the scholarly journal *Világtörténet (Global History)* was published, which includes the papers of a 2020 conference commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma, dedicated to the "Figure of Mahatma Gandhi in History and Cultural Memory."[12]

The important work of translating Gandhi's works into Hungarian has also been started. As is well-known, Gandhi was a prolific author. However, he mainly published articles in the journals and magazines he edited. Out of the individual books, however, the most relevant ones, his *Autobiography,* and *Hind Swaraj,* have been translated into Hungarian and have b, een published several times.[13]

Besides scholarly books written about the Mahatma, his memory in Hungary is also kept alive in other forms. Poets and writers were inspired by him, such as Gyula Juhász, who dedicated a poem to him in 1924. István Jánosy also dedicated several poems to the Mahatma in the 1960ies. László Németh, an eminent Hungarian writer, wrote a stage play entitled "Gandhi's Death" in 1963.

In the fine arts, Gandhi is represented in a group statue in Budapest, where the world's greatest religious figures meet silently around an orb. At least, that is what Hungarian sculptor Nándor Wagner envisioned when he created "The Garden of Philosophers," a cluster of statues perched atop the crown of the popular hill, Gellért Hill, overlooking the Danube. The artist's intention with this piece was to promote mutual understanding among the world's religions. The group of statues features an inner circle composed of what the artist saw as the five founders of the world's major religions: Abraham, Jesus, Buddha, Laozi, and Akhenaten. The orb they gather around is

about the size of a bigger apple and is intended to represent the similarities in what these major religions worship. Looking from the sidelines at this surreal meeting are Mahatma Gandhi, Daruma Daishi (Bodhidharma), and Saint Francis, who Wagner saw as leaders fostering spiritual enlightenment. Gandhi's statue is the most recognizable.

On the occasion of Gandhi's 150th birthday, the Hungarian Post Office issued a commemorative miniature sheet containing four identical stamps. This philatelic specialty brings forward the memory of the Father of the Nation in Hungary and among international stamp collectors.

Besides books and art, Gandhi's influence in Hungary had a special manifestation during the change of the regime in the 1980s. In the 80s, intellectuals started to get organized in secret meetings. The whole country felt the oppression of communism, and the urge to action was felt at these secret gatherings. Unofficial and uncensored writings called samizdat were circulating. Intellectuals were secretly reading copies of the *Hind Swaraj* and did not only identify with India's freedom struggle, but regarded her as a serious inspiration. The lesson the people of Hungary learnt in 1956 was to avoid armed struggle and all kinds of violence. Gandhi showed them a way to a successful liberation through civil disobedience.

A further special connection between Gandhi and contemporary Hungary reflects the Great Soul's support for the downtrodden. A secondary school in Hungary for Roma students adopted his name, thus becoming an important institution on its own for those coming from difficult and disadvantaged backgrounds. The Gandhi Secondary School, Pécs, is unique not only in Hungary but also in Europe for being a Roma minority educational institution. Besides general education preparing the students for matriculation, they also teach subjects about Roma history and India, their country of origin, thus enhancing their dignity in their roots instead of simply trying to assimilate Roma students into the majority culture.

Gandhi's influence in his own time can be measured from the notes the great physicist and thinker Albert Einstein wrote about him: "Mahatma Gandhi's life achievement stands unique in political history. He has invented a completely new and humane means for the liberation war of an oppressed country, and practised it with greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence he had on the consciously thinking human being of the entire civilised world will probably be much more lasting than it seems in our time with its overestimation of brutal violent forces. Because lasting will only be the work of such statesmen who wake up and strengthen the moral power of their

people through their example and educational works. We may all be happy and grateful that destiny gifted us with such an enlightened contemporary, a role model for the generations to come. Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this walked the earth in flesh and blood."[14]

There is a great unity among nations searching for peace and freedom through morally acceptable ways. Elizabeth Sass-Brunner put it this way: 'This power [of national freedom] does not ask questions, just carries me away. Where? To the ocean, to an undulation, to a swaying where there is no separate will – this love, this power, this supreme extraordinary driving force is embodied in Gandhi, the Mahatma. This is a power that frightens no-one and is never frightened – it exists and keeps the whole world in motion...'[15]

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Three Portraits of Gandhi

THE FOLLOWING THREE portraits of Gandhi were published at different times; the first two 60 years ago (shortly after his death), the third one more recently; the first two (translated from the French by Prof. David Braithwaite) were written for pedagogical purposes by his only Western disciple, the Italian Lanza del Vasto. The third was an academic paper by an eminent political theorist, the South Korean Sung Ho Kim; the first was written for a review about the aesthetics of fashion, and the second one aimed to bring about an understanding in the West of the nature of this extraordinary man, while that of the third one was to illustrate the theories of the great sociologist Max Weber regarding personal ethics. All three attest to the exceptional nature of Gandhi's life, about which, even seven decades after his death, academic appraisals are uncertain and often misleading because the categories commonly used in Western culture to evaluate a historical event hinder a proper understanding of the novelty of Gandhi. It is, therefore, preferable to refer to portraits written from direct experience or indirect portraits, rather than to some current misleading appraisals, however sophisticated they might be. **(Antonino Drago**)

Lanza del Vasto: "Beauty of Gandhi", French *Vogue* magazine, May 1948.

Does praise of the Hindu ascetic, the Father of the Pariahs, the king of poor, have its place among these pages of great elegance?

Why not? Was Gandhi not the host of a millionaire on the last day of his life? Whether he was in his mud hut or at Buckingham Palace, his poverty that he carried on him and in him, remained indubitable. Whether he was talking standing on the banks of the sacred Ganges or at a Luna-Park, as he did during his last visit to Paris, his words had the same significance, he looked on all men, beggars or princes, with the same compassion, for we all deserved it and maybe even more so those in whom the condition of human misery is more veiled.

We will speak of his beauty, not with irony or out of taste for paradox, but because this mark of perfection could not fail one who lived on truth, love and peace. It must be said first that he in no respect resembled the grimacing and disjointed puppet presented to us by his caricatures, drawings, even his photographs. He was not one of those who sit with very docile pride in front of the painter or

smile complacently into the lens: on the contrary he turned his head away and defended himself against the glassy eye of publicity, which does not always give happy results on the photographic plate. He would never pose for anyone (none of his postures or spectacular manifestations were ever a pose); myself, his disciple, I drew him twice while he was working; he even consented once to remove his glasses, which he never did for anyone, and I conserve this unique image of his almond eyes and naked gaze.

His mask was extremely movable and all portraits, in capturing him, more or less lie. And then, we only know him old and toothless, the lower part of the face wrinkled and shrunk (but actually wasn't there a reason for the loss of teeth, were they not signs of aggression and greed?). I have a photograph of him taken when he entered public life, at the beginning of this century. He is sitting on a chair with his knees close together, one hands resting on the other, wearing a white tunic and erect, his face is tilted a little forward, the protruding mouth, beautiful with goodness, two drops of light hang in his dark eyes, the eyes of a young goat ... He closely resembles the portrait of Saint Francis in the lower church of Assisi, attributed to Cimabue, the only one that had the possibility of resembling the subject - the painter having been able to see the saint with his own eyes -, and besides with an overwhelming humanity.

Even as an old man, there was nothing in Gandhi's appearance and first sight of him that was not open and pleasing. He was not, as he is commonly imagined, skeletal and withered, but, though over seventy, slender and lithe like a teenager. There was something touching in the fragility of his shoulders and chest, especially when you think of the load they carried, with the great heart hidden inside. His hands and feet were long and slender as with nearly all Orientals, but virile, the hands, more than in most individuals, the slender legs gave him a natural and free allure; a dignified and modest bearing gave him, both standing and seated, the majesty of judge and chief. His majesty is what was most striking. I have frequented what remains of royal courts in Europe and elsewhere, approached dictators and redoubtable leaders of men: their majesty was part of the decor, it came from their surrounding themselves with "armed faces", as Pascal said, it was pageantry and appearance, I never felt more timidity than before him when he leaned over me, smiling and half-naked, for his majesty was the presence of God in him which made me feel, before him, small, empty and judged..

Yet he was an attentive, affable and courteous host, and as soon as one joined his entourage, like an affectionate father, at table (or rather on the floor because there was no table) he served us himself

and took care that no one lacked anything; he, famous for his fasts, it spared us too heavy tasks and dissuaded us from excessive austerities. He always left us free to choose our way, but if we had chosen to obey him, his orders were not long in reaching us, short, clear, irresistible: "Do this, and this again, and then this, go."

His gestures were spontaneous, simple, noble and restrained, his laughter cordial and communicative. He was very talkative and spoke willingly at length although each week he reserved a day of silence when he would not have opened his mouth even to shout "Fire!".

He never departed from the primary refinement which is scrupulous cleanliness, like all pious Hindus, since it is an obligatory condition of the ritual of daily life. He only wore immaculate linen, hand-spun and home-woven. His loincloth closed over his left hip spread out in a stream of harmonious folds. His hut was swept every day and the dirt floor scrubbed with cow dung whose purifying virtue is well known. He observed a perfect purity in his diet, composed of milk, fruit, vegetables, rice and whole wheat.

He was not black in complexion but a dull white, like ancient ivory; his eyes were slightly almond-shaped. I have never heard that he was related to people of the Far East, but I wouldn't be surprised to learn that it was the case.

All the races of the earth meet and recognize each other in him, as do Hindu asceticism, Chinese wisdom and Christian charity in his doctrine. From him emanated a sovereign peace that extended to animals, plants, to the surrounding plains. With the silent step of their bare feet men in white robes passed through the room and women in light saris along the outside verandas. A white cow grazed in the meadow, a bird entered through the door on the right, jumped, nodding its head, flew out through the left door, merged into the immense light. Sitting on the ground in his shaded corner, the master leafed through his papers, or, with an even and musical gesture, drew the thread of his spinning wheel.

The ancients say that beauty is the splendor of true. Form that is equal to itself in all its parts and transparent, i.e. equal to the meaning that it bears, is beautiful. The life and the figure of Gandhi shine with that beauty, without lies, without illusion, without vanity, without frivolity, without artifice, shine with true beauty.

From the song of the morning prayer to the thread of his clothing, from the great gestures of public life down to the small acts of everyday life, from the high principles of philosophy and mysticism to the obscure practices of the kitchen and the toilet, everything derives from the same sources with a logical precision and musical simplicity. This man's destiny is like the composition of a celestial stained-glass window,

like a song in eternity. And death too has just added the right note at the summit of age and glory, and the blessing, his response to the murderer, and the red rose of blood on the offered breast of the Hero of Peace.

Lanza del Vasto: "Gandhi's Lesson" (*Nouvelles de l'Arche*, 1948)

Since Our Lord Jesus Christ, there has been no man more powerful in holiness; there have more mighty men, there have been holier men, there have been none more powerful in holiness. None had the power not only to transform the spiritual life and exterior attitude of those who approached and followed him, but also to suspend wars, stop revolutions, tame infuriated crowds, erase age-old prejudices, tear down consecrated institutions, raise up millions of oppressed, drive out a powerful and victorious empire without arms, impose laws, change the mores of a continent: none has compelled, as he did, the admiration of even his enemies; no death has been mourned by the whole of humanity like his. And yet, what does he say about himself? "Anyone," he said, "could have done what I did. This is not a formula of false modesty, is a great lesson for us all. Indeed, Gandhi was no different from the common people either by birth, or fortune, or culture, or even by intelligence. He had no special gifts, there are no miracles in the legend of this saint. The lesson is even more powerful for us, because it is proof that his greatness is open to us. It is proof that, if we do not imitate him, it is not because we cannot, but because we don't know what power is in us, and do not want to use this power.

To say that Gandhi is an Asian phenomenon is meaningless; to wonder whether what he did would have been possible in West is pointless. It is not possible in West for the sole reason that no one believes it possible and never try it. Ignorance, however, is no longer permissible today, since Gandhi's life is before our eyes like a marked path.

There is nothing miraculous, mysterious, or magic in his astonishing successes; there is only logic and humanity; everything he teaches and demonstrates, we knew it from the beginning, no Christian could ignore it.

His doctrine, which is all one with his life and forms a whole. Anyone who understands it must accept it as a whole. We cannot exalt one article and reject another.

When we consider his life, we find there from childhood the search for three things: strength, truth, charity. As he matures the man at a certain moment discovers that these three things become one, and immediately he begins to act.

The search for strength and efficacy, since this peaceful man is strong, because peace is an effect of power, because courage is the first of the virtues, it is virtue itself. " I see, he said, how can I teach non-violence to those who are ready for death, but to cowards I cannot. Gandhi can say in the sense that crucified Jesus said, "I have conquered the world" How did he conquer the world? By overcoming cowardice, laziness, the appetites of his body, because the body is the summary of the world and the key to everything; by probing, trying, possessing all the resources of his body in order to give them without reserve and without calculation, but not without method and without conscience. And it is thus that, giving himself entirely with all his strength, he erased his own limits and found the inexhaustible source of strength that is Living Truth.

Truth was for him before everything else: "The Truth is God," he said. He also said: "The Truth and the Non-Violence are the reverse and obverse of a medal without thickness." It is clear that for him the Truth is not locked up in a verbal formula, in a theoretical system, in a combination of the intellect, it is a state, a penetration and a dwelling in Being. And once established in Being, how would one do violence to the law of things? We are introduced simultaneously to non-violence, to charity which is the knowledge of this identity: *I and you we are the same*. This is the simple truth from which charity flows, from which non-violence cannot but flow.

The saints and the wise all knew that personal non-violence derives from that; but Gandhi adds this to their teaching: that this charity can and must to expand socially, nationally, economically and even (of which the many seems to have been unaware) on a religious level, through sincere and profound respect for the religion of others.

He teaches us that non-violence is the most effective revolutionary weapon for redressing social injustices, that it is the wisest tactic, the safest appraisal, the straightest direction, and the shortest path to achieve the renewal of peoples, the recovery of national institutions, liberation and dignity, and finally economic wisdom and stability.

Men of good will, why do you all sing his praises and continue to turn your back on him? There is only one praise worthy of this man of action and meaning: it is to follow him.

Will you continue to rot in your offices, your factories and your schools? To struggle in your petty concern with the evening meal, to bear the weight of the horrible machine to which you find yourself chained, pushing the wheel while the abyss opens three steps away? to tolerate being shown with what learned calculations and exquisite care the disintegration and annihilation of tomorrow is being prepared? What is required to wrest you from the nightmare, to get

from you a courageous "no", an active and considered refusal to remain complicit in the great public crime? Is the experience of these last two world wars not enough to open your eyes? Is the threat of the third perhaps not rather clear? Haven't you been shaken enough, warned enough to wake up from your slumber?

The remedy that Gandhi offers to our evil is practicable, immediately achievable, at hand, within the reach of the humblest intelligence, it is valid and good for all men, the remedy that consists in simplifying everything, in returning everything to human and reasonable proportions. Do yourselves, with your own hands, what is necessary to feed and clothe yourselves, and throw overboard the machines and the machinations, the disputes and the lies, ambition and servitude.

Is it possible? Yes, it is possible. It isn't even very difficult. If you cannot do it alone, come together fraternally and you will achieve it without difficulty and without wasting time. We no longer have the right to say we would like our deliverance, but that we do not know how to go about it: because Gandhi left his example and his teaching; he sent his disciples around the world to guide you on the new path, to prepare for resistance like that against Nazism, to establish and defend peace. What are you waiting for to join them? The time is running out.

Sung Ho Kim: "Max Weber", in E.N. Zalta (ed.), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/weber/*

The author was questioned whether he had in mind Gandhi when he wrote this illustration of the possible reconciliation of the two responsibilities envisaged by Max Weber. He answered in the following way:

"My answer to your query will be a (short) no and (long) yes. No, because the Gandhi connection did not dawn on me back when I wrote the Weber piece. Yes, however, because my doctoral mentor, the late Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, was a great expert (with her husband Lloyd) on Indian politics as well as on Weber. The Rudolphs are famous for their first book, Modernity of Tradition, in which they argued that traditional values and communities played positive roles in modern Indian democracy. Another book of theirs, In Pursuit of Lakshmi, is also a classic in the field of Indian political studies. My reading of Weber could have been indirectly and unwittingly influenced by their expertise on Indian affairs, which by the way includes a book on Gandhi. I will also have to go back and take a second look at Postmodern Gandhi (https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/P/bo4343100.html). This is a long and roundabout way of establishing the provenance, for sure, but my answer to your query would be a cautious yes for this reason! Many thanks for

reminding me of this fascinating connection to Gandhi."

Sect. 6.4 The Ethics of Conviction and Responsibility

Weber suggested two sets of ethical virtues that a proper political education should cultivate — the ethic of conviction (*Gesinnungsethik*) and the ethic of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*). According to the ethic of responsibility, on the one hand, an action is given meaning only as a cause of an effect, that is, only in terms of its causal relationship to the empirical world. The virtue lies in an objective understanding of the possible causal effect of an action and the calculated reorientation of the elements of an action in such a way as to achieve a desired consequence. An ethical question is thereby reduced to a question of technically correct procedure, and free action consists of choosing the correct means. By emphasizing the causality to which a free agent subscribes, in short, Weber prescribes an ethical integrity between action and consequences, instead of a Kantian emphasis on that between action and intention.

According to the ethic of conviction, on the other hand, a free agent should be able to choose autonomously not only the means, but also the end; "this concept of personality finds its 'essence' in the constancy of its inner relation to certain ultimate 'values' and 'meanings' of life" [Weber 1903–06/1975, 192]. In this respect, Weber's problem hinges on the recognition that the kind of rationality applied in choosing a means cannot be used in choosing an end. These two kinds of reasoning represent categorically distinct modes of rationality, a boundary further reinforced by modern value fragmentation. With no objectively ascertainable ground of choice provided, then, a free agent has to create a purpose *ex nihilo*: "ultimately life as a whole, if it is not to be permitted to run on as an event in nature but is instead to be consciously guided, is a series of ultimate decisions through which the soul — as in Plato — chooses its own fate" [Weber 1917/1949, 18]. This ultimate decision and the Kantian integrity between intention and action constitute the essence of what Weber calls an ethic of conviction.

It is often held that the gulf between these two types of ethics is unbridgeable for Weber. Demanding an unmitigated integrity between one's ultimate value and political action, that is to say, the *deontological* ethic of conviction cannot be reconciled with that of responsibility which is *consequentialist* in essence. In fact, Weber himself admitted the "abysmal contrast" that separates the two. This frank admission, nevertheless, cannot be taken to mean that he privileged the latter over the former as far as political education is concerned.

Weber clearly understood the deep tension between

consequentialism and deontology, but he still insisted that they should be forcefully brought together. The former recognition only lends urgency to the latter agenda. Resolving this analytical inconsistency in terms of certain "ethical decrees" did not interest Weber at all. Instead, he sought for a moral character that can produce this "combination" with a sheer force of will. He called such a character a "politician with a sense of vocation" (*Berufspolitiker*) who combines a passionate conviction in supra-mundane ideals that politics has to serve and a sober rational calculation of its realizability in this mundane world. Weber thus concluded: "the ethic of conviction and the ethic of responsibility are not absolute opposites. They are complementary to one another, and only in combination do they produce the true human being who is *capable* of having a 'vocation for politics'" [Weber 1919/1994, 368].

In the end, Weber's ethical project is not about formal analysis of moral maxims, nor is it about substantive virtues that reflect some kind of ontic telos. It is too formal to be an Aristotelean virtue ethics, and it is too concerned with moral character to be a Kantian deontology narrowly understood. The goal of Weber's ethical project, rather, aims at cultivating a character who can willfully bring together these conflicting formal virtues to create what he calls "total personality" (*Gesamtpersönlichkeit*). It culminates in an ethical characterology or philosophical anthropology in which passion and reason are properly ordered by sheer force of individual volition. In this light, Weber's political virtue resides not simply in a subjective intensity of value commitment nor in a detached intellectual integrity, but in their willful combination in a unified soul.

Mahatma Gandhi and the *Manusmriti*

Arvind Sharma

MAHATMA GANDHI REFERS to the *Manusmriti* at some points in his autobiography.[1] It might be worth examining these references in view of the controversial nature of the text.

It is interesting that Mahatma Gandhi, like many of us, had difficulty understanding it in full. Early in life Mahatma Gandhi "came across *Manusmriti* which was amongst my father's collection. The story of creation and similar things in it did not impress me very much, but on the contrary made me inclined somewhat towards atheism."[2] Mahatma Gandhi goes on to say:

> There was a cousin of mine, still alive, for whose intellect I had great regard. To him I turned with my doubts. But he could not resolve them. He sent me away with this answer: "When you grow up, you will be able to solve these doubts yourself. These questions ought not to be raised at your age." I was silenced, but was not comforted. Chapters about diet and the like in *Manusmriti* seemed to me to run contrary to daily practice. To my doubts as to this also, I got the same answer. "With intellect more developed and with more reading I shall understand it better," I said to myself.[3]

It is worth noting that one of Mahatma Gandhi's points of concern in relation to *Manusmriti* was whether it preached *ahimsa* or not. He remarks:

> *Manusmriti* at any rate did not then teach me *ahimsa*. I have told the story of my meat-eating. *Manusmriti* seemed to support it. I also felt that it was quite moral to kill serpents, bugs and the like. I remember to have killed at that age bugs and such other insects, regarding it as a duty.[4]

The point also crops up later on in his autobiography. When Mahatma Gandhi's wife, Kasturba, was taken seriously ill, the doctor wished to prescribe beef tea. It was refused. Mahatma Gandhi writes:

> In two or three days of our arrival at Phoenix a Swami came to our place.

> He had heard of the resolute way in which we had rejected the doctor's advice, and he had, out of sympathy, come to plead with us. My second and third sons Manilal and Ramdas were, so far as I can recollect, present when the Swami came. He held forth on the religious harmlessness of taking meat, citing authorities from Manu. I did not like his carrying on this disputation in the presence of my wife, but I suffered him to do so out of courtesy. I knew the verses from the *Manusmriti*, I did not need them for my conviction. I knew also that there was a school which regarded these verses as interpolations: but even if they were not, held my views on vegetarianism independently of religious texts, and Kasturbai's faith was unshakable. To her the scriptural texts were a sealed book, but the traditional religion of her forefathers was enough for her. The children swore by their father's creed and so they made light of the Swami's discourse. But Kasturbai put an end to the dialogue at once. "Swamiji," she said, "whatever you may say, I do not want to recover by means of beef tea. Pray don't worry me any more. You may discuss the thing with my husband and children if you like. But my mind is made up."[5]

What is interesting here is that, in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, it was Manusmriti's views on meat-eating which entered Mahatma Gandhi's moral universe at a personal level, whereas in the case of someone like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar it would be the attitude of the text towards the Shudras which would prove consequential. The religious texts thus intersect our life in the context of our concerns.

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1. Mohandas K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993) p. 34, 325, 171..
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3. *Ibid*.
4. *Ibid*.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 324-325.

Mahatma Gandhi and His Search for Celibacy

Arvind Sharma

IT IS OFTEN not realized that Mahatma Gandhi's experiments in celibacy were preceded by what one might well call experiments in chastity. He is on record as referring to three trials of this kind.[1]

The first trial occurred in India when a friend almost persuaded him to visit a sex worker. He writes: "I was almost struck blind and dumb in this den of vice. I sat near the woman on her bed, but I was tongue-tied. She naturally lost patience with me, and showed me the door, with abuses and insults. I then felt as though my manhood had been injured, and wished to sink into the ground for shame. But I have ever since given thanks to God for having saved me."[2] The second occasion occurred when he was in England and was attending a vegetarian conference in Portsmouth in 1896. One thing had begun to lead to another after dinner when, "remembering the vow I had taken before my mother,"[3] Mahatma Gandhi fled the scene. He recalls this "as the first occasion on which a woman, other than my wife, moved me to lust."[4] The third incident occurred on his way to South Africa, when the ship dropped anchor at Zanzibar. The captain of the ship, who had taken a liking for him, had made the arrangements in the negro women's quarters. "We were shown into a little room. I simply stood there dumb with shame. Heaven only knows what the poor woman must have thought of me. When the captain called me I had come out just as I had gone in."[5] After the sense of shame wore away, Gandhi "thanked God that sight of a woman had not moved me in the least."[6] He also adds: "I could claim no credit for having come out unscathed. I must entirely thank the all-merciful God for saving me. The incident increased my faith in God and taught me, to a certain extent, to cast off false shame."[7] This last sentiment arose out of his pitying himself "for not having had the courage to refuse to go into the room."[8]

What makes all this significant is the fact that the process followed by Mahatma Gandhi was analogous to that of meditation, which reduces all thoughts to one thought, and then requires that one give up that thought too. The march from promiscuity to chastity to celibacy

on the part of Mahatma Gandhi seems to follow a similar pattern.

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Book Reviews

John S. Moolakkattu and Jos Chathukulam (Eds.) ***Challenges to Local Governance in the Pandemic Era Perspectives from South Asia and Beyond*** **(Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2022), ISBN 978-1-5275-8174-6 HB; PP. 354, Price: £75.99**

First, I congratulate the editors and authors for such a timely and high-quality publication. I must compliment the editors in particular for the speedy manner in which they have put this volume together. It is a very significant and substantial volume, both in the quantity of the chapters and the quality of the content. This takes a tremendous amount of work, and Professor John and Professor Jos deserve great credit for getting this volume published less than 18 months after the webinar in December 2020. A great achievement!

I think it is a very timely volume for different reasons. First, the global pandemic has served to remind us of the importance of the state and its role, while also indicating the shortcomings and limitations of the neo-liberal state and its reliance on the profit-led private sector. At least, this has certainly been the case from where I sit in the UK. So issues concerning the nature and role of the state are firmly back on the agenda.

Second, the pandemic has caused us to reconsider the different roles and responsibilities of different levels of the state and government. This is where the book excels in drawing our attention to the important role of local government and issues of decentralisation. And I note a key statement made at the outset in the Introduction:

> *Local governments everywhere seem to have responded more effectively to prevent the spread of the virus, more effective than intervention by provincial and central governments.*

Therefore the pandemic has actually emphasised the importance of

local government. Now, decentralisation has been a hot topic for the last few decades. In 2005 it was stated that 80% of all developing and transitional countries were undertaking some form of decentralisation. At that time, there seemed to be a remarkable consensus on its desirability among diverse actors, encompassing both left and right on the political spectrum. But subsequently, there has been considerable disillusionment with decentralisation as various studies have highlighted its shortcomings in practice, often where it has only been implemented in a partial manner. There has often been a lack of ***democratic*** decentralisation or devolution, or the central government may be happy to devolve responsibilities but not provide the commensurate financial resources or revenue-raising powers to undertake those responsibilities, as well as a lack of downward accountability to citizens. Therefore this more effective role of local government during the pandemic has highlighted the need to re-visit questions of decentralisation and the potential benefits that can be gained from effective and democratic local government. As stated in the Introduction:

> *Pandemic provides an opportune moment to revisit the role of local governments the world over.*

And it is very appropriate that such reconsiderations have stemmed from a conference held in Kerala. In assessing decentralisation, Kerala has been one of the success stories with its emphasis on popular participation, albeit with limitations, as outlined by Olle Tornquist in his chapter. I like the structure of the book, which is divided into four main parts, starting with a focus on India and Indian states and then broadening out to South Asia more generally (Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) and then globally beyond South Asia, taking in experiences in Africa (South Africa, Ghana, and Burkina Faso), as well as experiences in Europe and Latin America. In my view, it works well to have this significant India focus and the regional and global comparisons.

Much of the attention during the pandemic has been on the role of the central government and measures taken by the central government to limit the spread of Covid and protect public health. This book is important in highlighting the more neglected but important role of local government. It has emphasized how being closer to the people has enabled local governments to be both more sensitive to local needs and to mobilize local communities for collective action. It has indicated how local governments can respond more effectively to poor and marginalised groups and address the economic

and social inequalities that the pandemic has highlighted and often exacerbated. It has demonstrated in particular the role that local governments can play in local health delivery, which often remains under centralised control. This suggests that a re-think of strategies is needed, and an enhanced role for local governments in health delivery given due consideration. The book has also noted the importance of trust in government and that citizens' trust in *local* government tends to be higher. This emphasis on trust is welcome for me, given that I work in a research Centre called CTPSR.

Now, the book has also indicated significant challenges that local governments have faced, not least resource constraints and capacity constraints. It is important that these are addressed, not least because one outcome of the pandemic is to re-think the division of powers and responsibilities between different layers of government. If there is a greater transfer of such powers to the local government level, then clearly, this brings with it the need for increased availability of financial and human resources.

Another interesting dimension that the book highlights is the community action and community resilience that was so evident in many places during the pandemic – the role taken by local community organisations to support local people, especially the most vulnerable. This has been very positive, and local governments are best placed to engage with such groups and strengthen state-society synergies.

The individual chapters provide such a wealth of experiences in different contexts and raise a variety of issues. But finally, I want to commend the editors for their introductory and concluding chapters. These go well beyond the expectations of introducing the contents of the book and its constituent chapters, and of summarising the issues raised in the conclusion. Both chapters provide a state-of-the-art discussion of the issues around decentralisation and local governance that the pandemic has given rise to, citing much recent literature that has emerged and situating the book within wider academic debates. I am sure that it will make a very important contribution to the literature on decentralised local governance.

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GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION

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Savita Laxmanrao Andelwar, *Gandhi and Indian vernacular languages* (Delhi: Akshita Publishers and Distributors, 2020). pp. 152. Price Rs. 650.

This book, published in 2020 and its release delayed owing to the pandemic is one of the recent studies in the field of Gandhiana. It is a survey of Gandhi's speeches and writings on English, Indian vernacular languages, and the scripts for writing the languages.

After a brief introduction, the author discusses Gandhi's views on the English language usage in India. Gandhi did not like it as it was a foreign language and a national disgrace. He regretted that many Indians spoke it as they considered it a status symbol. This had many harmful effects. He wanted the Indians to be proud of their languages. He gave the examples of the French and others who conversed in their own national languages while they talked among themselves. Hence, the replacement of English with an Indian language needed to be done soon. However, he was reconciled to the use of English in India under special circumstances.

He was an ardent supporter of the use of Hindustani in India. He believed that to be a national language, it should have five qualities. He felt that Hindi had them, but subsequently, he modified his stand and favoured Hindustani as the rashtrabhasha. His concept of Hindustani was inclusive of both Hindi and Urdu. His love for Hindi did not blind him to the usage of Urdu. He gave the example of Lala Lajpat Rai. Although he was an Arya Samajist, his mother tongue was Urdu. The real competition was not between Hindi and Urdu but between Hindustani and English. Supporters of Hindi and Urdu at times took extreme positions, but that was detrimental to both languages. He observed, "It may well be that I am alone in my view, but it is clear that neither Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu will win. Victory will go only to Hindustani" (p. 83). He appreciated the efforts of Osmania University in Hyderabad to impart education in Urdu. But he ignored that it was a costly failure. He tried to win over the South Indians in favour of Hindi by advising the Hindi-speaking people to learn a South Indian language. However, efforts to this end failed, and the South Indians refused to accept Hindi. There were violent agitations when attempts were made to this end.

The next chapter deals with the Indian vernacular languages. The author says, "Although a supporter of Hindi/Hindustani, Gandhi advocated the usage and development of other Indian languages together with it" (p. 93). This was needed for national rejuvenation even though many people found shortcomings in them. She rightly points out, "Among these Indian languages, Gandhi assigned supreme

place to Sanskrit" (p. 97). Although Gujarati was his mother tongue, he admitted that he did not have command over it. He thought highly of other languages too. The author points out, "Gandhi held the sway in popular vernacular literature and songs. In his honor, South Indians wrote songs, books, etc., in Tamil and Telugu while the government responded by proscribing the drama and other books" (p. 112).

This is followed by a discussion of his views on Devanagari and Persian scripts. At the very outset, he rejected the use of Roman script in India and gave his reasons for it. As a stop-gap arrangement, he was reconciled to the use of the Persian script, but he was convinced that ultimately Devanagari script would prevail because of its intrinsic merits. If regional literature was in Devanagari, it will be accessible to a wider readership.

In short, these are the contents of this book. It is a painstaking effort to analyse Gandhi's response to vernacular languages. The author has done justice to the subject taken up by her. Still, there are some weaknesses. It is heavily based on the *Collected works* of Gandhi, although this was inevitable to some extent. Besides, the index at the end has been compiled in a haphazard manner, and many words which should have been there are missing.

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Niranjan Pani & Debasis Bhuyan. (2020). *Gandhi's Leadership Style and Management Techniques.* Ghaziabad: N.B. Publications. 214 pp, Rs. 795, ISBN: 978-93-89234-65-7.

Mahatma Gandhi is the only person in Modern Indian history on whom research has been carried out and books published on the topics related to his personal life and his political engagements, either in his favour or against. One of the biggest questions arises about how and why Gandhi emerged as the only national leader who dominated Indian politics between 1920 and 1947. Before Gandhi arrived in India, the nature of Indian nationalism was westernized, and its concern was to create a 'new elite society' (Low, 1977). They were limited in their goals and rather unspectacular in achievements. However, Gandhi injected his ideas and philosophy of 'truth' and 'non-violence' into 'satyagraha' and won the heart of people living in the countryside. The movement he launched during India's freedom struggle is known as the period of mass nationalism. Gandhi became successful only because all sections of people participated in his movements, and everyone participated in the movements because his leadership techniques were different and unique. Gandhi helped Indians in getting independence from British colonial rule. Moreover, his ideas, philosophy and leadership techniques should be employed in contemporary times to solve rising problems.

Gandhi's Leadership Style and Management Techniques by Niranjan Pani and Debasis Bhuyan attempted to trace the leadership techniques adopted by Gandhi in his daily life. Though this book is not historical writing, a survey of Gandhi's historical events is done. Chapter one of this book, "The Start," begins with the definition and nature of leadership and its qualities. The authors write that 'a leader not only influences his followers to achieve the organisational goals, he also motivates [s] and guides the subordinates and pools the resources required to teach the goals' (p. 2). After that, they defined Gandhi as a 'visionary leader' and 'strategic manager' and argued that 'Gandhi was a born leader' as his grandfather was the Diwan of Porbandar, who was later succeeded by Gandhi's own father (pp. 6-7). According to them, Gandhi adopted the method of "Satyagraha," which was 'soul force or truth force and an alternative to violence that brings a positive social and political change' (p. 8). The authors move to talk about the management qualities of Gandhi and present a list of 'leadership lessons' from Gandhi's life. The chapter ends with an extensive literature review of Gandhi's life and ideas. The second chapter, "The Life," starts with a table containing the profile of Mahatma Gandhi, whose style seems to be directly taken from

Wikipedia.com. (*Mahatma Gandhi - Wikipedia*). This chapter portrays the life of Gandhi from the beginning to his death, presenting some factual details with images and photographs of significant events of Gandhi and his family. However, the sources of all pictures are not mentioned in the book. The Mahatma Gandhi family tree is taken from an open internet source (*Mahatma Gandhi family tree - Bing images*). The author could have provided some good-quality photographs at NMML, New Delhi, and created a new family tree to attract the readers.

Chapter Three, "The Concept," talks about the different concepts and features of leadership style. The authors present everything about leadership, i.e., 'Napoleon's concept of Rabbit Army,' 'Leadership is a Mutual Influence Process', 'Positive and Negative Leadership Style', 'Formal and Informal Leadership', and different theories of leadership and management skills, but they forget to mention about Gandhi and his leadership qualities in this chapter. It is hard to find any book ever written on a leader whose name is missing from one entire chapter. Chapter four, "The Leader", traces the leadership qualities of Gandhi from his South African days and then moves to discuss the circumstances leading to the emergence of Gandhi in the Indian National Movement. Here, the authors try to cite the views of famous Cambridge historian Judith Brown but forget to mention her main arguments from *Gandhi's Rise to Power* (1972). The authors could have talked about how Brown tried to emphasize the role of 'sub-contractor' in the emergence of Gandhi in the Indian national movement and called Gandhi a mediator, especially in the case of the Ahmedabad Mill Strikes. Nevertheless, the author moves to analyse the movements that Gandhi led; Champaran, Kheda, and Ahmedabad Satyagraha. The factual details of further movements, i.e., Rowlett Satyagraha, Non-Cooperation Movement, Civil Disobedience Movement, Quit India Movement, etc., are briefly mentioned in this chapter. This chapter depends on the factual details available in any basic textbooks on Modern Indian history. The authors missed writing about how and when Gandhi became famous in India. They did not discuss why Gandhi refused to go to Champaran when Rajkumar Shukla requested him at Lucknow. Gandhi arrived in Kheda very late when the Patidars had already paid the taxes. He only became a national hero after the Rowlett Satyagraha; as Ravinder Kumar has written, 'Rowlett Satyagraha was the first countrywide movement against the Britishers. It not only transformed nationalism in India from a movement representing classes to a movement representing masses, but it also paved the way for Gandhi's emergence as the dominant figure in Indian politics' (1971, p. 4). The authors could have written about the

role of rumours and religious phenomena in the rise of Gandhi, as pointed out by Shahid Amin (1984).

The next chapter is on "The Manager" where the authors highlight the management approach of Gandhi. Firstly, the seven deadly social evils are mentioned, i.e., wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, religion without sacrifice, and politics without principle. Gandhi's Satyagraha is one of his management skills that attracted the people. The 'organising capacity' and 'conflict resolution' are other sets of managing skills Gandhi, as the authors argue. The authors then talk about the 'five lessons' given by Gandhi which are useful in the workplace, and compare Gandhi and the corporate world. Chapter 6 is on "The Study," which is about the description of research upon which this book is produced. For this study, 200 respondents from each governmental organisation, private organisation, and the general public are taken. This chapter covers a large number of tables, graphs, and figures related to the questionnaire prepared for respondents and analysis of the socio-economic, political, and educational aspects of respondents.

In the concluding part the author writes that Gandhi's attitude of 'simple living and high thinking' attracted the whole world to him. They then talk about the legacy of Gandhi and point out how Gandhi was a source of motivation for great leaders like Dr Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Dalai Lama, Aung San Suu Kyi, etc. Nonetheless, the book concludes without any critical analysis of the leadership qualities of Mahatma Gandhi. There could have been a comparison between the leadership techniques of Gandhi with his contemporaries like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, B.R. Ambedkar, Subhash Chandra Bose, etc. Another weak point of this book is that the bibliographical section is not academically sound, and no citation style is followed consistently.

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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.

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